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Science and Society in Prehistoric Britain. By Euan W. Mackie. 23.5 × 15.5 cm. Pp. xii 252, pl. 17, figs. 36. Paul Elek, London, 1977, £12.50.

If only the Bristlecone pines lived less remotely and could talk like the Oak of Dodona, what memories they could tell! But dare I ask, blasted by science with its endless corrections of C14, whether they have said the last word on it? If they have, and if oriental chronology (not so stable, after all) is unaffected by it, then the step-cone that lies within Silbury Hill is about contemporary with the step-pyramid of Sakkara. Nothing in the north-west has the inhuman precision of Egyptian masonry, but we are asked to believe that the Hyperboreans were not behind in observations of *ta meteora* (this is 'Science') and that they had a privileged corporation to pursue them (that is 'Society'). In this matter there was no diffusion; so Good-bye, anyway, to those playmates of our pupillage, the Children of Sun!

Withal, it is a sober book. Dr. Mackie, an experienced Scots prehistorian, begins with a chastening, almost Calvinistic, exposition of the prehistorian's methodology and the treacherous uses of analogy and conjecture. He accepts, but not without verification, most of the contentions of Dr. Thom, the latest and most plausible of a long succession of disquisitors on the geometry of the Henges. But he makes special pleadings when he is impelled to institutionalize 'Science' in colleges (living in the larger henges). He has no place for genius, like that of Imhotep, or perhaps Merlin. Wren was *in* the Royal Society, not a creature of it; nor was St. Paul's designed by a committee. Silbury was likewise, apparently, unique, as, later, was the precise masonry of Stonehenge III, which Inigo Jones, for all its lack of classical detail, could not believe to be other than Roman. These have always been disturbing to those conditioned by myths, such as 'Progress', or the vernacular wisdom of the Peasantry – who saw that the Iron Age was nasty, obsessed (in the etymological sense) with petty warfare, and ripe for the *Pax Romana*, and who, looking for something 'even worse' before it, were gratified to hear of the undernourished peons of Windmill Hill, too feeble to fight. There was, of course, the saving myth of the *Herrenvolk*, identifiable in the squires of Wessex, with their elegant and honourable weapons, and their ladies, the banks of whose almost equal barrows were linked with their lords' in immortal love-knots. Silbury and Stonehenge III must be the work of such

gentlemen-amateurs, as it might have been in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Dr. Mackie is not of that Society, but forced back into the Windmill Hill phase, he must examine the myths of his own, which admits no gentry but a state-supported technocracy. Nevertheless, his interpretation, on his own hypothesis, of many famous sites in Wessex, is stimulating. By 'Southern England' he means Wessex, and never strays into the East Country (including Kent) for all the recent work there.

Despite his timely warnings about 'delusions of accuracy', and being 'blasted' with arithmetic (which I for one do not find 'extremely easy' and have not the patience to correct), and remembering not only his loving adherence to traditional measures, but also the not-so-distant days when every city of Europe had different ones, I find his sections on metrology and the 'megalithic yard' a swamp of approximation. Napoleon may have 'imposed' the Metric system, but it was devised ten years earlier by the *Académie des Sciences*, and much (not all) of the 'Imperial system' is equally 'arbitrary'.

S. E. RIGOLD

Camden's Britannia – Kent. Annotated and edited by G. J. Copley. 25.5 × 18.5 cm. Pp. 96 with a map and numerous illustrations. Hutchinson, London, 1977. £7.50.

Published originally in 1586, *Britannia* may be justly described as having laid the foundations on which all subsequent antiquarian research in this country has been built. The influence of Camden's great scholarship was felt throughout the learned world, so that by the time of his death in 1623 he had literally put Britain on the map. Written originally in Latin, the work was published in an English translation in 1789 by Richard Gough, and his text forms the basis of this projected series of volumes eventually covering every county. At present the volume for Kent and another combining Surrey and Sussex are available and they will prove most valuable to students of local history, especially those to whom Gough's full version is not readily available.

Dr. Gordon Copley has supplied voluminous notes in order to bring the reader up to date and supplement or correct Camden. These notes are printed in wide margins and at the foot of the page so as to be easily accessible when reading the main text. They provide a mine of valuable information and supply references to sources for those who wish to pursue matters further. But there are surprisingly few references to *Archaeologia Cantiana* although its existence is noted in the Select (but not in the General) Bibliography. Some of the information is already out of date: for example, the reader's attention is directed in the Select Bibliography to an article in *The Archaeological Journal*, cxxvi (1969),

on 'The Roman Haven of Dover', the main conclusions in which were dramatically reversed by excavations conducted shortly after its publication. Of the Saxon Shore fort at Dover, he notes that there is 'much surviving' (p. 4, n. 39), implying that he is aware of the recent discoveries (summarized in *Current Archaeology* for May 1973) before which nothing was visible and the very existence of the fort was in dispute. We may wonder why, therefore, among all the numerous notes he has added to Camden's account of Dover, the editor has made no reference to the important developments published four years before the appearance of this new edition of *Britannia*.

Concerning Tonbridge Castle (p. 17, n. 41) we are told that the gatehouse is of c. 1220–40 although *The Buildings of England*, given by Copley as one of his authorities, plainly puts it correctly at c. 1300, as evidenced by the Geometrical tracery of its windows.

No-one who undertakes a task of this size can be immune from minor errors of detail. Both publishers and editor have performed a valuable service in providing us with an updated version of Camden at a price likely to put it on the shelves of the local public library if not in our own private bookcases.

P. J. TESTER

(The) *Techniques of archaeological Excavation*. By Philip Barker. 25 × 19 cm. Pp. 279, 86 pls. and figs. Batsford, London, 1977. £8.95 (£4.75 limp).

The great increase of public interest since the last war and the undertaking of large excavations, both in the research and rescue fields, have brought about a curious, quasi-Parkinson's law situation in archaeology: the work has expanded, academic institutions have responded by providing theoretical instruction and some practical training and archaeological manuals have been published to meet the ever-increasing needs of field workers and newly-qualified archaeologists alike – if they do not yet know the basic skills of their trade, it certainly is not for want of reference books which now almost proliferate.

(The) *Techniques of archaeological Excavation* (the definite article on the cover of this book was not intended by the author, understandably) is the latest addition to this field of archaeological publication, and Mr. Barker lists conscientiously his forerunners in the preface to his textbook. What is the need for yet another such textbook, may well be asked; does it mean that its author does not consider the others as good enough? Not so; for, in his own words (p. 10), they are 'good introductory books'. Does then 'introductory' imply that *Techniques* is more than that, more detailed and instructional? Mr. Barker does not

seek to repeat previous advice, but sees his task, directly the by-product of his own wide experience as the excavator of many sites, as that of passing on to his readers 'practical hints', that of making excavation and the multitude of ancillary tasks that inevitably accompany it, more efficient, i.e. more economical in all its aspects.

There is a great wealth of practical experience, transformed into first-class advice, contained in the fourteen chapters of this impressive volume, without pontificating; every excavator, whether about to dig his very first trowelful or after years of frequently unspectacular labours, will find here much to his advantage, and also to the benefit of those he digs with, much that he may have already practised himself, much that may well cause him to reflect on his own methods. Though basic skills and techniques can vary little, their application can vary much more, be very laborious and time-consuming, and it is well worth repeating basic precepts, *pace* Mr. Barker, till they become automatic archaeological reflexes – we all know of excavations with languidly reclining sections!

Naturally, this volume is fully illustrated with many photographs and text figures; the former vary in quality due, no doubt, to the printing process used, the latter are mostly examples of what the best in archaeological drawing can be. However, it must also be recorded that this applies only to those figures drawn especially for this book; others, obviously re-used from the author's previous archaeological reports and requiring various degrees of reduction in order to avoid expensive throw-outs, clearly demonstrate with their loss of some definition in details Mr. Barker's own strictures (pp. 234 ff.) on drawing for archaeological publication.

All in all, Mr. Barker need not feel in the least apologetic about the 'somewhat autobiographical air' of his manual; for, after all, what does one write from in archaeology other than one's own direct experience? This is a book that, as one who has experienced situations similar to the author's, I can unreservedly recommend to fellow archaeologists; in what it sets out to do, it is a model of clarity and concision and certain to serve the younger generation of archaeologists at least as well as Atkinson's *Field Archaeology* served mine.

A. P. DETSICAS

The Genealogists' Guide. By Geoffrey B. Barrow. 22 × 14 cm. Pp. xv + 205. Research Publishing Co., London, 1977. £9.00.

Mr. Barrow's admirable book extends the period for which British printed genealogies are indexed by twenty-five years to 1975. Of course, as the compiler anticipated, there are omissions. The pedigree of Blake,

of Barham Court, in Burke's *Landed Gentry* (iii, 70), contains a descent from Haslewood which Barrow has omitted; he unwittingly reveals that he has not always gone to 'original sources' by perpetuating a small mistake in a book review under the entry for Lukyn and omits my article on the family of Francklin in *Sturry – the changing scene*.

I wholeheartedly endorse Barrow's classification as a standard work. It is case-bound in hard-wearing buckram.

T. S. CHURCH

Royal Tunbridge Wells. By Alan Savidge. 22 × 18 cm. Pp. 216 with numerous illustrations. Midas Books, Tunbridge Wells, 1975. £6.50.

A cynic might claim that Tunbridge Wells lives mainly on the reputation of its past. Certainly a visitor today soon becomes conscious of the air of faded elegance pervading this once-famous spa which in its heyday rivalled Bath and Cheltenham. Its plain-fronted, stucco-covered houses stand as though brooding on the affluent days before they were converted into flats and offices suited to the egalitarian needs of the mid-twentieth century.

It all began not much more than three centuries ago as a cluster of buildings around the springs claimed by Lord North to possess medicinal properties – the springs that soon attracted the upper and middle classes to journey from London to 'The Wells' in search of health. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw an expansion of the town into a fashionable residential area and today it provides a widely used shopping centre as well as a dormitory for the commuters who travel by British Rail daily to and from London, more rapidly but less cheaply than the spa patrons of the Georgian era.

Mr. Savidge has written a book which brings old Tunbridge Wells to life by helping us to people it in imagination with the generations whose patronage made it famous – let alone 'Royal'. History is essentially about people, and the illustrations and text enable the reader to see the life and movement of former days against the architectural background happily surviving to our own times. Among the many past aspects to which he directs our attention is the profoundly religious character of the place which led the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1888 to refer to it as 'a kind of sacred city . . . a kind of modern Jerusalem'. This fervour was of a sternly Protestant persuasion, typified by the portrait of the redoubtable Canon Hoare, vicar of Trinity from 1853 to 1894, standing in his pulpit attired in black preaching gown and bands. Low anglicanism and nonconformity flourished and still today the internal starkness of most of the churches in Tunbridge Wells proclaims 'No Popery' as plainly as though the slogan were written in foot-high letters on their outer walls.

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The book is scholarly, entertaining, copiously illustrated and well worth the price at modern values.

P. J. TESTER

Everyday Life in the Roman Empire. By Joan Liversidge. 21.5 × 14 cm. Pp. 240, 105 pls. and figs. + 1 map. Batsford, London, 1976. £3.50.

Yet another book on the Roman empire may 'arouse serious misgivings' (p. 19); however, this volume in the publishers' *Everyday Life* series is, strictly speaking, a survey of daily life during the first and second centuries A.D. in most provinces of the Roman world, a work of synthesis, not a detailed discussion of the evidence: for all this, both specialists and general readers should be indebted to Miss Liversidge. What for most scholars would be a daunting task is clearly a labour of love for Miss Liversidge that she has undertaken for the benefit of English readers; the evidence for life under the Romans is scattered in many publications, some not easily available in this country, and the author draws on them to paint her picture. On such a huge canvas (the chapter headings alone are in themselves subjects for detailed studies), it is not entirely unexpected that only the background colours can be brushed in; Roman Britain receives only peripheral attention for, after all, Miss Liversidge has, with her massive *Britain in the Roman Empire* (1968), drawn together most of what was then known on daily life in this province. Nevertheless, if the reader survives the formidable choice laid before him, the bibliography offers many starting points for further private study; this, I suspect, Miss Liversidge would accept as some recompense for her painstaking survey.

The present volume is profusely illustrated by text figures and half-tones, some of which would be known only to specialists, and must be welcomed, if for no other reason, at least for its very modest price in these days when books have mostly become luxuries that few can afford.

A. P. DETSICAS

Deep-rooted in Kent. An Account of the Filmer Family. By Reginald M. Filmer. 21.5 × 14 cm. Pp. 69. Folding chart. Research Publishing Co., London, 1977. £6.00.

In his review of another history of the Filmer family by this publisher, F. L. Leeson wrote, in the *Genealogists' Magazine* for December 1975, 'The best thing about this expensive little booklet is the binding. . . . One would have thought that by now the average

genealogist might have realized the importance of quoting in detail sources and authorities, but few are given in this case, and there is no index.' Only the quality of the binding has altered.

The author, who wrote this work for his family and died in 1965, cannot be held responsible for most of the book's failings. The value of his painstaking research is apparent, but on p. 33 he does confuse the surname Dive with Dine. The monument he quotes not so long ago read thus: HERE LI/ETH THE BODY OF / JOAN SKERE / THE WIFE OF ROBERT / FILMER OF WITCHLING / DECEASED LATER / THE WIFE OF RICHARD / DIVE LEFT ISSUE BY / FILMER RAYNOLD JEF / FERIE & JOHN BY DIVE / ELIZABETH JOANE / THOMAS & DIED THE / 31 DAY OF JANUARY / ANNO 1635.

I find the manuscript corrections to the family tree unconventional, preferring a tipped-in corrigenda slip.

T. S. CHURCH

The Saxon Shore. Edited by D. E. Johnston. 29.5 × 21 cm. Pp. 92, 18 pls. and 40 figs. CBA Research Report No. 18, London, 1977. £6.00.

This report, published last year, is 'the record of a symposium' held in 1975 at the University of Southampton to discuss problems of the vexed question of the Saxon Shore forts. Unfortunately, before this report appeared, much of what it contains had been either anticipated or superseded by Johnson's *Roman Forts of the Saxon Shore* (1976), himself a contributor to the symposium.

So far as Roman Britain is concerned and apart from Cunliffe's lucid contribution, Hassall's historical background of the forts' garrisons and Mann's paper on the fourth-century command of the Saxon Shore, the rest appears to be little more than re-statements of what is already known. In the section of the British evidence, Brancaster stands out as a very useful summary of recent work, Lympne could only have 'a preparatory statement' at that time, Dover but a very 'brief note' summarizing what has mostly already appeared, owing to the inability of the writer through pressure of other work to contribute a full paper.

However, the main value of this report seems to be the marshalling together of 'the Gallic evidence', which is too scattered in foreign periodicals to be familiar to British archaeologists in general; it contains papers on the Channel Islands and the fort sites at Boulogne, Alët (Saint-Malo) and Brest in France and Oudenburg in Belgium, which are well illustrated by several plans and plates.

The concluding section includes a paper by Johnson on late Roman defences much of which must have already been in the press at the time

his contribution was delivered, Rigold's thought-provoking thesis that most of the Saxon Shore forts and other strongholds may have survived the end of Roman Britain as religious settlements during the early Anglo-Saxon period and Wilkes' explanation of the total lack of the normal building inscriptions from these forts.

This report also contains a bibliography as well as a comprehensive index; regrettably, it is printed in the two-column format which may be thought as more suitable to ephemeral house-journals than a serious research report, and at its price seems too highly marked-up, even by prevailing standards. On the other hand, it is a record of value to specialists in its field as a summary, in the main, of the current state of knowledge on the *litus saxonicum*.

A. P. DETSICAS

A Hundred Years and More: A History of Faversham Baptist Church.

By the late Rev. W. R. Weeks. 25.5 × 20.5 cm. Pp. 39. Published by the Faversham Society, 1977.

The cover of this fourteenth publication in the Faversham Society's admirable series depicts the front of the Baptist Chapel built in 1872, the foundation stone being laid by the famous preacher, C. H. Spurgeon, extracts from whose lively sermon on the occasion are quoted at some length. The book is mainly about the people – ministers and prominent members of the congregation – who have sustained the local Baptist connection from that time forward, although reference is made to Baptists of one sort or another who can be traced back in Faversham as far as the sixteenth century. The Rev. W. R. Weeks, who compiled these notes, was minister from 1950 to 1965 and did not live to see their publication. In his prologue he commends the view that chapel histories should take into account social, political and economic factors, though unfortunately his sources did not supply much material of this kind and the interest of the book suffers accordingly. In fact the attitudes of the Faversham Baptists seem at one time to have been distinctly intuned, typified by a description of the local church as 'a little garden walled around', but by the 1930s liberalizing influences had brought about open membership for which believer's baptism was no longer a compulsory qualification.

A large section of the book consists of little more than a catalogue of the names and deeds of successive ministers, all of whom were apparently of exemplary character. Anything bespeaking human weakness is referred to in veiled terms. We are left to wonder what upheaval in 1886 caused several families to leave and why ten years later all details of the trouble were removed from the records by tearing

out several pages from the minute book; and what offence was committed by the deacon whose name was erased from the church roll after 'grave charges' had been made against him? One does not look in a book of this nature for lurid details of past scandals but such oblique references may well be taken to imply more serious departures from virtue than were in fact the case, especially judged by modern standards.

Although the book provides a useful contribution to the history of Faversham, its interest is undoubtedly greatest to members of the present Baptist congregation. Its slightly moralizing tone may be considered by some to be more appropriate to the pulpit than to a work presumably addressed to a wide readership.

P. J. TESTER

Pottery and early Commerce: Characterization and Trade in Roman and later Ceramics. Edited by D. P. S. Peacock. 23.5 × 15.5. Pp. 340, 8 pls., 53 figs. and 15 tables. Academic Press, London, New York and San Francisco, 1977. £12.80.

Pottery is, in many excavations, not only the largest single category of finds but, very often, also the only means of dating. It is not surprising, therefore, that, with the post-war great increase in excavations, there has been a marked resurgence of interest in pottery studies during the last two decades. Following close upon the formation of the Study Group for Romano-British Pottery, a forum for people working in this field, there came the CBA Oxford conference (1972) culminating in the publication of the CBA Research Report 10 (1973), which was very soon to be out of print, then *Roman Pottery Studies in Britain and beyond* last summer. In the meantime, apart from the Study Group's annual seminars in various parts of the country, pottery research has been gathering momentum at various academic institutions where research students have been applying more recent scientific methods to pottery dating alongside the time-honoured typological approach. *Pottery and early Commerce*, as the list of contributors and their approach clearly show, stems from one of these University departments of archaeology and contains a number of important papers edited by Dr. David Peacock, who has pioneered the study of pottery by means of the heavy-mineral analysis of the clays used in manufacture.

The general approach of this collection of papers is boldly stated (p. vii) as 'the study of economic aspects of pottery production and marketing', an aspect discussed with regard to mortaria by Kay Hartley in her 1973 paper (CBA Research Report 10); not 'a

comprehensive coverage of this wide field', according to the editor, but a hope 'to explore . . . possibilities and problems and to encourage further research'.

After an introduction by Professor Renfrew in which he surveys pottery production and exchange in early state societies, Dr. Peacock deals with pottery in Roman and medieval archaeology and the rôle of scientific methods and pottery reports; in this latter section of his paper, the author pleads for a standardized scheme of fabric description (Table 2, p. 29), which will find many echoes in anyone who has had not only to read but also write pottery descriptions, though his *desiderata*, by and large, can seldom be within reach of few others than those possessing either scientific training or laboratory facilities, or both.

Dr. Fulford follows with an important contribution, covering the period between A.D. 250 and 400 where pottery dating is less securely established than in earlier times, and discusses such late Continental imports as Argonne ware (his gazeteer, Appendix 1, pp. 76-7, is not as comprehensive as it could be; for, even at the time of its compilation, there were other sites, some in Kent, which are not included, through no fault of the author as they are mostly unpublished), German coarse wares, that odd fabric characterized as 'pottery decorated "à l'éponge"', and exports of Romano-British pottery to the Continent - both these categories obviously demonstrate trade links between Roman Britain and factories in Gaul and Germany. This is very important evidence in that it helps to distinguish trade routes and, coupled with the evidence of other items of trade, leads Michael Fulford to argue 'Britain's economic integration with the Continent towards Gaul and Germany' (p. 70). If nothing else, he has amply shown the immense value of comparative pottery studies and his paper should help to break down the insular approach only too obvious in Romano-British pottery reports; pottery is a durable, marketable product, but how often do we look for parallels beyond our own shores?

Neil Loughlin's article on Dales ware takes over where Gillam left off in 1951 and proceeds to discuss the form and decoration of this ware, its production, dating and evolution, illustrated by a comprehensive series of pottery types (Figs. 1 and 2); Loughlin then brings his scientific approach to bear on the question with heavy mineral analyses and thin sectioning. Supported by the distribution of Dales ware and interpretative models, he then draws conclusions (pp. 117-25) which may not secure immediate general acceptance.

Pompeian red ware, a rather rare and little known class of pottery, next receives David Peacock's attention in a paper which assembles conveniently together the evidence scattered in many reports, with a

discussion of this ware's types and seven fabrics which the author himself has distinguished; it is an interim report on the study of a class of pottery which has obvious possibilities of adding much to our knowledge of supply centres during the first century A.D.

Dr. Williams' paper, based partly on his doctoral thesis, on the Romano-British black-burnished industry may well raise impatient eye-brows when so much has already been published about this ware since Gillam's pioneering studies and Farrar's detailed paper in CBA Research Report 10; but this would be unfair to David Williams for his approach to BB1 and BB2 is not typological and his conclusions, leading to the classification of both categories of black-burnished ware, are largely based on the spectrographic analysis of specimen sherds obtained from many sites. It is here that one feels that Williams could have been rather more cautious and critical of the material he accepted for his data; certainly, in the case of some of the sites I am familiar with, Williams appears to have gone beyond their excavators' published reports, not in re-interpretation but in conclusions that the excavators themselves felt unable to reach on the basis of their own evidence. For instance, at Joyden's Wood, Bexley (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxviii (1954), 170), the excavators clearly indicate the absence of tell-tale wasters, as does Williams, and cautiously add that 'it seems *likely* (my italics) that the sherds numbered 16-21 and 29-32 . . . represent ware fired in this kiln'; on the other hand, they also suggest that the kiln may have been a corn-drier which, in the absence of significant amounts of pottery, let alone wasters, seems to me a more acceptable interpretation. Again, in the case of the Greenhithe site (*Arch. Cant.*, lxxxi (1966), 136-90) Williams concludes that 'a local industry seems to be indicated' whereas Farrar (CBA Research Report 10, 100) merely 'suspects a local industry here'; indeed, there is 'no mention in the report of any evidence for pottery production at the site', as Williams puts it (p. 198), for none was found! The Greenhithe pottery was found in a refuse deposit, intermingled with building débris and domestic rubbish; the black-burnished ware in this deposit *could* have been made near its find-spot or anywhere on the fairly broad belt of the north Kentish marshes where pottery was manufactured (macroscopically, some of the Joyden's Wood vessels look very close to Greenhithe black-burnished pots, the latter to Rochester ones and so on). Moreover, some of Williams' conclusions on the origins of BB2 are open to question, certainly with regard to the Kentish sites producing this category (p. 208; incidentally, Southwark is not in Kent!) none of which is proven to my unscientific mind. In spite of some reservations felt on matters of basic detail, this remains a very valuable contribution, showing how scientific method can supplement, often supplant, typological analysis and highlighting also the essential need

for statistically broad enough samples for analysis, of which I am sure Dr. Williams is fully aware.

David Hinton's paper on 'Rudely made earthen Vessels' ushers the medieval pottery section of the book, Richard Hodges treats of the early French wine trade on the basis of early-medieval French wares in Britain, Alan Vince discusses the medieval and post-medieval pottery of the Malvern region, floor-tiles and clay tobacco-pipes, by David Hinton and C. J. Arnold respectively, bringing up the rear. In all these papers there is a similarity of approach to those of the Romanists and of the criteria used for their conclusions.

Apart from their excellent illustrations, each paper is accompanied by a most comprehensive bibliography which should save many a pottery student hours of frequent vain search.

This volume shows the way pottery studies can be used beyond providing chronological data. Though analysis of the clay, as well as other scientific processes, will not date a sherd, it can identify its kiln-site, when sufficient data have been collected and assessed, and the latter, where securely dated by internal evidence, should aid the dating of the sherd's find-spot; additionally, and possibly of greater value, the socio-economic implications of such pottery research are numerous, as the contributors to this book have so well demonstrated. All in all, this book is a very important contribution to pottery studies, and workers in this field, of whichever generation or school of thought, should be indebted to its contributors, editor and publishers for its production – if only it could be a little cheaper, for it will undoubtedly soon be out of print!

A. P. DETSICAS

Faversham 1900–1910: Syd Twist Remembers. 25.5 × 20.5 cm. Pp. 64.
Published by the Faversham Society, 1977. 50p.

The author, Syd Twist, has lived all his life in and around Faversham where he was born nearly eighty years ago, and in his retirement he has set down what he remembers of the scenes of his childhood. When he left school he went to work at the gunpowder mills and was employed later by the brick and cement works at Murston. His reminiscences are, therefore, essentially those of a manual worker and are all the more interesting as a record of the side of life less usually presented in publications on local history. The Faversham Society has done well to publish these notes which were originally compiled by the author merely to test his own powers of recollection.

There are descriptions of various roads and localities, the local industries and happenings such as the disastrous T.N.T. explosion in 1916. Sportsmen will be interested to learn how the old Kentish game

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of goal running was played between teams from different villages after work on summer evenings, while less energetic townsfolk spent their leisure on Sundays promenading round the Recreation Ground paths. In this latter activity, Mr. Twist assures us, 'There was no noise, no shouting – just walking and talking until about nine o'clock'. There is an engaging simplicity about this and many of the author's other descriptions which make pleasant reading and also preserve an intimate picture of a notable Kentish town in Edwardian times.

Copies are obtainable from the Fleur de Lis Heritage Centre, Preston Street, Faversham, price as above or 65p. post paid.

P. J. TESTER

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