REVIEWs

Kent Records Series. Volume 3 Parts 1-9. 145 x 210mm. Paperbacks. Each part may be purchased separately at £3.00, which includes postage and packing. Remittances must be made in sterling to the Kent Archaeological Society, Ashton Lodge, Church Road, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 8JA, England. Email queries can be dealt with on: booksales@kentarchaeology.org.uk

Kent is a most fortunate county in having a splendid survival rate of historic documents. Following ‘Testamenta Cantiana’ in 1906, the KAS Records Branch published a number of volumes of value to both established historians and those beginning to explore the past. In time historians began to ask for more volumes on a myriad of subjects and the Records Branch had the task of finding authors of quality to undertake the research. Even more difficult was the spiralling cost of publishing large volumes. The economic costs and projected sales were considered most unlikely to balance. In the 1990s it was decided to try an experiment by publishing some documents in parts, limiting each paperback copy to £3.00. Vols. 1 and 2 have been published. Vol. 3 parts 1-9 are available with part 10 expected later this year.

Volume 3 encompasses a most varied selection of transcripts many of which will mean buying a number of Parts. The Tenterden Tailor’s Accounts fill Part 1 but to complete the accounts one must also buy Parts 2 and 3. Part 3 also records Shipbourne Title Deeds and the beginning of a selection of the Constable Returns for the 1664 Hearth Tax. To sum up, the researcher is unlikely to find many complete transcripts without spending more than the £3.00 per paperback.

To return to the content of Volume 3, to have these records transcribed instead of waiting for the information to be painstakingly unearthed in a repository or a book, is valuable. You do not have to be researching Tenterden records to appreciate the information given in The Tenterden Tailor’s Accounts. The accounts were edited by Felix Hull and the Introduction covers seven pages. As he says, the primary import is the fact that these are the surviving accounts of drapers and tailors at an early period and therefore throw light on the materials used, the clothing made and the prices at that time. The article ends
with a glossary and two indices, the first of personal names and the second of places and subjects.

Part 3 contains Shipbourne Title Deeds from 1423-1823 edited by C.W. Chalklin. The Introduction describes the value of such documents that Dr Chalklin says have been neglected in favour of wills. Historians with a comprehensive collection of local wills could well expand their research by searching for Title Deeds, of which a huge numbers have survived for Kent. Part 3 ends with the beginning of the Constable’s Returns for the 1664 Hearth Tax, which continue in Parts 4 and 5. This is a useful introduction to such returns and draws the reader’s attention to the recently published Kent Records Vol. XXIX, which covers the whole of the county.

Part 4 continues the Hearth Tax, which is concluded in Part 5. Part 5 continues with transcripts of seventeenth-century inventories for Westenhanger Castle and Sturry Court which are continued in Part 6. These were found amongst the records at the British Library by Duncan Harrington and record the possessions of Sir Thomas Smythe K.B. taken in 1635 at the time of his death.

The inventories were ‘taken valued and prised’ in October 1635. They are very long and detailed and are of importance for studying the furnishings of the period. For historians particularly interested in military history the armoury at Westenhanger contained items listed on one and a half pages. The appendix is a review of the known historical documents including a 1559 survey of the manor of Westenhanger and other documents, which give an excellent background on the administration of a large estate.

Part 6 concludes with Faversham’s Assessment for a Ship for the Counter Armada of 1596. The main article for this topic was published in Archaeologia Cantiana, CXXII (2002).

Part 7 begins with a 1487 manorial rental from West Kent found in a Common Plea Roll at the PRO. The major portion of Part 7 introduces the Faversham Fines with a six-page introduction by Patricia Hyde and Duncan Harrington. Faversham is a particularly good example for street names have remained the same for centuries and the properties recorded can be placed in a precise area.

The whole of Part 8 is devoted to the Faversham Fines, as is the first part of Part 9. The rest of this part ends with Part 1 of Early Kent Muster Rolls. The Introduction describes how the militia was a citizen army, rather like the Home Guard and would make essential reading should any historian wish to study the subject for their own area. It takes up just over fourteen pages and so it is not surprising that some transcriptions of actual Muster Rolls found at the PRO have had to be held over for Part 10.
When I received these nine booklets for review, my first reaction was irritation that few of the contents were complete in one Part. On reading the various Parts, I appreciated that the material was of great interest to historians and it was a great shame that it had not been published years ago. I still find it muddling that each booklet within a volume is titled as Part ‘X’ and the contents are also titled as ‘Parts’. Ideally it would be good to have each article completed in one booklet even at a greater cost.

PATRICIA WINZAR


In common with the other volumes in the Kent History Project, this book does not present a continuous political and social history of the county over its chosen time-span. Instead it offers eight thematic chapters in a broadly chronological order. The editor explains in his short Introduction that the primary purpose of the volume is to answer fundamental questions as to who held power in Kent during this period, in whose interests that power was exercised and what opposition it provoked. Each chapter addresses one or more of these questions. The best of them amount to substantial pieces of research in their own right.

Jacqueline Eales begins this volume, as she concluded its predecessor, with a fine analysis of conflict in seventeenth-century Kent. While her previous chapter focused upon the county in the Jacobean and early Caroline periods, this chapter discusses in depth the participation of, and impact upon, the county of the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth period. Drawing upon an enviably wide range of evidence, the essay rightly questions the idea that the leaders of Kentish society took an insular view of the Civil Wars and sought to preserve their own independence without taking sides. This type of ‘localist’ interpretation of mid seventeenth-century county communities seems now to be on the retreat. Dr Eales demonstrates that ‘genuine neutrals’ in Kent were rare during the 1640s and 1650s and that the county was genuinely polarised, at all levels of society, between the royalist and parliamentary causes. Maidstone, indeed, was the scene of a decisive parliamentary victory in the Second Civil War (1 June 1648) and prominent royalists, including Edward Hales
the Younger and Sir Roger Twisden, paid heavily in financial terms for their allegiance.

Dr Eales concludes with a short examination of the Restoration in Kent, showing that, despite the unpopularity of the Cromwellian regime, dissent, especially in its religious forms, was far from extinguished. The Restoration also forms the starting point for Frederick Lansberry's survey of the government of the county between 1660 and 1836. His chapter offers a thorough analysis of the structure of local administration, with particular reference to the politics of the gentry and their patriarchal role as JPs in a county which, unlike many others, was not dominated by a handful of powerful aristocratic dynasties. Over a fifth of the county was owned by gentry families with estates between 3,000 and 10,000 acres in size (p. 60). Dr Lansberry and the late Bryan Keith-Lucas bring much expertise to bear in their joint chapter on the government of the boroughs. This chapter takes the form of a lucid and well-documented discussion of the pre-1835 corporations and their reform (which certainly did not bring corruption to an end) in 1835.

There follow three chapters on various forms of resistance to authority in Kent. Paul Hastings contributes a characteristically elegant and well-balanced essay on radical movements, together with agrarian and industrial discontent, between the period of the French revolution and the end of the Chartist era. Bruce Aubry, in one of the book's longest chapters, develops some of these themes in a detailed account of the emergence of a separate working class political force in the Medway Towns between 1859 and 1914. Enhanced by a shrewd use of the Chatham newspapers, Dr Aubry examines the importance of trades councils, republicanism and party organization, and concludes that the successes of the I.L.P. and the Labour Party in local and parliamentary elections before the First World War were very limited. A second chapter by Paul Hastings surveys the level of crime and the challenges to public order in the county during the second half of the nineteenth century. He attributes a fall in the level of (recorded) crime in his chosen period in large part to a much more professional approach to policing, and has a particularly good section on the Kent County Constabulary. The volume concludes with Elizabeth Melling's essay on the administration of the county between the Napoleonic Wars and 1914. A key theme of the chapter, as one would expect, is the replacement of the General Sessions by the establishment of the Kent County Council by the Act of 1888, a measure which is examined in some depth.

If one element of the period is relatively neglected it is the eighteenth century. More could have been made, for instance, of the
longer-term effects of the Revolution of 1688-89, one of which was a reaction against central interference in the privileges of local élites. Canterbury was on the receiving end of a writ of *Quo Warranto* in 1684 and twice between 1686 and 1688 the election of a mayor of the city was overruled by the Privy Council. It was partly because of an anxiety to avoid such intrusion thereafter that what is sometimes termed (retrospectively) the ‘unreformed’ system of local government was able to endure for so long. One might also suggest that since the volume rightly gives much attention to those who held power in Kent, more consideration might have been accorded to the Anglican clergy. Kent was unique in Britain as a county that included two dioceses of the established church. The importance of the clergy as magistrates, and the conflict over tithes, both receive brief references. But clerical power, expressed for instance through the authority of the pulpit and the pamphlet, together with a dominant voice in educational and philanthropic enterprises, went much further than that. Jeremy Gregory’s first-rate study *Restoration, Reformation and Reform, 1660-1828*. Archbishops of Canterbury and their Diocese, 1660-1828 presumably appeared at too late a stage for the contributors to use. But Dr Gregory’s Oxford D.PHIL. dissertation, upon which the book was based, and his edition of the *Speculum* of Archbishop Secker have been available for some years. It is, of course, easy to criticise the balance of material within a multi-authored volume which covers so lengthy a period. Any such criticism, however, should not detract from the overall value, to researchers, students and general readers alike, of this well-produced book.

G.M. DITCHFIELD


Pearson provides a well-written and rounded account of archaeological scholarship relating to the Roman fortifications commonly called the Saxon Shore Forts. This is the first comprehensive look at the forts since S. Johnson wrote *The Roman Forts of the Saxon Shore* in 1976. This recent account, although written for a more general audience, is also useful for both students and academics because the author not only provides a detailed description of the sites, but explains problems of interpretation and provides information about recent research on the area.
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To begin with, Pearson challenges the use of the term ‘Saxon Shore Forts’ because it is based on an account, the Notitia Dignitatum, with an indeterminable date, which has presented problems with interpretation. Up until recently scholars have used the term ‘Saxon Shore’ indiscriminately and hence their arguments are then grounded in the assumption that the construction of the forts might have had something to do with threats of Saxon incursions. It is demonstrated by Pearson that the motives behind the building of the forts cannot be determined as originally believed by previous scholars and, therefore, he does not employ the term unless necessary (i.e. in the case of later fourth- and early fifth-century Roman Britain when there is greater evidence for Saxon settlement). Thus, the term Shore Forts is used to replace the older description. With this definition explained, the author attempts to examine the forts in their context to gain a stronger understanding of why they were created by looking at a number of factors such as their construction, geography, occupation and economics.

The first three chapters provide background information about each of the forts: Brancaster, Caister, Burgh Castle, Walton Castle, Bradwell, Reculver, Richborough, Dover, Lympne, Pevensey and Portchester. The remains of, and excavations at, each structure are first described, followed by a discussion on the dates of the construction in the context of the events of the third century. To understand the development of the coastal system, Pearson not only examines the forts themselves, but looks at them in a broader geographical and temporal context and notes that they were part of a much larger system of fortifications in Gaul and Britain.

In the fourth chapter the author examines the materials used and building techniques employed in the construction of the forts. (See also his article in Archaeologia Cantiana, CXXII (2002), 197-220.) Complementing these main issues, more detailed aspects are considered in an attempt to gain a greater appreciation of the how and why they were built. For example, Pearson notes that the structures do not conform to a specific style, as some forts are of the earlier ‘playing card’ shape, whilst others are square. These typological variations have been the basis for dating the structures, but he remarks that one should not rely on building typologies for precise dates because they are sometimes anachronistic and do not conform to the typical style of their period. Also relating to how the forts were built, Pearson provides estimates of the amount of hours and manpower necessary for their construction as well as discussing the possible role soldiers played in this process. During the third century, throughout the empire different army units were often in the state of
revolt, and to avoid possible uprisings soldiers might have been kept occupied with fort construction.

The topographic setting of the forts is also considered as part of the contextual analysis. By looking at the forts in relation to the reconstructed Roman shoreline the author provides a few possible reasons for their construction. With more geomorphological studies having been made of the area, Pearson is able to argue against Mann’s scheme that there were harbour forts built in association with coastal forts. These recent surveys show that all the forts, with the exception of Dover, were built on shallow waterways. In these areas boats built for shallow rivers and coastal travel could have been used for shipping. Thus, the sites could have been employed as safe harbours for the transportation of goods and/or bases for maritime units.

In chapter six a convincing case is made for the changing roles of the forts. Here it is demonstrated that during the late fourth century there is more evidence for a possible defensive purpose at a time when more Saxon influence is seen in the area. Yet, the author raises some important issues that question previously-held assumptions, one being the assumed Germanic origins of certain units based on the identification of finds. There are serious problems with the cultural historical view that certain artefacts are definitive indicators of certain cultures, one example being the use of belt-fittings for the identification of Saxon or Germanic units. Following this, closer examination is given to the occupation and economy of the forts. Here the internal structures and the people who occupied the forts are discussed, including women and children. In relation to the economy, attention is given to industry both in the forts and the *vici*.

Pearson’s book is a well-rounded approach to the understanding of the Shore forts. He is careful to point out the many assumptions made about the reason for their construction. At the same time he is not afraid to admit that he is not able to provide precise answers to the questions he poses, as there is insufficient information at this time, indicating a greater need for more archaeological exploration in the area. The book is useful because it provides new venues in which to approach the subject of the Shore forts and will hopefully be the starting point for anyone interested in taking on new research. It is written in an approachable manner that appeals to both the popular and academic audience, and is highly recommended.

PATRICIA BAKER

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It is a pleasure to have the opportunity of reviewing Gerald Grainge's monograph which deals with a subject of great current interest and debate with both Kent and Sussex claiming the site of Aulus Plautius's main landing in AD 43. For this is the central question that Grainge addresses: where did the Romans land in AD 43?

Traditionally the question has been approached using the famous and only written account of the landings by Cassius Dio in combination with the archaeology of likely landing sites. In the past Richborough has always been the leading contender, but more recently a strong case has been made for Fishbourne. In his introduction Grainge briefly discusses the main theories resulting from these two strands of evidence, implying that the debate has become a little bogged down and that the question will never be definitively answered from these sources. If archaeology is incapable of solving the problem, it can however elevate a particular site to the list of probables, which Grainge discusses in Chapter 2. He concludes that there are only two realistic candidates, Fishbourne and Richborough, based upon the archaeological record, the size of the anchorage and degree of shelter. Chapter 3 is a short and focused analysis of Dio's account, concluding that Dio should be understood as describing three consecutive waves landing at the same point.

The core of the work, Chapters 4 to 10, is taken up with what the author calls 'An alternative approach' and it concentrates on the relatively neglected maritime aspect of the invasion. He begins this section by considering the types of ship available; evidence is fairly limited, but Grainge draws on the archaeological evidence of Roman wrecks, especially the Blackfriars example, and iconographic sources. Chapters 5, 6 & 7 discuss their performance, which includes their likely speed and how effective they may have been sailing into the wind. Evidence from Caesar is used to give some idea of passage times. The size of the fleet and the significance this had for the operation is considered in Chapters 8 & 9, as well as the channel tides and prevailing winds in Chapter 10. Grainge agrees with other estimates of the size of fleet required to transport four legions, their equipment and pack animals, etc., and puts it at about 1,000 ships. This comprehensive discussion of maritime matters is a significant contribution to the debate.

Other naval operations in the channel are considered in Chapter 11,
from Constantius in 296 to William of Orange in 1688. Initially these disparate naval operations, spread over 1400 years, with different types of technology and different objectives would appear to have little relevance to a discussion of the invasion of AD 43, but some broad and useful points do emerge. Firstly, the weather, especially wind direction and strength is crucial if an operation is to be successful. Secondly, such operations are always risky undertakings, with an overall success rate of about 50 per cent.

Grainge begins his conclusion, which occupies Chapters 12 & 13, with a section entitled ‘The Roman Naval Staff Consider their Options’. In this he discusses not just the merits of Fishbourne and Richborough, but also the political situation. For example, was the restoration of Verica really an important Roman objective, as supporters of a Fishbourne landing claim? The author also lays quite a lot of stress on the economic importance of Britain, suggesting that grain exports to the Rhine may have been more significant than most scholars have previously allowed. Common sense would suggest that a route from Boulogne to Fishbourne is going to be more problematic than a short sea crossing to the Kent coast, but Grainge’s book emphasizes how great these problems were. Every maritime factor would appear to be against the longer westerly route; the prevailing winds are generally unfavourable, as are the tides. Instead of the 16 to 18 hours a short sea crossing between Boulogne and Richborough might have taken, Grainge argues that his analysis of the maritime factors suggest that the longer Boulogne - Fishbourne route ‘is likely to take two and a half to three days, probably considerably more’. If this figure is anything like correct then it is a pretty compelling argument in favour of Richborough, as Grainge comments in his conclusion. ‘In my view, the weight of the maritime argument is so strong, that the landing of AD 43 must have been at Richborough.... only the discovery of Tacitus’s lost Annals confirming a landing elsewhere than at Richborough could provide the basis for a different view’.

Quite a lot of this work is highly technical. This technical detail is not just confined to the twelve appendices but is also prominent in the sections that deal with types of ships, performance, fleet size, etc. However these chapters do repay persevering with because they are crucial to Grainge’s thesis. The author does not claim to have definitively proved that the invasion of AD 43 landed at Richborough, but argues persuasively that any Roman commander departing from Boulogne would have been foolhardy in the extreme to contemplate a three-day passage to Fishbourne. Grainge’s work is a very useful contribution to any discussion of the invasion of AD 43.

COLIN ANDREWS

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This scholarly book is based on a UKC Ph.D finished in 1995. It is concisely written, suitably organised and well supported with figures, helpful maps, tables and numerous and detailed footnotes. The use of manuscript material provides a fascinating insight into a neglected subject; while in the last 25 years marriage in early modern England has been studied extensively, courtship, or the way marriage partners were chosen, has not received thorough study before this book. The remark of the historian Dr E.J. Carlson, to which the author refers at the beginning, that ‘we know little about what courtship meant to the less exalted inhabitants in Sixteenth-Century villages and towns’ can now be forgotten.

Dr O’Hara argues that few couples of any social group married for romantic love alone. All sorts of constraints and considerations affected courtship. They included protection against future family poverty provided by the man’s occupation and earnings and the woman’s dowry, opportunities of meeting which were obviously affected by distance, the state of the local economy, relatively equal social status, ideas about the proper age of marriage, and the attitude of family, friends, neighbours and the local community.

The Introduction includes a useful, brief survey of recent historians’ views on marital choice in Tudor England. After contrasting Lawrence Stone’s belief that upper class marriages were based on family interest and arrangement, with Alan Macfarlane’s that individual freedom and the absence of restriction were normal, O’Hara emphasises that the majority of the experts have since stated opinions combining both affection and social, cultural and economic constraints, with some thinking that romantic love became more important as one descended the social scale.

Courtship is studied by the use of the Canterbury diocesan court records relating to eastern and part of central Kent. Much of the material is derived from deposition volumes recording testimonies given in marriage contract disputes. These allow the author in some parts of the book to quote extensively the words of the witnesses, thus bringing the sixteenth century to life with vivid personal detail. The Consistory act books, containing instance business and wills from five parishes with different economic and social structures, allow a statistical approach on some important themes, such as the mobility experience of potential partners and the provision of dowries.
Relations and local people influenced courtship through a ritual of gatherings, including private betrothals, feasts and drinks for relations and public occasions. Thus others intervened by either encouraging or expressing dislike of the proposed wedding. Romantic or sexual desire might clash with family or social pressures. In the case of Tusten v Allen (1567), all went well at first, with widow Godlen Allen receiving marriage tokens from Richard Tusten, their mutual affection, the goodwill of their relation Thomas Spratt and successful financial negotiation; then Richard’s ‘c certain unkynde woords’ to Thomas’ sister-in-law caused a break up, and the widow married a Simon Ansell under pressure from Thomas Spratt. Fear of communal censure through defamation of character might stop courtship, and parishioners could delay proceedings. How important was such influence in causing pre-marital pregnancies, so common in the Elizabethan period?

Gifts and tokens were crucial in courtship. In 1596/7 the case of Divers v Williams at Canterbury produced a detailed schedule, printed in the book, of all the expensive gifts of William Divers to Elizabeth Williams and her mother, ‘in token thereof [Elizabeth] replied like kyndnes’ to William. Generally money was most important, followed by clothing and metal goods such as rings, gifts being often symbolic of the occasion or the affection of the partners. Also vital was a go-between, either a negotiator, intercessor or messenger, ‘not onely a wytnes by allsoe an actor’.

Courtship was localised, with almost half the couples living in the same parish, and 84 per cent within ten miles of each other. It was begun and continued at fairs, in alehouses and at social gatherings, and among servants or between servants and employers in individual households. The theme is supported by lively quotations from the deposition books. A blend of customary attitudes and economic factors affected the ages contemporaries thought were suitable for marriage. O’Hara examines the ages at which testator chose to transmit property to children and other young people, showing differences between the sexes, changes over time, and even between parishes. Thus ‘the age specifications may be understood as representing the notional minimum limits of marriageability’, as the ages in wills are several years younger that actual marriage ages. Some readers may find the writing on the timing of marriages rather dull on account of its statistical bias and perhaps unexciting conclusions. The material aspect of marriage is shown in dowries, given not only by craftsmen and yeomen but also husbandmen and labourers, though they were often tiny compared with portions granted to daughters by the peerage and knighthood. Thus dowries average about £25 in the
five parishes at the end of the sixteenth century, compared with £859 for English knightly families in the later Tudor period. These Kent portions rose more than five times, in nominal values, or faster than general prices, between the mid-fifteenth and the later sixteenth century.

Although this study needs careful reading, it opens up an interesting subject against the background of economic and social life in Tudor England. The habit of adolescents entering into service in households away from their parents, from which they were later courted and married, and the frequency of widows remarrying, with zealous suitors if they had property, are prominent features. The decision of the Publishers to produce a paperback edition suggests the wide appeal of the book.

CHRISTOPHER CHALKLIN


Leeds Castle ranks ‘among the finest inhabited castles in the kingdom’ (p.9), being one of the country’s ‘most popular heritage sites’ (p.171), having been altered, restored and rebuilt many times. It has featured prominently in articles in *The Builder* (1869) and in *Country Life* (1936 and 1983) and on picture postcards since the late nineteenth century. Only parts of the estate were mentioned in the 1066 Domesday survey, a fortified Donjon being under construction on the site of the present castle from c. 1120. While strategic considerations influenced castle building at Dover, Rochester or Tonbridge, ‘the site of Leeds Castle was neither of strategic value nor did it guard an important river crossing or command a road junction’ (p.13).

Throughout its long history, it has assumed many functions. It was a royal castle for 274 years, 1278-1552, being held by six queens consort for 97 years between 1278 and 1437, beginning with Edward I’s wife, Eleanor of Castile. Why she purchased the castle is subject to tantalising speculation, but over the next twelve years the gloriette, or keep, ‘took on the basic appearance that it has today’ (pp.15-16). For 422 years, 1552-1974, it was a private residence. It has served as a guesthouse for important visitors, commencing from 1293. As a detention centre, it housed Richard II in 1399, Joan of Navarre in
1419, Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester, in 1441 and during the Civil War the prominent royalist Sir Robert Filmer of East Sutton. It was a state prison during Edward I’s Scottish wars and again during 1665 when Commissioner, John Evelyn, marched 500 prisoners of war to the castle. In 1651, it was a Commonwealth magazine. Post 1926 it has been a centre for weekend house parties (Chapters XIII, XIV and XVI); a Second World War hospital and convalescent home; a conference and arts’ centre; a venue for state hospitality, most notably an Israeli-Egyptian peace conference, 17-19 July 1978, attended by the United States Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, leading to the Camp David Agreement; and a public visitor attraction.

Repairs to the fabric and the castle’s furnishings have been thoroughly investigated, both in the text and in detailed appendices, including inventories taken in 1414, 1532 and 1768; so too have the people passing through its doors as owners, tenants, guests, architects, builders, decorators, landscape gardeners, craftsmen and workmen. There is an immense amount of biographical detail in what is a living history of the castle. There are seven family trees, including Culpeper, Fairfax, Martin, Wykeham Martin and Paget/Baillie. Lady Baillie, the last private owner, 1926-1974, entertained many distinguished guests, including the Duke of Windsor, the Prince of Wales, and Mrs Simpson; the Duke of Edinburgh, as Prince Philip of the Hellenes, in 1946 and John and Valerie Profumo in May 1963 when the Profumo scandal broke, so that the ‘Leeds Set’ rivalled Nancy Astor’s ‘Cliveden Set’. She was an ‘astute collector’of paintings, tapestries, furniture, clocks porcelain, etc., Chapter XV being devoted to ‘Lady Baillie as a collector’ (pp. 153-64). For 157 years, 1649-1806, the Culpeper and Fairfax families exercised influence over a large part of Virginia (Chapters.V, VII, IX).

The author began researching this history in 1976 when he was appointed Official Historical Adviser and Archivist to the Leeds Castle Foundation, a charitable trust owning the castle since 1974. In 1990, the Foundation published David Cleggett’s History of Leeds Castle and its Families, now superseded by Leeds Castle through Nine Centuries, more substantial and scholarly. While naturally having access to Leeds Castle MSS, the author has also researched MS sources in the Centre for Kentish Studies, the Public Record Office, the British Library, the Bodleian Library and in America, notably the Huntington Library and the Library of Congress. Other sources cover auctioneers’ catalogues, an impressive range of printed works, newspapers and periodicals and oral history for the twentieth century. The text is supported by fourteen appendices and 1,140 notes. It is enriched by some impressive coloured illustrations:
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Thomas, 2nd Lord Culpeper, Margaret Lady Culpeper, Thomas, 6th Lord Fairfax; Lady Jemima Mann; Arthur Wilson Filmer, 1916: the castle from the north-west, 1810; Lady Baillie’s boudoir in 1974 and Leeds Castle from the air. Equally commendable is a 29-page names, places and subject index.

Collectors of quality Kentish books should certainly add this to their collections. Finally, there are two historical references to the Kent Archaeological Society, Charles Wykeham Martin (1801-1870) being a founder member in 1857; in 1882 and 1902 the Society’s members went in large groups to Leeds Castle.

JOHN WHYMAN


In the early twentieth century the Faversham oyster fishery found itself in a familiar position, disputes over ownership of the beds and foreshore resulted in legal action. Even on this occasion, when the Borough Council was found to have acted illegally in discharging sewage into its fishery, the compensation was inadequate and hardship persisted. However, this is a much richer and engaging story than one of mere adversity in the face of inevitable economic decline. This excellent study traces the story of oyster fishing in Faversham and its related environs with both fascinating and exhaustive detail.

Appropriately, the authors begin by explaining the nature of the prized creature and the possible origins of its farming with the Roman colonization. The authors develop their work by exploring the true documented origins of the oyster fishery in the twelfth century. This presents an interesting paradox that although the company of fishermen had existed ‘time out of mind’ these very documents would be the source of endless legal wrangles even today over ownership and rights.

One of the major strengths of this excellent book is the depth of detail and its value as a source book in both referencing and reproducing a large number of first-rate primary sources. In fact it is through the earliest Mercian charters that this book persuasively argues the need to see the Faversham oyster fishery as a part of a
wider tapestry which included the better known Whitstable. This is clearly vital for students wishing to appreciate the cumulative economic muscle of the industry in this region. As a result the fishery became involved in both local and mainstream politics. Not surprisingly, control was everything and here the authors skilfully examine the role of King Stephen, the founder of the company and the role of the local manor and Abbot.

The future of the fishery as a counter in the wider politics of the day was assured in the medieval period. Fish and shellfish were extremely important items in the medieval diet. By the thirteenth century a fishing industry, complete with markets and regulations was in place. However, it did not prevent a major protagonist in this story, the Cinque Ports from demanding huge amounts of annual tribute for the protection of the confederation.

This comprehensive study also recounts the extent to which, although disputes continued, the eighteenth century saw a settled pattern of trade. The high point was achieved by the mid 1800s with the annual sale of oysters in London at over 124 million, focused on the expanding market at Billingsgate. The book is particularly strong on exploring not just the economic but also the social and cultural impact of the oyster. The material cited is never less than relevant and usually entertaining, as Dickens’ Sam Weller commented: ‘It’s a very remarkable circumstance, sir, that poverty and oysters always seem to go together’. Here the authors have produced some of their most engaging material to illustrate the extent to which oysters impacted on all levels of society. The streetscape was undoubtedly altered by the introduction of stalls and restaurants to sell oysters. An impact on society which can only perhaps today be surmised by comparing it with the importance of modern day fast food, which ironically clearly owes its origins to the nineteenth-century love affair with fish.

The authors may have been tempted to focus purely on the economic demand for oysters in the nineteenth century which reached a peak between 1860-64 but quite rightly they explore both the advantages and problems created by the sheer scale of the industry in a national context. This resulted in both Government legislation to promote and protect cultivation, but it also created local friction. In many respects the measures enacted were well intentioned, aiming to combat disease apparently spread by oysters or to assist an industry frequently hit by poor weather and diseases, which wiped out the oyster beds. Frequently, they merely added further bureaucratic legislation. The government’s regular attempts to investigate the industry have produced a wealth of interesting statistics for which
historians can be grateful. Unfortunately for the fishermen it tended merely to postpone an inevitable decline. The twentieth century witnessed a number of attempts to restock the denuded beds, but frosts and a change of popular taste all took their toll. Not least, as the authors point out, the war had opened up new trades to men who probably felt the life of an oysterman was both arduous and dangerous.

In their Conclusion the authors of this splendid book are perhaps rightly cautious of attempting to estimate how wealthy the fisherman were, bearing in mind the apparent swings of economic fortune and the capricious nature of the oyster beds across time. However, if there is a criticism of this very valuable work it is that perhaps the opportunity to engage in a dialogue between the wider interdisciplinary sources to probe such issues is not grasped. Many of the great characters are highlighted but are not always explored to the full. However, this is only minor observation of such a substantial work, which is worth obtaining for the excellent range of primary source material on display alone.

The authors have produced a very entertaining and authoritative account well supported with fascinating sources, which are impressively collated and referenced. Historians and a wider audience will find much of value and interest in this work, which emphasises the opportunities for historians interested in local maritime history.

CLIVE POWELL


This latest addition to the list of publications by the Sandwich Local History Society is a well-produced little volume which charts the history of the town using the views of outsiders. The views are interesting, though not quite as diverse as the Introduction claims, and for many writing during the last 300 years, the main characteristic of the town was its sleepy nature. Yet, even though most agreed that relatively little had happened in Sandwich since its heyday in the Middle Ages, there was some difference of opinion regarding how this had affected the nature of the place – was it a picturesque town of red tile roofs or a dull place, where grass was proverbially said to grow in the streets?
The extracts do, however, provide a narrative covering the development of the town. Thus the reader learns that the Strangers, Dutch and French men and women had settled in the town prior to 1563; that in 1621 there was an excellent inn called the Dolphin; that John Wesley preached there in 1789; that the town had a railway station and a gaol in 1847, the former provided trains to London nine times a day, the latter a tread-wheel for the punishment of offenders; and that in 1907 Sandwich had become famous for its golf links. The directories and official government sources provide additional information, and from these the reader discovers, for example, that in 1881 Sandwich had a large timber yard, a tannery, a large corn store and two breweries. Yet the underlying theme of the extracts, for this reviewer, was a feeling of nostalgia for a lost port, where international commerce had been exchanged for a local market which merely served the needs of Sandwich and its environs. Although understandable considering the type of material used in this anthology, it is a pity the overwhelming proportion of the entries are from the modern period, thereby leaving the reader with few contemporary accounts of life in medieval and early modern Sandwich, a deficiency that might have been addressed by using extracts from the state papers, for example.

Overall, the volume is a valuable addition to the Society’s publications, and will appeal to many, both visitors and natives, who wish to know more about Sandwich’s development, or lack of it, over the last six centuries.

SHEILA SWEETINBURGH


The ‘oldest profession’ was widely practised in nineteenth-century urban and rural Kent but perhaps most extensively in the many garrison and naval towns. It is surprising that so little research has been done on this fascinating gender subject, and even more so that the towns in the South-East, an area subject to the operations of the Contagious Diseases Acts from 1864-86, have also been little studied by historians. Brian Joyce’s interesting book, heavily based on the local press, provides a useful introduction to the topic, focused on the naval dockyard town of Chatham.

The Contagious Diseases Acts were a brief attempt at state-
regulated prostitution in an attempt to reduce the high levels of venereal disease among soldiers and sailors. The legislation targeted women. Under the second Act of 1866 any women suspected of being a prostitute, diseased or not, could be subject to compulsory medical examination every two weeks; those found to be diseased could be forcibly detained in state-run hospitals. The initial ‘subjected districts’ included the ‘Chatham District’, Woolwich, Sheerness and Shorncliffe; a third Act, in 1869, added the Kent towns of Canterbury, Dover, Gravesend and Maidstone. Plain-clothed Metropolitan policemen enforced the Acts. The legislation proved to be crude and ineffective. By 1882, Chatham had more pubs serving as brothels than any other ‘subjected district’, a topic of national news and thus the ‘Chatham Scandal’. However, of greater scandal was the offence given to women. This spurred a national campaign of protest that eventually led to repeal of the Acts.

Joyce’s well-researched account ably describes the business of prostitution and also the workings of the CD Acts in Chatham. The women who engaged in prostitution were not all regulars; poverty, the desire for extra money, and various misfortunes put women ‘on the game’. Two-thirds of them appear to have come from within the County. Joyce looks at the campaign for repeal, the impact of the Licensing Act, 1872, and the effects of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 which raised the age of consent and struck at brothel keepers. He also refers to but does not develop a persuasive idea advanced by Michael Mason, in his *Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes* (1994), that the most distinctive feature of Victorian sexual culture was the desire to rescue prostitutes.

This book is a solid and colourful contribution to the history of prostitution in a locality during the late nineteenth century. However, as a scholarly source it is weak in two respects: there is little attempt to indicate how the study contributes to and questions the current historiography of the subject; and there is a lack of full and adequate references making it a limited tool for other historians.

DAVID KILLINGRAY


A book on policing the County is to be welcomed if only as a printed account of the foundation and operations of the various regular
uniformed forces created since the 1830s. The first modern police force to operate in the north-west of the County was the Metropolitan Police but for some reason Roy Ingleton does not include that force in his well-illustrated book. His focus is on the various borough forces established following the Municipal Corporations Amendment Act of 1835, and the County Constabulary compulsorily created in 1857 but for long opposed by local magistrates reluctant to agree the costs.

Early Kent police forces were small and often overlapped with existing parish constables. Besides apprehending criminals, police duties also included dealing with nuisances and acting as firemen. By 1900 policing the County rested with the County Constabulary, nine Borough forces, and the ‘Met’. This was rationalised in 1943 when the Borough police forces were incorporated into the County force. These structures and organisations are dealt with in a robust way by Ingleton as he describes the interior economy of the forces, discipline, uniforms, and the growth of professionalism. Women are not ignored – the first women police officers were appointed in Folkestone in 1916, the County followed much later – but although race relations are mentioned en passant the appointment of black officers is not. Surprisingly detection is not accorded much space (not even in the index) although the County force established a Detective Branch in 1896.

The early sections of the book are better handled than the latter where the author, perhaps borne down by the weight of twentieth-century sources, provides an often episodic text with a great deal of detail about the appointment of chief constables and the provision of vehicles. The former is the kind of material that could have been usefully confined to a biographical appendix while the text might have focused on analysis. There are no maps that would have been usefully employed to show changing divisional structures. In so doing perhaps the role of the ‘Met’ in policing the County would not have been overlooked. Occasions of policing strikes, labour and political disturbances are described but with little attempt at interpretation. Nevertheless, readers within the County will find much that is informative in this attractively produced volume.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

These four books whose publication or revisions have been stimulated by the interest in local history associated with the recent millennial celebrations provide a fascinating insight into the perceptions of a representative sample of Kentish communities over two thousand years. They tell us as much about the nature of local historians as they do about the communities they are describing. As an historian with an interest in local communities throughout Kent, rather than just my own locality, my first documentary search is always into the maps of the area. Maps can tell so much on their own, and conscientiously contextualised, can be an invaluable resource for understanding the existence, development and economic and social structure of a locality. It was therefore a disappointment to find only a poorly reproduced 1870 map of Hollingbourne and the pre-1550 road layout of Beckenham (plate 2) with the promised Cator Estate map on the inside cover (p.18) missing. For Gillingham, the Hasted map of 1789 as a frontispiece, an extract from Mudge’s map of 1819 and two others showing Gillingham at the height of its expansion in the late nineteenth century in relation to Rochester and Chatham and an undated map of Brompton are limited in their usefulness. By contrast Marjorie Lyle’s maps and plans in the Canterbury volume are an examplar of appropriate use. Did the authors of the Hollingbourne, Beckenham and Gillingham volumes modestly assume that their work would only be of interest to local inhabitants who would be familiar with the changing local landscapes?

The Beckenham volume which is a revision of the edition first published in 1993 and a tribute to the late Nancy Tonkin, has one other weakness, its apparent lack of awareness of wider Kentish and national context. However, this is compensated by the informed enthusiasm of the authors. The earlier settlements in the area are
effectively dealt with, but this well-produced and indexed volume is essentially an affectionate and successful study of the development of a modern town from its ‘creation’ in the nineteenth century. The Hollingbourne study is by contrast a traditional local history, taking a chronological and anecdotal approach with the emphasis on the major local families. There is disappointingly minimal discussion of the post-1945 period, much of which is now history to potential readers born since then. Nevertheless Helen Allinson’s work will give pleasure to those who have a fondness for, and familiarity with, Hollingbourne. The Gillingham Chronicles work thematically within a much broader chronological context, which also pleasingly includes a chapter on local government from Saxon times to the early twentieth century, a theme too often treated peripherally in local histories. This thoroughly researched volume, drawing on the author’s fifty years of expertise in handling local sources, has extremely useful appendices for local historians wishing to pursue specialist interests, including a detailed glossary of ‘Place Names and Street Names’ (Appendix 5) and ‘Public Houses’ (Appendix 6).

Unlike most local histories the revised Canterbury, 2000 years of history, echoes the exquisite personal portrait by Richard Church (A Portrait of Canterbury, 1953, revised 1968) with the emphasis on the Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods. The approach to the history is predominantly through the physical rather than the human history and is in this way a fitting study of a city which appeals to the interests of archaeologists, historians, students, tourists as well as those with an interest in the local past. This concentration on the archaeological discovery of Canterbury’s past is emphasised in the new final chapter ‘Into the twenty-first century’, which briefly explores the opportunities for discovering further early remains during continuing developments in the city. The book concludes with appendices and a glossary, including guidance for visitors (and locals) on what to visit in Canterbury. Nevertheless, we do need to remember that the people of Canterbury also have a history that is separate from, but closely associated with, the built and archaeological heritage, which should not necessarily be confined to studies within individual parishes.

These four studies demonstrate how both the range and potential of local history can be extended through informed and contextualised research, but also the balance and care needed in writing appropriately for the chosen audience. The lavish inclusion of illustrations in each study plays an important part for the reader in portraying what is distinct in the built landscape and in bringing the human side of history to life.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

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REVIEWs


The Blean Research Group developed from a University of Kent adult education class which first met in 1987 and has now produced a meticulous landscape and natural history of what is described by Oliver Rackham in the Foreword as having been ‘For a thousand years...the second biggest concentration of woodland in Kent after the Weald’. Archaeological and documentary evidence of the influence of human activity on the woods are blended with detailed examination of the natural history. Although Chapter 2 ‘Woodland Myth and Reality’ by Christopher Cherry shows a disarming naivety about current, informed, understanding of post-Roman and medieval history in its discussion on ‘myth’, it makes an important contribution by carefully describing the ‘reality’ and giving the reader a clear context for the following chapters. There is much within this volume for the expert amateur, but the breadth and presentation of themes researched also offers even more for those with a general interest in The Blean.


The revised and enlarged edition of this specialised study (reviewed in Archaeologia Cantiana, cxix (1999), 418-20) includes a 17-page supplement updating references in the first edition and bringing the story up to 2001.

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