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*At the Great Crossroads: Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval discoveries on the Isle of Thanet 1994-95.* By Paul Bennett, Peter Clark, Alison Hicks, Jonathan Rady and Ian Riddler with 34 other contributors. 366 pp. 183 figures, 73 plates and 71 tables. Canterbury Archaeological Trust Occasional Paper No. 4, 2008. £45. ISBN 978 1 870545 14 3.

This excavation between Monkton and Mount Pleasant, which preceded a road widening scheme, was the examination of a strip of chalkland 3km in length and some 30m in breadth, an area of some 90,000 square metres. It was one of the larger works of its kind undertaken in recent years, and is clearly the most extensive archaeological excavation of Thanet's soil or, for that matter, that of Kent. It is a generous sample of a relict landscape, with the remains spanning some six millennia. Neolithic pits and inhumation burials, beaker graves and ditches of razed round barrows were uncovered while a few fragments pointed to Iron Age activity. This was followed by Romano-British building remains, pits, a well and overt traces of what may have been a rectangular shrine. At the eastern end of the excavated area a small Saxon inhumation cemetery came to light while at the western end there was evidence of substantial medieval timber structures.

An Introduction by Paul Bennett delineates the methods of the enterprise which began in July 1994 and was continuous until completion in February 1995, some eight months. The fortitude of all is to be commended but, nonetheless, such stratigraphy as shallow sites offer has, during the winter months, an essential clarity often lacking in summer, the traditional excavation season. Peter Clark and Jonathan Rady present the prehistory (pp. 9-100). They are to be congratulated upon their identification of a Beaker coffin (fig. 1/10). The present writer isolated such a coffin (Amesbury barrow 51) and, sadly, has seen circumstances where examples have been dug away unrecognised.

Alison Hicks writes well and clearly of what is termed the Roman settlement (pp. 101-273), its character and the pieces therefrom. A particular feature is termed the roadside shrine (fig. 2/4). Although of modest dimensions it compares well with what is known of such installations and is at no great distance from Richborough and Worth.

What is termed a well has a weathering cone and has been backfilled. It could perhaps have been considered as a ritual shaft such has been encountered at Birchington, Hammil and Ramsgate.

The nineteen Anglo-Saxon graves are presented by Ian Riddler (pp. 279-304). Was it perhaps part of a larger cemetery? As compared with other cemeteries encountered in the vicinity its paucity of grave furnishings is thought to be evidence of a final series. Of note are the grave reconstructions (fig. 3/11) while, with David Perkins, there is a section treating the local and regional context of the graves. Paul Bennett's work (pp. 307-38) has put before us some substantial long, rectangular, buildings within enclosures which can be referred to the eleventh and twelfth centuries AD. There were latrine deposits which allowed palynological assessment. Despite an undertone of reservation regarding the nature of the buildings, the environmental record is considerable and should mark a way forward for the examination of medieval rural dwellings.

When confronted with major works such as *At The Great Crossroads*, most readers scrutinise the illustrations pertaining to their especial interests before sampling the texts. The plans, for example, of the ring ditches and the beaker graves are of high quality although the schematic presentation of sections is innovative which, so far as can be seen, works well (e.g. figs 1/15, 2/19). The lithics, which do not as is customary precede the pottery, are dealt with in detail. The illustrations of prehistoric pottery, Neolithic bowls and beakers, which are backed by photography, have a sensitivity which in some publications is lacking. Where vessels have been reconstructed from sherds the results are apposite and not unconvincing.

In the Romano-British section the intricate excavated features (e.g. 2/25) are all well described. The Saxon graves and the medieval settlement are again amply illustrated and they should be perused even by prehistorians. The rather complicated numerical system which gears illustrations to the text in the report (e.g. 1/13; 1/14) are appreciated. However it must be said that in many places a verbal indication of cardinal features would have been welcomed.

As can be seen in the index (p. 365) the use of radiocarbon dates is confined to the prehistoric, that is the Neolithic and Bronze Age section. Sadly, apart from small, sectional, tables, the dates and their usages are scattered through the narrative (pp. xv-96). It is felt that the usages of radiocarbon and the results therefrom would have been better presented had they been welded into a single sub-section.

*At the Great Crossroads* more than adequately reports upon what was the largest and most comprehensive examination of Thanet chalkland. It was a great undertaking and the principals and all concerned must be congratulated upon their endeavours. Although the present writer has criticised certain aspects he must stress that the five principals have

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discharged their responsibilities with distinction and a copy of this report should be in every archaeological library and in the possession of every practising field archaeologist. Other development operations of such great magnitude will surely come to pass in our uncertain future and it is essential that field archaeologists can again exploit such challenges.

PAUL ASHBEE

*The Isle of Thanet: from Prehistory to the Norman Conquest.* By Gerald Moody. Tempus Publishing, 2008, 192 pp., 62 b/w illustrations and 41 maps and plans. Soft cover, £17.99. ISBN 978 0 7524 4689 9.

Gerald Moody has produced an admirable account of the evolution and archaeology of the Isle of Thanet which combines the virtues of accessibility and scholarly authority. The writing is clear, the supporting plans, drawings and photos are most helpful and the narrative and evidence engrossingly relayed. Care is taken to explain specific technical terms, jargon and past practices for those who may be unfamiliar with such. This is an essential book for the shelves of anyone interested in the archaeology of Kent and southern England striking the right balance of detail, information and interpretation as it moves through the eras. The author as a full-time field archaeologist and Deputy Director of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology is well placed to tackle the subject, but that considered it is a wonder both that he has found the time to put this work together so comprehensively and, moreover, that it is so evenly strong, informed and thoughtful, independent of chronological period, method or theme. Moody is an accomplished ‘all-rounder’ even by the gauge of the flexibility required of a field archaeologist these days.

Essential to the production of this book is the great body of work, recording and research undertaken on Thanet over the past few decades, particularly, as the author acknowledges, the key role of Dr David Perkins and the contribution of Moody’s colleague, Emma Boast, Trust Director since 2003. This book fills a gap, being a survey of sites and finds from the Isle, presented in a convenient format. It will have an immediate audience amongst the many people of Thanet and Kent interested in the past, while local libraries should have multiple copies. It will, too, inspire interest amongst those who encounter the book with no previous depth of archaeological knowledge or leaning. The book signals the man: Gerald Moody, is a thoroughly committed enthusiast for his subject, driven to research, inquire, innovate and explain and to develop ‘out-reach’ at all sorts of levels to the wider community. Hence this publication is both a sound advert for the archaeology of the Isle, and of the writer. The book brings together what is known to date (specifically to early 2008 and so pre- the substantive ‘Thanet Earth’ project). In so far as the book fills an

existing gap for a handy compendium, doubtless the gap will reappear over the next few years as archaeological fieldwork and study continues to move forward apace; hence one can envisage an update of the volume in a few years time.

The book opens with a chapter on 'The history of discovery' in which the reader is introduced to some key early finds, people and themes. At the head of the investigators was John Lewis. We are advised he: 'balanced his sources well, often adding his own scholarship to achieve an acceptable balance between the authority of his ... sources, and his own learning and practical experience' (p. 9); Moody is evidently from the same mould. This is an absorbing chapter as it weaves the sequence of investigations and 'discoveries' with the flavour of the times and the personalities and explains their significance in terms of present understanding. Next come two essential chapters on the geology of the Isle and its formation and the investigation of the development of the Wantsum Channel and its components. The author is clearly interested in these geomorphological and environmental elements, and rightly so as they were formative and to some considerable degree determining the nature of potential human activities. These aspects are researched with care and thought and in the volume Moody presents constructive explanations of the process and original maps which develop the 'Doggerland' thesis of Bryony Coles. The development of the Wantsum and Thanet's marine context are accordingly pivotal in Moody's subsequent text, shaping the big picture, but visible too in the detail, such as in the case of the whale bone capping of an inhumation from North Foreland (p. 77, illustration 33). The recovered evidence (especially via aerial photos and small scale excavations) is notably extensive and rich for the monuments, pottery, barrows, burials and bronzes of the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Thanet, for instance, has a remarkable concentration of round barrows. The quantity of evidence is not necessarily greater than that of the hinterland of the Wantsum on the mainland side, though it is when compared with the adjacent Chalklands of the North Downs and other areas of Kent. This is not mentioned or explored by the author. Are such features and activities a function of population density, arising from a relative ease of soil cultivation on Thanet, compared to other areas of Kent, which may have had less early inhabitants in consequence? Was the availability of freshwater here crucial, whereas elsewhere in parts of Kent surface water was rare? Was the temperature moderating effect of the sea a factor? Or did such distinctiveness mean Thanet was defined by past people as 'special'? Some inclusion of a comparative perspective then, may have been enlightening. Similarly there is a fair level of reference to Continental contacts, which this reviewer sees as entirely reasonable, but at the same time there is little mention of potential or actual connections with the British mainland, the London

basin, Essex, East Anglia and the south coast. For sure the archaeology of east Kent including Thanet often seems to have more in common with the material culture and trends of the near Continent, and these aspects might have been somewhat more emphasized. In fairness the author's imperative and brief is to profile Thanet. Perhaps a little attention to such comparisons could feature in any revised version of the volume. A time-line might also be of assistance for the general reader, especially for the earlier chapters.

Considering the later eras it was interesting to note that Thanet lacks diagnostic evidence for classic circular domestic structures (roundhouses) that are such a feature of the Bronze Age through to the Romano-British period elsewhere in the British Isles. One explanation is that some of the four or six post-hole structures excavated might be the local signature of such buildings. In some ways the evidence for the Roman period seems thinner than one might expect given the geography, but perhaps evidence and answers still lie in the ground. The recent excavations at the villa complex at Minster, led by this Society, and the results arising, feature prominently in the Roman chapter, emphasizing the valuable research and training exercise that undertaking has proved to be.

This reviewer is sure that the contents of this book will educate even the most learned scholar of Kent's past. He was interested to see the photo of a greyware pottery bottle from Sarre (p. 168, illustration 100) which we are told is testimony to the continuation of the industrial tradition of Roman-era Gaul during the Frankish period and of sustained trade connections. This particular vessel resembles the first pottery item this reviewer was shown on his arrival in Kent from Durham in 2004. The partner of my landlord had in her possession an identical vessel to the one illustrated, which had been found by a family member eroded (typically) from the cliff face at Reculver (though minus the rim) but with likewise faint rouletted style decoration at the shoulder. Presumably this vessel too had been associated with a burial. The decoration of these vessels is similar to that appearing on vessels from the near Continent that we term Merovingian, but otherwise typologically the vessel looks like traditional Roman greyware. Is there a chance they were made (copied) this side of the Channel, in north Kent, in the early post-Roman era?

Tempus books, it has been observed, can be of variable quality: highlights are numerous (eg. Ian Stead's book *The Salisbury Hoard* (1998), John G. Evans on landscape and environmental archaeology *Land and Archaeology* (1999), and more recently Paul Ashbee's *Kent in Prehistoric Times* (reviewed in vol. cxxvi)), whilst some books have received flak from professionals for perceived flaws of information or editorship. It is pleasing to report that the production of the present volume has been well handled judging from the book in hand: the cover is well selected and attractively arranged, the text and reproduction of

the illustrative material fine, the sheer number of maps and photographs generous and instructive.

In the final chapter Moody advises that: ‘where the archaeological story runs out, some other language has to be used to continue the narrative’. In some cases this is filled by ‘geography’, in others by the author’s interpolations and extrapolations (or what he terms ‘intuition’), a certain licence one might say to engage, deduce and explain. These sections are readily identifiable and it is appropriate these days for authors to make the distinction whereas a few years back authors of general books so often slipped into narratives that were presented as ‘the way it was’ when really this was a reconstruction of the modern mind. Writers have learnt to be more reflective and avoid such pathways. Invariably with this volume this ‘author narrative’ seems reasonable, well thought through and is grounded within themes of contemporary archaeological thought. Ultimately this is helpful and aids coherence. It is a successful aspect of the style of the book, giving rise to some lucid passages and its status is self-evident (for example p. 70 and p. 107).

Given the diachronic scale of the book and the diversity of cultural expressions and practices that unfolded through those years it should not be expected that the author provide a neat summary of ‘enduring threads and themes’ in the final summary. Nonetheless one can discern some overall themes that provide a powerful sub-text to the account. Not least among these is the significance of connectivity through maritime links, as well as the dynamic development of the landscape in and around what we know of as Thanet and which shaped it: ‘a reminder of the relatively recent origin of our familiar surroundings’. Much of the recovered record from Thanet to date relates to burials which form, by any comparison, a high proportion of the known data, and over many cultural phases. Implicit too is the potential for further exciting discovery, not least on the one hand ‘off-shore’ (e.g. maritime archaeology and the archaeology of Pegwell Bay and its hinterland) and on the other in particular in and around the area of the Wantsum, be that consisting of currently dry land or (promisingly) wet environments. These latter areas may become more of a priority in the next few years given the prospect of sea level change. Moody and the Trust for Thanet Archaeology would rightly also point to the considerable research potential of the data already ‘out of the ground’ but requiring study.

In sum this is a great book that deserves the wide audience that it will doubtless reach and enthuse, in Kent, Britain, in the Transmanche region and beyond.

STEVEN WILLIS

*Anglo-Saxon Button Brooches: Typology, Genealogy, Chronology.* By Seiichi Suzuki. 418 pp. 234 b/w plates, 116 b/w illustrations, 69 tables. Anglo-Saxon Studies 10, The Boydell Press, 2008. Hardback £75.00. ISBN 978 1 843383 362 8.

Button brooches are small circular brooches, cast in copper alloy and gilded on the front with a (usually iron) pin on the reverse. They are distinguished by having a moulded human mask as their central motif. They also have an upturned rim, making them similar in form to the larger saucer brooches. They date from the fifth to sixth centuries AD and have a distribution heavily concentrated in southern England, with smaller numbers found in France. The first comprehensive study of them was published in 1982 by the late Richard Avent and by Vera Evison.<sup>1</sup> Since then the corpus has grown by over 80 per cent to well over 200 examples, largely as a result of the systematic recording of metal detected finds by the Portable Antiquities Scheme and others. Those who have tried to classify new finds according to Avent and Evison have often encountered difficulties, especially with the large classes A and B which often exhibit only subtle differences between their various sub-classes. Furthermore, Avent and Evison's suggestion that these brooches originated in the Upper Thames valley during the early fifth century, with east Kent (which has produced the greatest number of finds) being the last area to adopt them, has looked increasingly at odds with the evidence. Given these problems, a thorough re-appraisal of button brooches is very welcome. In this new and well-illustrated book, Seiichi Suzuki provides a comprehensive study of this brooch class and successfully clarifies the place of this still-growing corpus within the wider cultural context of north-western Europe in the post-Roman period.

After a short introductory chapter that defines the design and overall distribution of button brooches, Chapter 2 revisits Avent and Evison's system of classification and the 'Old Corpus' of brooches (finds up to 1982) upon which it was based. Rather than develop completely new classifications, Suzuki redefines Avent and Evison's system, using statistical analysis to provide an empirical basis to the definition of classes and re-assigning a number of brooches to different classes. Chapter 3 begins with the classification of the new finds. Working with this expanded corpus, Suzuki goes on to further refine the system of classification, takes a closer look at classes A and B and reconsiders the distribution of brooches by class, site and region.

Chapter 4 is titled 'Genealogy: The Network of Family Resemblances' and here Suzuki moves beyond traditional typological approaches to explore the development of button brooches from the perspective of prototypes and lineal descent. He investigates, through extremely detailed observation, the likely design relationships between individual brooches,

both between and within classes. The end result is a comprehensive 'family tree' of the complete corpus, which presents a convincing picture of the development of button brooches from the prototypical examples of Class A1. The geographical distribution of the brooches is then examined again in the light of this 'genealogical' perspective.

Chapter 5 deals with the chronology of button brooches and explores their links with other brooch types, while Chapter 6 draws together the findings of the earlier chapters to provide a concluding narrative. Suzuki argues that button brooches originate from the human masks found on some Scandinavian relief brooches. He attributes their development specifically to a craftsman, the 'Kentish Master', whose existence is theorised on art historical grounds. This individual is believed to have served his apprenticeship in Jutland before migrating to east Kent during the second half of the fifth century. Such a craftsman has long been suggested as the originator of the Kentish range of square-headed brooches; Suzuki argues that this innovator may also have been responsible for developing the button brooch as a completely new type, somewhere in east Kent, shortly after AD 480. Intriguingly, he also suggests that button brooches originally functioned as substitutes for the anthropomorphic bracteates (pendants bearing images of human heads or masks) that are conspicuous by their almost total absence in Kent, despite their southern Scandinavian origin. Thereafter the production and use of button brooches spread beyond Kent, to Sussex, the Isle of Wight, Hampshire, the Upper Thames region and beyond. Their resemblance to Saucer brooches, a culturally 'Saxon' type, seems to have enabled them to cross the cultural barriers that may have existed between areas with a Saxon, rather than Scandinavian or 'Kentish' identity. During the later phases of button brooch production, up to c.AD 550, many had a larger diameter comparable to saucer brooches, whilst some saucer brooches appeared with human masks as their central motif, apparently in imitation of button brooches.

If there is a minor shortcoming with this book, it is perhaps that Suzuki does not always fully explore the network of relationships with other artefact types to which his work alludes. Notably, he makes little mention of 'button-type' brooches which substitute geometric ornament and garnet-inlay for the human mask motif, but which in size and overall form correspond closely with button brooches. These occur largely in east Kent and clearly represent a development of button brooches that parallels the adoption of geometric ornament and garnet-inlay on other contemporary Kentish metalwork. But that aside, this book is a masterly study of its topic and has implications that reach far beyond button brooches themselves. By tracing the origin and development of these objects, Suzuki has made a major contribution towards unravelling the complex network of inter-relationships between the different forms of Anglo-Saxon metal dress accessories, and between the artistic,

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symbolic and craft-working traditions that produced them. That these networks extended along either side of the English Channel and across (some) cultural or ethnic boundaries, during the late fifth and early sixth centuries, is a picture that this book brings into much sharper focus. Kentish craftsmen and seafarers clearly played a pivotal role in these relationships; all those with an interest in this period of Kent's history should read this book.

ANDREW RICHARDSON

(See also the article by Professor Suzuki in this volume, pp. 55-76, which discusses the significance of further recent findings of button brooches in Kent and the Isle of Wight. Ed.)

<sup>1</sup> R. Avent and V.I. Evison, 'Anglo-Saxon Button Brooches', *Archaeologia*, 107 (1982), 77-124.

*The Earliest Books of Canterbury Cathedral, Manuscripts and fragments to c. 1200*, by Richard Gameson. 414 pp., 63 colour illustrations. The Bibliographical Society, 2008. Hardback, £60. ISBN 978 0948170 166

This essential book details the manuscripts and fragments to c.1200 remaining in the archive at Christ Church, Canterbury. It seems incredible that the earliest manuscripts, still resident in one of the most influential of medieval scriptoria, have been hitherto unpublished and one can only feel excitement when opening the volume for the treasures which inevitably lie within.

Written in the author's usual, accessible style, the volume starts with a considerable introduction. It is not simply a catalogue, but uses the manuscripts and fragments featured within to discuss the book culture of Canterbury at the time in which they were produced, what they show about the 'recycling' of older volumes in the later Middle Ages and what they reveal about the history of such books and attitudes during the Reformation and beyond. The book takes the reader through the different stages of book production at Canterbury, both at St Augustine's Abbey and Christ Church; pre-Viking, tenth century to the sack of Canterbury in 1011, post-1066 and 1120 - c.1200. Given the highly unusual instance of having two rich monastic houses in such close proximity, the evidence for connections between the two and their possible bibliographical relations is a matter of interest and comment; also giving evidence for a possible link with a third Kentish house – Rochester. The working lives of the volumes are discussed; their use, reuse, reworking, copying, rebinding, additions, annotations, possible wearing out and going out of fashion. All these points serve to give an idea of how many of these manuscripts were still working titles, many hundreds of years after their production and, in

some cases, on the eve of the Reformation and how some were recycled post Reformation. The dispersal of the libraries of the Canterbury houses is compared with other leading houses of the time, along with those books which found their way back to the Canterbury libraries and their possible respective benefactors.

The catalogue comprises 42 manuscripts or fragments thereof, residing at Canterbury Cathedral and dating to c.1200. At the front of the book there is a useful preface which details the presentation of each item. At least one colour illustration accompanies each entry and we must be grateful to the publisher for this – since black and white images would never have done the manuscripts justice. Each entry follows the same format; heading, physical description, content, scribes and script, decoration, history, commentary and bibliography. Given the fragmented state and long history of some of these manuscripts, each section makes fascinating reading and is far from a usual catalogue entry. The physical description might discuss what form the piece takes now, but how it might have started life as something different. The content discusses the original text, but also includes the glosses, notes and changes that might have been added over the centuries. Scribes and script identify the hand(s) responsible for the writing of the text, thus suggesting the possible date of the manuscript and the origins of the scribe. This also allows for comparison with Canterbury manuscripts in other collections.

The majority of these examples have little or no surviving decoration, with the notable exception of entry no. 22, which contains both illuminated and historiated initials. Where it is likely that decoration would have been present, the author presents other similar examples and opines as to what might have been lost. The history and provenance of these pieces is of great interest and these, combined with the commentary provided makes for particularly interesting reading.

Whilst the plundering of Christ Church's manuscript collection in the mid- to late sixteenth century by a small group of episcopal 'collectors' must be lamented, this book provides us with a fascinating, and long overdue, look at what remains in this once great medieval scriptorium. The comprehensive introduction and meticulous catalogue descriptions are invaluable to both scholars and the interested amateur alike, and raise many issues that merit further investigation – made possible by an invaluable bibliography.

Professor Gameson has been lured by the bright lights of another cathedral city. It is to be hoped that he can be persuaded to return to Canterbury in order to continue his cataloguing efforts.

ANNETTE TOMLIN

*The Early Town Books of Faversham c.1251 to 1581.* By Duncan Harrington and Patricia Hyde. History Research, Folkestone, 2008, 2 vols (xcviii + vi) + 774 pp. 54 b/w illustrations and maps. Hardback, £100. ISBN 9780953099832.

The excellent foreword by Margaret Spufford highlights the importance and value of this massive work of transcription and translation for anyone interested in the history and development of what she calls ‘The charming little borough of Faversham’. These well-planned volumes aim to help the general reader and the more dedicated researcher, providing a resource which grows in interest and importance with use, a major compensation for what might seem, at £100 for the two volumes, quite an expensive investment. It opens with a very useful glossary before the substantial introductory sections. Harrington and Hyde then give the history, survival, physical construction and arrangement of the two town books of which the second is by far the longer. Both books were ‘paginated’ in 1561: ‘All this boke was fygyeryd on the corner of every lefe by Thomas Norton Mayor the 10th October in the year 1561 ...[at] which [ti]me dyvers of the sayd leavis were cut owt of the sayd bowk etc’. Notwithstanding such omissions, such an early contribution to responsible archiving must be useful.

The second section of the introduction is a narrative history of Faversham, drawn from general historical background sources and, more usefully, from the Town Books themselves which as the authors say ‘provide the basis for the history of the town for that period [1382-1581]’. They highlight the initial benefits the Abbey brought to the town, but also the tensions which inevitably arose, leading to the association of the town as a limb of the Cinque Ports to ensure wider support and then, as a result of their contribution to naval support, the granting of the earliest town charter by Henry III in 1252. The importance of Faversham as a port, supplier of goods to London and the built landscape are all addressed as well as the landowning and jurisdictional issues, together with the *dramatis personae*, which determined the political landscape of the town. Indeed the evidence of the dispute over the will of Henry Hatch (d.1533) tells a story which almost equals the drama of the more famous Arden.

The two volumes run consecutively as one complete work, the pages numbered in sequence throughout, with the shorter first Town Book taking up a mere 76 pages [53 folios] in the first volume. This book includes manuscripts mainly from the late fourteenth to early fifteenth century with some later fifteenth- and sixteenth-century documents. Harrington and Hyde have transcribed and translated these from the original Latin and the two versions (transcription and Latin – or in a few cases French – original) are printed with the original in a footnote format, which, while

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keeping the two close together also allows the reader to follow the entries sequentially. Folios 30 to 33 provide a history of the world from the first line of the Book of Genesis (the first age) through the Flood (the second age) and the following three ages to the birth of Christ (the sixth age) with the establishment of Britain by the Trojan Brutus set in 1105 BC; and so on through the establishment of London and the chronology of the Kings of England until, on 21st May 1382, the chronicle ends with a 'great earthquake throughout England'. The inclusion of this and some other unexpected items enriches our knowledge and understanding of the original compiler, and sits comfortably with the more predictable legal documents.

The second Town Book runs to 465 pages [282 folios] and includes mainly sixteenth-century documents from which it would be possible to construct a detailed history of the development and administration of Tudor Faversham and its people. The careful transcriptions and the comprehensive separate indexes of people, place names and subject, provide an immensely useful resource for the researcher who can avoid much of the normal time-consuming preliminary work and easily cross-reference between documents.

But this is not the end of the resource Harrington and Hyde have produced. There are six appendices: I – Tallage 1327; II – Administration after the Norman Conquest; a list of Mayors and other Officers; III – Faversham Rectors from about 1122 to 1662; IV – Faversham Borough Accounts; V – Fourteenth-century Faversham records from the National Archives and Centre for Kentish Studies (transcribed and translated by Dr Bridgett Jones); and VI – Sixteenth-century listings of the inhabitants of the town. The work is, as for the Town Books, very thorough and in Appendix IV for example the marks of those unable to write are accurately reproduced.

Both volumes are illustrated throughout with both original early maps and useful new historical maps by Jack Simmons, diagrams, and pictures of artefacts and town seals, etc. The authors can be forgiven the few typographical errors, but it is a pity that the page headings only include the title of the work and not the section headings, which would be a considerable help for cross-referencing. But this is the most minor of irritations and overall these volumes will provide the general reader with amazing insights into the history of the late medieval town, and the serious research student with a resource which must surely stimulate some welcome new work on Faversham.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

*The Wealden Iron Industry*. By Jeremy Hodgkinson, 160 pp., 75 b/w and 30 colour illustrations. The History Press, 2008, Paperback £15.99. ISBN 978 0 7524 4573 1.

The stated objective of this book is 'an attempt to present the story of the [Wealden iron] industry in a less academic form, for the more general reader'. This it does while successfully avoiding the 'dumbing down' which could easily have been the result. It is certainly more accessible than Cleere and Crossley's eminent book, 'The Iron Industry of the Weald' (1985), the second edition of which (1995) was edited by Hodgkinson. This new volume provides the reader with a greater context for the industry not only in its chapter 'Economic Effects of Iron Making', covering in particular the impact on the workforce, buildings and transport, but also more widely within the text as a whole. As a result it is to be hoped that the general reader may be tempted to engage with the more detailed volumes (academic and technical) listed in the bibliography.

Chapters take the reader through the early processes of iron making (the direct process), the scale and form of Medieval iron production, the introduction of the blast furnace and associated forges, to the resulting new products of the sixteenth century, until the decline and eventual complete disappearance of the industry in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

A variety of sources are examined to provide historical evidence. Rolls of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries indicate the scale of the Crown's requirements, which, with the smith's own needs, show that sufficient production capacity, often at short notice, was available to the Wealden region. Other sources provide evidence for the scale of iron making in the fifteenth century, both in terms of the consumption of raw materials and the amount of iron produced. The new methodology required a much greater investment of money and labour. Since the air required for the blast was delivered via water-powered bellows, furnaces in the Weald had to be built near streams. Wealden output peaked in the early 1590s, when over 9,000 tons were being produced a year. Within twenty years production in the Weald was matched by other regions of England and twenty years later the Wealden industry was facing a significant decline. As the regular business of producing sows and their refining into bars diminished in the late seventeenth century Weald, gunfounding took on a greater significance for the skilled labour force in the region.

Elements of synergy and conflict between the iron industry and other industries in the area are observed. Notably, blast furnaces were usually 'blown in' after the harvest, in about October, and the smelting campaigns continued until late spring, when diminishing rainfall caused the water supply to lessen. Compared to furnaces built in other parts of Britain,

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Wealden ones were relatively small while the conventional layout of a forge building enabled conversion to other mill uses once their original purpose was finished, such as fulling woollen cloth or grinding corn.

The influence of immigration, so often seen in Kent industry, is also highlighted. The author notes that investment in the iron industry in the Weald was growing rapidly in the first half of the sixteenth century. As a result migrant workers were able to find employment with relative ease, and it was not long before most communities in the Weald included French families. First generation immigration reached its peak in the 1520s, after which assimilation of these newcomers took place. However, while from the mid-sixteenth century the ironmasters in the Weald had been essentially local in origin, with the concentration on the merchant trade in guns, merchants themselves came into the business.

More particularly this volume provides an insight into an industrial landscape of which many are ignorant today. This is reinforced by a series of artistic reconstructions to help the reader visualise the various scenes, while the author also assists the casual explorer to recognise features of that landscape which can still be identified today. There are two useful Appendices: Appendix I 'Where To See Wealden Iron' – lists publicly accessible sites (all in Sussex), relevant museums and, finally, churches with iron grave slabs; while Appendix II 'List Of Blast Furnaces And Finery Forges' – is a list, alphabetically by parish, of the name of the furnace/forge and grid reference. Again, useful to the reader who wishes to follow up the subject with some undemanding 'fieldwork'.

Unfortunately, the review copy had pages 129 to 144 mis-bound upside down which, together with the absence of a list of the illustrations, diminished what was otherwise a well produced volume which would be a worthy addition to the bookshelves, not only of the general reader, but also of those with a deeper interest in the subject.

PHIL BETTS

*Marianne Farningham. A Plain Woman Worker.* By Linda Wilson. xviii + 244 pp. Paternoster, 2007, 'Studies in Baptist History and Thought', vol. 18. £19.99. ISBN 978 1 84227 124 7.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Marianne Farningham was a well known name, particularly in the many evangelical households where church newspapers and magazines were regularly read. As an editor and writer for Christian journals, a popular novelist, poet, hymn writer, and biographer, sometimes under her other pseudonym of Eva Hope, Farningham poured out weekly articles and a stream of books all aimed at encouraging young people and particularly women to live committed Christian lives. In this busy life of journalism she also found time to run a

young women's Bible class for 34 years and serve as an elected member on the Northampton School Board.

Marianne Farningham was born Mary Ann Hearn in the west Kent village of Farningham in 1834, the village supplying her subsequent literary name. The home was Christian, working class and poor, with much devout activity focussed on the Strict Baptist chapel at Eynsford south along the Darent valley. From these constrained circumstances, harshly shaped by the early death of her mother, Mary Hearn became a school teacher in Gravesend and eventually in Northampton where she made her home for the rest of her life. These early years have already been the subject of a brief study, based largely on Farningham's autobiography, by Shirley Burgoyne Black, published in 1988. Linda Wilson's detailed study builds on her profound knowledge of earlier work on the role of women in the nineteenth-century evangelical milieu, challenging certain received stereotypes and offering Farningham as an example of feminist endeavour, showing how her faith influenced her life and work as a woman journalist.

The first two chapters outline Farningham's life (she died in 1909). Further chapters focus on significant themes that she promoted in her writings and public speaking – on the role of women, Sunday schools (Farningham edited the *Sunday School Times* for 20 years), as well as on her public life and her spirituality. Wilson persuasively claims her as one of the many women who quietly and persistently, in Christian word and example, helped to pioneer women's rights. She was an influential feminist voice that gently urged women's right to vote, for access to tertiary education, to practise medicine, and to speak and preach. Farningham was certainly naïve and sentimental in many of her assumptions and statements, cautious not to provoke confrontation, but she was 'a woman worker' although certainly not 'plain' as she liked to claim; Wilson concludes that she was a very remarkable woman indeed.

This biography offers a number of challenges to those interested in the late nineteenth century and in local history. The first challenge is to look at the role of women in the local community and not to be suborned by stereotypical views of what they were supposed to have thought and done. The second is to look further at Sunday schools and the important position that they held in the lives of many families, the focus after the 1870s being less on instruction in reading and writing and more on how young people might live a Christian life within a community. By 1910 several million children belonged to Sunday schools, and as Snell's recent work has shown, their influence was considerable. As Wilson says, those who worked in the numerous Sunday schools up and down the country, and this included many women, were involved in a 'third space' which was neither 'public' nor 'private'. Sunday schools provided Christian and moral instruction, rewards for attendance such as outings which helped

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widen children's horizons, and also gave teachers access to their homes. Local Sunday schools, and other church-run and para-church organisations for children and young adults, need further research at the local level to investigate the role that they played in shaping communities. Both the role of women and of Sunday schools need to fit within a third challenge, a new approach to writing church history that gives pre-eminence to the 'church' as people, as congregation, not as mere bricks and mortar with occasional references to worthy work by clerics. And for the local historians prepared to take on this task there is a largely neglected source: the extensive and extremely useful ecclesiastical press which burgeoned after 1850.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

*Canterbury. History You Can See.* By Marjorie Lyle. 127 pp., 104 b/w illustrations and maps, 13 colour illustrations. Tempus Publishing, Stroud, 2008. Paperback, £14.99. ISBN 9780752445380

This lavishly illustrated account of Canterbury's history through its standing buildings is a useful addition to the corpus of popular histories about this internationally important city, embracing as it does three World Heritage sites. The book is divided topographically each chapter providing the reader, or even better the pedestrian who wishes to see the city, with an account of the various buildings and their predecessors that stood within the walls and in the immediate suburbs. Consequently, there is a chapter headed 'The World Heritage Site' that encompasses the cathedral and precincts, St Augustine's Abbey and St Martin's Church; another called 'Outside the Western Walls', a similar one for the eastern suburbs, and three chapters which use the different friaries: the Blackfriars, Greyfriars and Whitefriars (who were Augustinian friars, not Carmelites as one might expect). Maps are provided for the different city sectors on which the various buildings are marked, each having a useful key that should again help those wishing to use this to guide their footsteps around Canterbury. Such a technique has a long history in Canterbury, William Somner (1640) and Gosling (1777), among others, being early exponents of this approach. Marjorie Lyle's text is in an easy readable style, again in keeping with the popular history format, but the services of a copy editor would have been a valuable addition to the publishing process.

Trying to cover over 2,000 years of history of a place, even when this is tied to the standing fabric, is a vast undertaking. In seeking to pack in as many interesting 'facts' as possible within the confines of a popular format, Marjorie Lyle has at times taken the reader through several centuries in a single sentence. For those aware of Canterbury's history it is not too problematic, but for the visitor or the casual reader

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this may be somewhat disconcerting. Nevertheless, the details she provides are often fascinating, providing colourful stories concerning the past owners, users and developers of Canterbury from Roman times to the present day. So, for instance, we learn that Canterbury's history as a spa town around the turn of the eighteenth century was short lived, Celia Fiennes describing the waters as nauseous and possibly numbing. Occasionally Marjorie Lyle is not totally accurate or is somewhat vague about particular events, though for the general reader this may be less of a problem. Footnotes are not appropriate in volumes of this kind, yet it would have been valuable to know more about her sources because she appears to have made considerable use of the work of William Urry. Urry's *Canterbury Under the Angevin Kings* is noted in the text (but not in 'Further Reading'), but his work on Christopher Marlowe is not, which is strange because it is still the only published account of Elizabethan Canterbury (Catherine Richardson's recent monograph includes material on Elizabethan households in Canterbury) and thus remains extremely important. Marjorie Lyle also appears to have made extensive use of research reports compiled by Canterbury Archaeological Trust. Much of this material comprises what is known as the 'grey literature' and is not freely available, so it is strange that she does not acknowledge her debt to the Trust in her Foreword. Nonetheless, she is to be congratulated on the production of an easily accessible book, moderately priced, on the visible history of this ancient city.

SHEILA SWEETINBURGH

*An Historical Atlas of Tunbridge Wells*, Edited by John Cunningham. ix+132 pp. 80 maps and plans. Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society. Local History Monograph No. 7, Tunbridge Wells, 2007. Softback £16.95. ISBN 978 0 9545343 8 7.

County and town historical atlases usually come in two forms. The usual format is a series of maps and plans specifically drawn for the purposes of the atlas with an accompanying text which analyses the history of the area. Another approach, used 15 years ago by Barker and Jackson for London, is to assemble maps from the past and use them as a vehicle for explaining the development of the area. This latter pattern has been adopted by John Cunningham and his collaborators to produce a splendid atlas to show the growth of Tunbridge Wells from a small Spa town in the early seventeenth century to a sprawling town of nearly 40,000 people in the 1950s.

The format adopted for the *Atlas* is a large one, 42 x 29.7cms [16½ x 11¾in.]. This is rather unwieldy for a soft-covered book, although necessary for the maps to be properly and adequately displayed. Generally

the production is of a high standard. Most maps are presented in a two-page spread, the main map being on the recto with facing text. They can be easily read and interpreted, although this is obviously not a book to be carried by the visitor. In fact the contents and approach of the editor make it most likely to be a book used by those who live in and know something of the history and development of Tunbridge Wells.

By the standards of most Kent towns and villages, Tunbridge Wells is a very late arrival. The first known reference to the actual wells is on Ogilby's *Itinerary* of 1675, and notice of the town's first formal appearance appears on Budgen's map of Sussex of 1723. However, a few years earlier Jan Kip's detailed engraving provided a 'birds eye' view of the town with its wells, stream, houses, roads and gardens, and its human activity, set out in a way that can only delight the modern viewer. Thereafter the *Atlas* includes a number of maps, some accompanied by helpful interpretations drawn by Dr Philip Whitbourn. These maps include Bowra of 1738, those used in the annual guides published first by Sprange in 1774 and then by Budgen, Barrow, Clifford, Colbran and others, the variety of Ordnance Survey from 1799 onwards, turnpike plans, Tithe Award maps, and those drawn up with the coming of the railway in 1846. Further maps and plans show in considerable detail the development of the various residential park estates that shaped the town and helped inform patterns of urban development followed elsewhere in the country. Many of these are beautifully made coloured maps that have been well re-produced in the *Atlas* and at a size that are easy to read and interrogate.

There are relatively few maps in the *Atlas* for the twentieth century, a period in which the population of Tunbridge Wells more than doubled and new housing was built. A most useful example included is from the Valuation Office Survey of 1910-15, based on enlarged OS 25 inch maps; these little used sources offer a range of data for local historians to analyse and ponder over. Other modern maps include 'where bombs fell' during the Second World War, the Royal Victoria Place Shopping Centre 1987, and a counterfactual 'what might have been' section with maps showing proposals not followed for housing development, roads, amenities, and administrative boundaries.

This *Atlas* is a wonderful source for historians and those who know Tunbridge Wells, but it is a partial history of the town. The accompanying texts are all too often brief, leaving large blank spaces. Much of the text is about map makers (less on surveyors) and on housing and estate development. Readers will see tantalizing references on maps, rarely pursued in the text, about local industries of brick making, quarrying, sawing, brewing, printing, Bramah's workshop, and the supply of water and gas. But little is said on these industries or the service industries which expanded in the twentieth century, or on commuting and bus

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services, both activities which resulted in maps. More could have been said on many of the maps, for example, on the modern maps nothing is said about those who drew up the schemes of the Civic Association in 1945. These are small points, observations rather than criticisms. This is a splendid *Atlas* and the citizens of the town are fortunate to have such skilful historians to bring them such a rich fare to interest, please, and instruct.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

*Maidstone: A History.* By Cyril Cooper. xiii + 130 pp. 141 b/w illustrations. Phillimore 2008. Hardback, £16.99. ISBN 987 86077 529 1.

*Royal Tunbridge Wells: A History.* By C.W. Chalklin. xii + 146. 93 b/w illustrations. Phillimore 2008. Hardback, £16.99. ISBN 987 86077 526 1

These two new publications from Phillimore form part of their latest series of fully illustrated histories of Kentish towns. Both successfully meet the challenge of providing attractive popular books based on sound historical research. Maidstone is perhaps the more problematic topic; Cooper has had to cover the history of Maidstone from pre-history to the present time within a limited word count and there is necessarily some contraction of the earlier periods, and selectivity of evidence in the later. He has overcome this to a certain extent through themes within his chronological periods. So we are able to get a sense of the growth in population and the development of the essential infrastructure of an important market town: industries, utilities, welfare and not least local government. The other main theme is the rebellious nature of the citizens of Maidstone, who emerge as more than willing to pin their colours to the mast of radical rebellion, or legal dispute with Parliament, from the Peasants' Revolt in the fourteenth century to the Swing riots of the nineteenth, on the way forfeiting their town charter in the early eighteenth century. Through these and the careful selection of illustrations and less well-known incidents, Cooper has brought to life many of the people who made up the community. Sub-headings within each chapter would have helped the reader to navigate through the sometimes overwhelming range of topics addressed, and although we are guided to the main archive sources in the Bibliographical Note, footnotes would have been a useful addition, given the brevity of some of the narrative.

Chalklin, on the other hand, has had the luxury of following the story of Tunbridge Wells and its early development as a spa only from the seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century (Part 1) and then to discuss the changes in the modern town up to 1974 (Part 2). The early part is a fascinating read, well-illustrated with helpful maps, diagrams

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and illustrations and makes sense of the development of the spa as still visible in the modern town. And of course such study can now also be enhanced by John Cunningham's *An Historical Atlas of Tunbridge Wells* (see above). Part 2 has greater similarities with other local histories of its kind, tracing the development of the modern town through its assimilation of new trends in population, housing, public utilities, commerce, leisure and popular culture, and of course the influence of the two world wars. Church building in the nineteenth century is dealt with carefully, together with the dominance of the new public buildings from the Opera House (1902) to the 1930s modern civic centre. But even in the later period when external influences were more apparent, Chalklin reminds us that the history of Tunbridge Wells has always been closely bound up with its original development as a spa town. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century its population profile reflected a large leisured class with an average age above the national norm, and with a larger number of women both in the wealthy middle classes and in the service industries. Large manufacturing industries were notable by their absence with only relatively small scale production in lighter industries and consumables. On the other hand there was a considerable proportion of private schools.

Taken together these two volumes provide us with a fascinating insight into how the different nature of Kentish towns occurred, and their consequent individual contributions to the County's evolution.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

*Seal: the history of a parish.* By Jean Fox, David Williams and Peter Mountfield. Phillimore 2007, 260pp. 50 illustrations. Hardback, £20. ISBN 978 1 86007 464 5.

*The Westwell Chronicles.* By Elizabeth Hollis. Published by Elizabeth Hollis 2008. 389pp. 4 maps, 34 colour, 15 b/w illustrations. Paperback, £18.00. ISBN 978 0 900443 15 2.

The authors of the history of Seal set themselves a tough challenge in the opening paragraph of their introduction, stating that they aim to appeal to the residents of Seal and to academic historians, both regional and national. The support of both local residents and county historians is evident from the financial assistance acknowledged to have made the production of the book possible: subscriptions, donations from Seal Parish Council and Charter Fayre Committee and grants from the Allan Grove History Fund and the Kent History Fund all bear witness to the desire to get this book published. Moreover, the book is co-authored and the introduction acknowledges that many more local residents assisted in the research.

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The book is sensibly divided into four well balanced sections, each dealing thoroughly with the available evidence for the period. The community is firmly placed geographically although, for those unfamiliar with Seal, a map showing the location in the county would have been helpful. The first chapter, 'From the earliest times to the Restoration' inevitably is restricted by the available sources. However the chapter comes to life with the detailed use made of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century records. Parish registers and probate material produce a lively picture of the residents of the parish and their day-to-day activities. The skilful combination of anecdotal material and sound analysis continues in subsequent chapters, taking the account of the development of Seal up to 2006.

Whilst the main focus is always on events in Seal, these events are placed appropriately in the context of regional and national history. The account also demonstrates, with a commendably light touch, a good knowledge of the relevant modern scholarship and assists the general reader with clear and concise explanations of institutions and how they operated.

The Westwell volume is also the result of collaboration, having emerged from a local history group which was formed with the aim of bringing together all that is known about the history of the parish. The aims are implied in the title. As a chronicle, this book sets out to detail events in the community. In doing this greater emphasis is placed on more recent history; two thirds of the book is devoted to the twentieth century. The account of the village up to the end of the sixteenth century is based on secondary sources, for the most part Hasted and Furley. [For the early history of Westwell, see Mary Adams, 'Westwell – the establishment of a Village', in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXVII (2007), pp. 175-95.] The seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries are covered by reference to the usual range of documents found in the parish records. The account of the late nineteenth century and twentieth century relies almost entirely upon the parish council minute book and latterly the personal recollections of the author.

This narrative approach is not without its problems. From the perspective of the general reader, the emphasis on events extracted from the parish records leaves some curious omissions in the book. For example, at no stage is there an indication of the population of the village, even in the nineteenth century where this information is readily available from the census. The diversions into national history, whilst going some way towards offering a context for events in Westwell, are somewhat distracting. The system of referencing at the beginning of paragraphs is eccentric but functional.

This volume is testament to a tremendous amount of hard work in

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bringing together information about Westwell. The chronological list in appendix form of all documents in the Parish Records at the Centre for Kentish Studies is a useful starting point for anyone wishing to undertake a more analytical study of the community. The detailed account of twentieth-century Westwell, will no doubt raise many discussions locally and would form an excellent basis for an oral history project.

These two volumes share a common purpose in that both aim to illuminate the history of their respective parishes. However their methodology differs and the end results have little in common although both books deliver what they promise at the outset. The work on Seal is very much a finished account of life in the parish to date. The work on Westwell has only just begun.

SANDRA DUNSTER

*Hinxhill: A Historical Guide.* By Paul Burnham. Wye Historical Society 2008. 32 pp. maps, colour, and b/w illustrations throughout. Paperback £6. ISBN 0 9546499 0 10.

*The College at Wye: A Historical Guide.* By Paul Burnham. Wye Historical Society 2007. vi + 74 pp. maps, colour, and b/w illustrations throughout. Paperback £6. ISBN 0 9546499 0 9.

*Lady Joanna Thornhill: Her Life and Times and Her School.* By Paul Burnham. Wye Historical Society 2008. vi + 138 pp. maps, colour, and b/w illustrations throughout. Paperback £10. ISBN 0-9546499-0-11. All available from Wye Historical Society post free, 1 Upper Bridge Street, Wye, TN25 5AF Tel. 01233 813125.

These three new volumes by Paul Burnham continue the impressive publication record of Wye Historical Society bringing yet more of the local history into the public domain. All three are fully illustrated with high quality pictures and useful maps and drawings. *Hinxhill* is primarily a brief historical record of the church, the manor, the rectory and major listed buildings, but the opening chapter sets the tiny hamlet into its own historical landscape. Today the population is less than fifty; at its height in 1841 it was 171.

The history of *The College at Wye* tells a fascinating and clear story of the early establishment of the College of Priests and the Grammar school through its gradual changes to the agricultural college and the gradual decline of teaching and research after the merger with Imperial College in 2000. But the core of the book is a fully illustrated architectural tour of

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the buildings. The short guide ends with useful appendices, a full index, and a key and plan of the buildings.

*Lady Joanna Thornhill* only lived at Olantigh from her marriage in 1653 until she joined the Queen's household in 1665 at the age of 30, but her interest in Wye and the establishment of the school have given her a place in its history. Most of the book is a history of her families' (Cornish Grenvilles and Kentish Thornhills) exploits in the service of the Royalist cause in the Civil War, but it is a good read and the transcription of her will and the other appendices once again help to produce a useful and attractive volume.

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