

REVIEWS

Calendar of Kent Feet of Fines to the end of Henry III's Reign. Prepared by Irene J. Churchill, the late Ralph Griffin and the late F. W. Hardman, with an introduction by F. W. Jessup. Kent Archaeological Society, Records Branch, Vol. XV. Ashford (1956). Pp. cxxxvi+419+67. 1 plate.

This valuable and learned book has been produced over a period of nearly twenty years, much of the *Calendar* having been completed even before the Second World War. During that period sections of the *Calendar* were produced independently, but the final volume is immeasurably enhanced by the addition of an index and a very comprehensive introduction.

The *Calendar* itself is easy to use and attractively set out. Its value as a study in the use of a particular legal form is apparent from the sheer bulk of the Kent Feet of Fines. Its value for place and personal name research, for the history of property transfers and in relation to the social and economic life of Kent during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries will be plain to all who use its pages.

A volume of this nature is primarily a reference or source book. As such it has a distinct value for both national and local history. The thirteenth century, with Magna Carta in its early years and the Model Parliament at its close, was one of the great formative periods of English history more especially in the related fields of constitutional and legal development. In some respects the story of the Fine as means of securing ownership in real estate closely reflects this wider development and here, as Mr. Jessup so ably indicates, one can observe a genuine product of litigation gradually take on the form and character of the collusive, fictitious law suit so well known at a later date. In the same way through these early fines one may watch the *dicta* of Glanvill and Bracton, the two great medieval lawyers, take shape and become facts of everyday experience. It is of special interest to note that Mr. Jessup can adjudge that the great conveyancing statute of *Quia Emptores* "was in line with general conveyancing practice which had emerged toward the end of the century," rather than a positive measure of reform as has sometimes been suggested.

On the local level, however, the picture is less easily developed. Mr. Jessup has wisely limited his Introduction to dealing with the wider legal and administrative significance and development of the

Fine. For this reason the minutiae which illumine the many Kentish peculiarities, are less fully examined. They occur throughout and there is hardly a section of the Introduction which does not refer at some point to gavelkind and its effects on this special form of legal action. At the same time Mr. Jessup is well enough aware of the immense local value of such a volume. He has analysed the distribution of the Fines, hinted at the complex agrarian systems of Kent and dealt at some length with the units of area used. So, too, he raises important issues regarding the relationship of *vill* and *manor* which may well have a peculiarly Kentish significance, and he hints in his final section at the many uses which could be made of this important *Calendar*.

The three appendices are also of note, not only as being illustrative of points raised in the Introduction but also as a valuable supplement to the main series of Fines. The formulary especially is of significance to students of diplomatic.

Two matters in this otherwise wholly admirable book call for criticism. The first, if in fact it is the case, is the more serious. According to the prefatory note of 1938 the basis for this book was the work carried out many years ago by the late Mr. Ralph Griffin and never published. Nowhere is it stated that his notes were collated with the original Fines in the Public Record Office. That indeed may have been done and no one would wish to impugn the excellent scholarship of the editors. If, however, such a check was not made there is surely a greatly enhanced danger of error creeping in, and this would greatly lessen the value of the result.

The second and relatively minor criticism relates to the index. Since this is in two parts, an index to subjects and to personal and place names, it would surely have been advisable to indicate these divisions in the running headings to the pages. It is most irritating to the user to refer to an index and repeatedly to find that he is using the wrong part because of lack of any such indication.

As a whole, however, this *Calendar* is a book which has long been needed and one which will be used and admired by scholars for many years to come. Very real thanks are due to all who were concerned with its production at this time.

FELIX HULL.

Roman Roads in Britain. By Ivan D. Margary. Vol. I—*South of the Foss Way-Bristol Channel.* 10×7½. Pp. 255, with illustrations and 11 maps. *Phoenix House*, 1955. 45s.; Vol. II—*North of the Foss Way-Bristol Channel.* 10×7½. Pp. 288, with illustrations and 6 maps. *Phoenix House*, 1957. 50s.

It is particularly fitting that our Centenary Year should see the completed publication of this monumental work on Roman roads.

Did we not, in the great exhortation which opened our first volume, pledge ourselves to trace step by step "in the examination of these remains, now spanning the long reclaimed morass, now surmounting the hill or piercing the once impenetrable forest, the genius of that unwearied people, covering with a sympathetic network the provinces under their control" ? Right well has our Honorary Member accomplished the task.

First of all it is important to remember that book-work in itself forms the least important part of the study of Roman roads. Roads are history in the open air, and Mr. Margary has travelled no less than 19,000 miles (excluding his own home districts of Kent, Surrey and Sussex) to investigate more than 6,500 miles of Roman work. His book provides the most complete and detailed account of the Roman roads of any country in the world. It is indeed a remarkable achievement.

More than fifty years ago Thomas Codrington, a civil engineer, wrote an accurate and knowledgeable book about the roads of Roman Britain and, in its topographical aspect, it has remained a classic ever since. Mr. Margary's work, much more thorough and with details of the northern roads which were little known to Codrington at first hand, will now take its place and remain an authority. Future field-work and in particular the use of aerial photography which, as well shown in this book, has almost revolutionized knowledge of certain areas of Roman Britain, will add further details especially, it is to be hoped, in Wales, but Mr. Margary's corpus will remain the standard authority.

It is essential that the two volumes should be used together, for the Conclusion in Volume II with its notes on the development of the road system, milestones, observations on constructions, and notes on finding and recording of lost roads contains material which some readers might expect to find by way of introduction. The Introduction itself gives an account of the three chief classes of roads which make such an impressively complete network over Britain, their place in military and civil history, and their initial breakdown in the shadows of the fifth century. By the time of the Saxon settlement "long stretches of roads would have been quite overgrown and useless, others would still be usable as rough trackways, and thus it is that we now find such surprisingly abrupt changes upon a Roman alignment from motorable roads of admirable straightness to rough green lanes or overgrown remains of the original *agger*." There is a valuable section describing how Roman roads may be traced in the field and another on what is known from contemporary sources, from Saxon charters and from place-names, though it is not known what names, if any, the roads themselves bore in Roman times. A final section here summarizes the literature of the roads and pays special tribute to the work of the

Ordnance Survey in recording antiquities and in the issue of the now indispensable *Map of Roman Britain*. The system of numbers by which every road mentioned in the book can be identified easily and quickly is very satisfactory.

Our own area is covered in the chapter describing the south-east and London. The several roads of East Kent, Watling Street, the Rochester-Maidstone-Hastings route, the system designed to link East Kent with the iron districts of the Weald, and the cross-country route between Maidstone, Ashford, Lympne and Dover are all described in detail. With some of these we are, of course, familiar from Mr. Margary's much welcomed papers in *Archæologia Cantiana*, but it is well to see the network as a whole. Only two matters seem to have escaped his eye—the barrow on Stone Street between Canterbury and Lympne, and an existing stretch of road at Park Pale, Cobham, which yielded Roman sherds when the writer cut a trench through it many years ago, and of which the alignment was then still preserved by a stony course across a field at Singlewell.

The main purpose of the book is to provide a descriptive survey of the state of the roads as they exist today. The author has done this, and he has done it excellently well, aided by good maps and by photographs, a few of which, unfortunately, do not do justice to their subject.

Finally, a tribute must be paid to the Directors of Phoenix House who were responsible for the bold decision to publish this work. It is to be hoped that their satisfaction is now as full as that of the archaeological world to whom the work is mainly addressed.

RONALD JESSUP.

A History of Kent with Maps and Pictures. By F. W. Jessup, M.A., LL.B., F.S.A. Pp. 192, 16 pp. plates, 15 pp. maps. *Darwen Finlayson*, 1958. 16s. (School edition 8 pp. plates, 15 pp. maps. 7s. 6d.).

Many books are redundant, some stop a gap and a very few fill a void. Mr. Frank Jessup's book is to be placed without question in the last category.

Local and county history tends to attract the amateur who, by reason of the abundance of material and the limited time at his disposal, is likely to become a specialist, the fruits of whose labours are to be found in monographs and articles in learned periodicals. The history of Kent has inspired many such scholars, for whose work we are profoundly grateful, but the layman, rightly anxious to begin with the general before proceeding to the particular, has long looked in vain for a concise history of the county which will give him a sense of development, pattern and perspective. The difficulties facing the writer of such a

general history are, however, so great that few have attempted the task. Mr. Jessup has bravely done so and has triumphantly succeeded.

A brief history can easily become a patchwork of penny numbers without internal unity or coherence, but within a wide chronological frame Mr. Jessup has woven a tapestry in which social, religious, political and economic threads are skilfully worked to produce a comprehensible pattern of development, the result of the interaction of local and national forces and conditions the nature and significance of which are brought unerringly to the reader's eye. In spite of the severe limits of brevity within which he has worked and the mass of material which he has had to survey and digest, Mr. Jessup has entirely avoided dead generalization and has made his narrative continuously vivid and alive by quotations from primary sources, references to individual men and places, well-chosen statistical tables, and by signposts inviting the reader to explore further for himself. The value of the text is greatly enhanced by the maps and illustrations with which it is so generously sown. Good maps and relevant illustrations are worth many pages of print, and with one or two exceptions these fully live up to the major role planned for them. The bibliography is most helpfully arranged and of a length designed to attract the reader to further study, rather than to advertise the extent of the author's learning.

The book deserves to receive and will receive a very warm welcome from all interested in Kent, and it will be greeted with especial enthusiasm by teachers of history within the county for whom it provides, not only an essential addition to the library, but a textbook from which can spring a wide range of local history courses and projects.

Mr. Jessup has indeed put us all deeply in his debt. As Honorary Secretary of the Kent Archæological Society he could have found no more fitting way to crown the Society's centenary year or to further the objects for which it stands.

E.T.M.

The Story of Ifield and Singlewell. Edited by R. H. Hiscock. 9½×6. Pp. 48 with 9 plates and 3 line drawings. Privately published. 1956. 2s. 6d.

Ifield, otherwise known as Singlewell, is a small village on the London-Rochester road (A2) about 2 miles south of Gravesend. In 1935 the civil parish was absorbed into this borough, and the recent development of the adjoining fields for housing is fast altering the character of the place. It is good, therefore, that an effort has been made to record the appearance and history of Ifield before all is lost in the suptopian metamorphosis which is unhappily overtaking so much of this corner of the county.

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This little book, which has been published through the generosity of Mr. L. W. Leach, President of the Gravesend Historical Society, is based on material collected by a former rector, the Rev. K. M. Ffinch, and supplemented by information from other sources which are duly listed. The result is commendable, especially those sections which comprise a record for the future of the old cottages, farms and other similar features of the parish. The story is retold concerning little Salerna who in the late twelfth century threw herself down a well at "Yfeld" and was saved by the intervention of St. Thomas of Canterbury, this being a translation compiled by Mr. Ffinch from the two accounts of William of Canterbury and Benedict of Peterborough written within a few years of the event.

An account of the parish church is accompanied by an admirably drawn plan, and the sketch of the south wall of Chapel Farm provides a useful record of this medieval fragment.

Several minor errors need correction. For example, the 21st year of Edward I (1272-1307) was not 1298 as asserted on p. 5. A statement on the same page that *Shyngledewell de donimo Berando de Crycle* [sic] in the time of Edward I is the earliest reference to Singlewell is contradicted on p. 10 where this name is identified with *Chingledede Well* of 1240. An instructive comparison might be made between the former quotation and *Shingledealle de domino Bertramo de Cryele* which occurs under the heading *Hundredum de Langeport* in Kirkby's Inquest, temp. Edward I, printed in *Arch. Cant.*, XI, 366.

P. J. TESTER.

Plaxtol—A Kentish Village. 8½ × 5½. Pp. 67, with 12 photographic illustrations and 3 line drawings. Published by *Plaxtol Women's Institute*. 1957. No price given.

The material in this book was gathered for a Scrapbook Competition sponsored by the West Kent Federation of Women's Institutes in 1955, and this adapted version has been published with the declared three-fold intention of raising funds for the Memorial Hall, preserving information gained in compiling the Scrapbook and stimulating interest in local history. As the second object has in a large measure been achieved we are left to hope that the others will be attained with equal success.

Perhaps the most valuable part of this book is the record of near-contemporary events. It is not without interest to learn that Mr. Foster Clark, whose name is now a household word, served his apprenticeship in Plaxtol under a grocer named Bacon, and that in 1953 the Post Office was the scene of an exciting burglary when the post mistress's dog was given doped meat and the Rector's car appropriated to

carry off the safe containing £700. There are informative notes on farmhouses, inns, local industries, legends and customs, natural features and wartime activities. Photographic illustrations add to the interest of the descriptions, but the line drawings are not without certain shortcomings. In the plan of the Roman villa it should have been indicated that the accompanying scale is graduated at 10 ft. intervals, as otherwise it has little meaning. A note at the foot of the opposite page giving the scale as 15 ft. to 1 inch is incorrect, as may be ascertained by comparison with the original plan in *Arch. Cant.* II. At the end of the book a map of the parish showing features referred to in the text is helpful to readers unfamiliar with the local topography.

Some of the archaeological information is faulty. Nearly twenty years ago Oldbury Camp was proved by excavation to belong to the Early Iron Age, yet we are told here that the Early Stone Age inhabitants of the district built their homes conveniently near the fortifications of Oldbury where they could shelter when the Celtic invaders began to land on the shores of Kent. Plaxtol is declared to possess "the one complete seventeenth-century church of Kent," a claim which takes no account of the remarkable church at Groombridge, built about 1625, and remaining much closer to its original form than Plaxtol, which in 1894 was considerably altered by the addition of a chancel and transepts.

P. J. TESTER.

English Romanesque Lead Sculpture. By George Zarnecki. $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$. Pp. vii + 46, with 81 plates. Alec Tiranti, 1957. 15s.

Dr. Zarnecki has continued his much valued study of English Romanesque art with a short monograph on lead sculpture which is of distinct interest to Kentish antiquaries. Lead fonts form the largest single group of Romanesque church fittings in England and, despite their neglect as a whole by earlier students, they can give, says the author, "more information about the general trends in the development of metal-work in this country than more isolated objects, even if these are made from more precious metals." Of the thirty lead fonts still in existence in England, no less than sixteen are Romanesque in style: it could be wished that it was part of Dr. Zarnecki's present task to include all the lead fonts in his survey, and we shall look forward to a future account of those which date from after the twelfth century.

Apart from the well-known group in Gloucestershire and the two locally made fonts in Sussex, the geographical distribution does not seem to give any real hint of the place of manufacture. They are certainly more frequent in the southern counties, and none is found north of Lincolnshire. The main source of artistic inspiration, Dr. Zarnecki

explains, was the Duchy of Lower Lorraine, but he also gives full consideration to the probability of some inspiration from regional schools of metal-work "formed under different local and external traditions and influences."

Local tradition in the pre-Conquest style is certainly shown in one of the two Kentish Romanesque fonts, that at Lower Halstow with its figures of a king and an angel. In view of its rather poor artistic quality, it may have been the product of a worker who had seen but quite misunderstood the decoration on an Anglo-Saxon font. At the same time, the capable treatment of the welding which unites its five sections shows remarkable craftsmanship. This font belongs to the third quarter of the twelfth century. No account of it—apart from a reference to its dramatic discovery when the plaster covering was cracked by gunfire during the First World War—has appeared in our volumes.

The second Kentish font, that in St. Augustine's Church at Brookland in Romney Marsh, is very well known, and in past years it attracted the attention of several of our members learned in such matters, among them Canon Scott-Robertson, Canon Livett, and above all our one-time Secretary Mr. George C. Druce whose paper on lead fonts in the *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* in 1934 remained the most important publication on its subject until Dr. Zarnecki's present monograph.

The present account, however, is based on a wide and authoritative appreciation of Romanesque art as a whole, and whether the author is discussing methods of manufacture or details of design and decoration, his remarks and citations of manuscript parallels compel attention. The inescapable conclusion is that the Brookland font was imported from the Continent. It was made about A.D. 1200, and the rim plaques with the Resurrection scenes which are stylistically later, were added in the thirteenth century, perhaps soon after the order to provide font-covers to prevent the abstraction of hallowed water for magic purposes was made by Archbishop Edmund Rich in 1236.

A special feature of the book is its remarkably fine plates which are among the very best of their kind. Ten are devoted to the Kentish fonts. As a second edition may well be called for, the following should be noted : p. 7, R. M. James should read M. R. James ; on pp. 3 and 45, the standard Tirlmont is to be preferred ; on pp. 22 and 23, the footnotes are transposed ; on p. 24, A. F. Fryer should read A. C. Fryer ; on p. 27 there is a garble between paragraphs 3 and 4 ; on p. 40, the notes on Plates 71 and 72 are reversed ; on p. 27, 1 Kings, 25 should read 1 Kings vii. 25. These slips do not in any way detract from the great value of the book.

RONALD JESSUP.

Archeion ; or a Discourse upon the High Courts of Justice in England. By William Lambarde ; ed. Charles H. McIlwain and Paul L. Ward. 8½×5½. Pp. ix+176. Harvard University Press, 1957. \$5.00.

Kent remembers William Lambarde as the author of the first county history, his *Perambulation*, published in 1576 ; lawyers remember him chiefly as a learned legal historian, and as the author of *Eirenarcha*, first published in 1581, which went through many editions and became the standard handbook for Justices of the Peace until well on into the seventeenth century. *Archeion*, which is a description and history of the High Courts of Justice, was not published until 1635, many years after Lambarde's death, when two editions, both unsatisfactory, appeared in the same year. No new edition has been published until this present one was undertaken by two American scholars, to whom we are indebted for an intelligible version of a work which is of importance to anyone who wishes to understand the background to the constitutional conflict of the seventeenth century. Lambarde's laudatory account of the Court of Star Chamber, in particular, is a healthy corrective to the Whig interpretation which sees in it only an engine of tyranny and a despotic abridgement of the liberty of the free-born Englishman.

F.W.J.

Guide to the Kent Archives Office. 8½×5½. Pp. xvi+288, with 16 plates. Kent County Council, 1958. 13s. 6d.

This is an invaluable book. Since the County Council established its Archives Office in 1934, the accumulation and collection of documents has proceeded apace, and in 1938 a splendid, and specially constructed, Records Block was built at County Hall to house the material. But so extensive has the Office become, and so rapid has been its expansion, that, in spite of the helpfulness of successive County Archivists and their assistants, it has been difficult for the student to know, apart from the obvious, official, records, what he might expect to find at Maidstone. Thanks to this comprehensive and excellently planned *Guide* no one need any longer remain in ignorance of the contents of the County Archives Office.

The *Guide* is divided into four parts. The first comprises the official county archives, including the Quarter Sessions records (a fine, and remarkably complete, series from the middle of the seventeenth century) ; Commissions of the Peace (especially interesting is the group of thirty-eight Commissions covering the period 1641 to 1714) ; nineteenth-century Enclosure Awards and maps ; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Poll Books ; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Petty Sessions records ; turnpike records, the earliest dating from 1718 ;

and a vast collection of Poor Law records. Part II contains official archives which have been deposited with the County Council, amongst them the archives of most of the several bodies concerned with land drainage and river- and sea-walls, from Woolwich right round to Dungeness ; the records of the Liberty of Romney Marsh ; the extensive archives of the corporations of Sandwich and Tenterden, with their Cinque Port connections ; and a fair selection of parish records.

Part III, "Ecclesiastical and miscellaneous semi-public records," includes, *inter alia*, the probate records of the Consistory and Archdeaconry Courts of both Canterbury (from 1397) and Rochester (from 1440), as well as of the three peculiar jurisdictions (Shoreham Deanery, Cliffe, and Wingham College). Some idea of the wealth of these probate records is given by Dr. Hull's rough estimate that the series of inventories in the Canterbury Consistory and Archdeaconry Courts number 40,000—a rich field awaiting more intensive cultivation by the social historian. Also included in Part III are tithe records, and various nonconformist and charity and society records.

Finally, Part IV lists the enormous quantity of unofficial archives which have been deposited with the County Council, a large number of them through the instrumentality of our Society and certain of our members, especially Dr. Gordon Ward, the late H. W. Knocker, and the late F. W. Tyler. In part these archives consist of "natural" accumulations of family and estate records, and in part of "artificial" or "composite" collections, such as those formed by antiquaries, or purchased in the sale room, or brought together in solicitors' offices. Amongst the family and estate records are the Sackville, Conyngham, Cornwallis, Brabourne, Darell, Filmer, Radnor, Darnley, Dering, Twisden and Twysden, Furnese and North, and Wykeham-Martin MSS.—collections of families whose part in Kent's history has been a notable one ; not the least of their many public-spirited actions has been to place their archives in the County Office, and make them available for the use of students.

The arrangement of artificial and composite collections presents serious problems ; to restore the various items to their "natural" habitats would be convenient to the searcher, but an offence against the canons of archive practice ; on the other hand not to connect them with the records of the family, estate, or parish to which they belong would mean that, save by lucky accident, many of them would be little better than lost to the student. The cautious merging of certain groups, and the collating of related material by cross-reference, adopted in the Kent Office, commends itself as an ingenious and helpful way of dealing with the awkward problem of arrangement of this material.

In short, the *Guide* gives a clear and, considering its comparative brevity, surprisingly detailed account of the contents of the Archives

Office, together with a large number of useful and informative head-notes, and some interesting reproductions of typical documents. The County Council deserves our congratulations and thanks for its enterprise in publishing the *Guide*, and Dr. Felix Hull has earned the gratitude of present and future Kent historians, genealogists, topographers and antiquaries for the care with which it has been compiled. F.W.J.

The Kentish Historical Newsletter. Edited and published by P. M. E. Erwood. 10×8. Paper covers, duplicated typescript. 21s. per annum. No. 1. *September, 1957.* No. 2. *October, 1957.*

Mr. Erwood shows courage and enterprise in this latest attempt to provide the county with a monthly journal of current news and events in the archæological and historical fields. The growing influence of wireless and television has led to a considerable awakening of public interest in archæology and history, and those so influenced will find an excellent vehicle in the *Newsletter* for the dissemination of news and views, and for their own enquiries. It deserves the support of our members, and those of the many county local history societies. We shall watch the progress of the *Newsletter* with interest and sympathy and hope that it may become established as a permanent county journal.

The first number contains notes on Local History studies, Notes and Queries, news of current investigations and discoveries, together with a useful Directory of Local History Societies. No. 2 follows the same pattern but with the addition of an interesting survey of the *Watermills of the Upper Darent* by A. J. and D. Stoyel. J.H.E.

Transactions of the Gravesend Historical Society. 1955-6 and 1957. 8×6½. Paper covers, duplicated typescript.

We congratulate this vigorous Society on being able to publish these accounts of its transactions which range over a wide field. Naturally the premier place is given to the Springhead Excavations, but other sections report progress on matters affecting Footpaths Preservation, Records and the Society's Museum, in addition to the usual business reports. An interesting development has been the formation of a Natural History Section. J.H.E.

Roman Canterbury, the City of Durovernum. By Sheppard Frere, F.S.A. 8½ by 5½. Pp. 28. 14 illustrations, 1 coloured. *Canterbury Excavation Committee, 1958.* 2s. 6d.

This booklet is admirably written and produced. The lamentable destruction suffered by Canterbury offered, and indeed does still offer,

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a wonderful opportunity for research into its early years as a Roman city; and in Mr. Sheppard Frere, Canterbury has found not only an excavator of the highest skill and scholarship, but an author who has produced here a synthesis of information easily to be enjoyed by the ordinary reader and the archæologist alike. His introductory section in regard to the site of Durovernum, its history and institutions (Parts I to IV), is splendidly concise, yet contains all the information one requires for an understanding of the subject. The Archæology of Roman Canterbury very rightly forms the core of the booklet. It is framed within shorter sections touching on pre-Roman and post-Roman Canterbury, and is just what the ordinary reader needs, a simple though informed discussion of what is now known of the Canterbury of that era. It is particularly pleasing to have an example in Fig. 9 of one of the author's sectional drawings; this is the sort of pictorial information the general reader needs when he asks himself how the archæologist gets his information from the earth. The booklet is lavishly illustrated, the photographs are clear and well chosen, and the plan at Fig. 5 is easy to read and understand. The photograph of the medieval well and its mass of broken pitchers (Fig. 13) is of particular human interest.

No member of the Kent Archæological Society should be without a copy of this excellent booklet, which should indeed find a very wide public.

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