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The Origin of English Place-names. By P. H. Reaney. Pp. x + 277. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1960. 32s.

English Place-names. By Kenneth Cameron. Pp. 256. Batsford Ltd. London, 1961. 30s.

Since Skeat, 60 years ago, put place-name study on a scientific footing, there has been no general work on the subject until these two books appeared within a few months of each other. True, Ekwall's invaluable *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names*, now in its fourth edition, was first published in 1936, and Volume I of the publications of the English Place-name Society (1924) contained a collection of essays on various aspects of place-name study, but we have had to wait until now for a general survey of the subject. The nearly simultaneous appearance of these two excellent books is not altogether an accidental coincidence. When Allen Mawer gave his inaugural lecture, nearly forty years ago, as Baines Professor of English Language in the University of Liverpool, he took as his theme "Place-names: an essay in co-operative study". It was, said Mawer, "but another illustration of the need at the present time in the world of scholarship of mutual aid and cooperative effort." And in an earlier lecture, to the British Academy, he had said: "the place-names of a single area (county or whatever it may be) can only be explained in satisfactory fashion when the material for the whole of England is available in ordered form." That day is not yet, but the English Place-name Society, which grew out of Mawer's British Academy lecture, has now published monographs on the place-names of twenty counties, thus providing the raw material from which a country-wide survey could be constructed. The authors of both of these volumes have already made notable contributions to that raw material, for Dr. Reaney was responsible for the Essex and Cambridgeshire volumes and Dr. Cameron for the Derbyshire volume in the English Place-name Society's series.

It is something of an embarrassment to review the two books together, because comparison is scarcely to be avoided. Inevitably, and properly, they cover much the same ground: an exposition of the methods of place-name study, followed by an examination of the Celtic, English, Scandinavian, and French elements, with some consideration of street-names and field-names. Dr. Reaney includes a chapter on "Personal names and place-names," and who so well qualified to write on the subject as the author of *A Dictionary of British Surnames?* Dr. Cameron includes chapters on "Place-names and Archæology,"

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“Place-names with Pagan, Mythological and Popular Associations”, “Place-names with Christian Associations”, and “Place-names illustrating Social and Legal Customs”, but the absence of similar chapter headings in *The Origin of English Place-names* does not mean that Dr. Reaney neglects these subjects. Dr. Cameron concludes with a useful paradigm of common elements in English place-names.

The number of place-names referred to by Dr. Reaney is upwards of 3,500, and by Dr. Cameron nearly 5,000. In order to accommodate this additional number Dr. Cameron is obliged at times to resort to a catalogue-technique, which does not make for fluent reading. If it were not for this one would be tempted to describe *English Place-names* as the book for the general reader, and *The Origin of English Place-names* as the book for the scholar. However, such a classification would be quite wrong if it suggested that Dr. Cameron was not scholarly, or that Dr. Reaney was not readable; he is eminently readable, and, indeed, entertaining. Perhaps it is a fair summary to say that one study is broad where the other is profound.

English Place-names, being a Batsford book, naturally is illustrated. One of the illustrations, of three extracts from the Pipe Rolls, showing the progressive deterioration of the spelling of Nuthall, is instructive; the others, mainly of old maps, are attractive rather than directly relevant.

We have had to wait a long time for a general survey of English place-names, and we must be grateful to Dr. Reaney and to Dr. Cameron for the erudition and diligence that have gone to the making of these volumes. We must be grateful also for the large measure of agreement between them, for in the past the wide differences between place-name experts have sometimes daunted the layman from any attempt to enter this much-fought-over territory; but I wonder whether Dr. Reaney, the Chairman of our Society's Place-name Committee, would agree with Dr. Cameron when he says that research on Kent is well advanced?

FRANK W. JESSUP.

The Belgic Britons: Men of Kent in B.C. 55. By Gordon Ward. Sevenoaks (1961).

This is an interesting, provocative and infuriating book. It is a dangerous book. Assumption is piled on assumption and a magnificent edifice erected which has no foundations. The reader is told that the evidence on which it is based “may be checked by anyone who has the leisure to do so”, but surely it is the duty of the propounder of a revolutionary theory to produce his evidence, giving chapter and verse, so that the reader can test the argument as he reads.

Dr. Ward's thesis is that the Belgae were of unmixed Teutonic origin

and spoke a Teutonic language, and that it is to them that we owe the Kent place-names ending in *-ham*; "the present day farms whose names end in the syllable *-ham* were already so named in Cæsar's day—500 years before ever Hengest and Horsa set foot in Kent" (p. 141). The Belgæ have left us no literature; our knowledge of their language must be inferred from their personal-names and the names of their tribes and these are Celtic, not Germanic. The four kings of Kent who attacked Cæsar's naval camp were named Cingetorix, Carvilius, Taximagulus and Segovax. Lugotorix, a prince of noble blood, was captured by the Romans (*de Bello Gallico*, V, 22). People who used such unequivocal Celtic personal-names must have spoken a Celtic language. Dr. Ward states categorically (p. 26) that "Cæsar says that the Belgæ brought many of their place-names to Britain". This is typical of the confident mis-statement on which his evidence is built. What Cæsar does say is that almost all the Belgæ who crossed from Belgium to Britain were named from the states from which they had come.¹ Dr. Ward himself makes out a case for the Celtic origin of the name *Belgæ*. The only place-names mentioned by Cæsar are *Tamesis* and *Cantium*, both Celtic. Later, whilst the Romans were in control, we have Thanet (*Tanatus*), Dover (*Dubris*), Richborough (*Rutupiæ*), Reculver (*Regulbium*), Rochester (*Durobrivæ*), Lympne (*Lemanis*), Canterbury (*Durovernum*), Crayford (*Noviomagus*) and Springhead (*Vagniacæ*), all Celtic. No place-name ending in *-ham* is mentioned until long after the arrival of Hengest and Horsa.

In the attempt to bridge this gap, Dr. Ward is reduced to various expedients, including long lists of place-names, with little attention to their relevance. Neither the place-names of a modern housing-estate, nor those of Tasmania or the Pitcairn Islands, can have any bearing on the place-names of Kent *c.* 50 B.C. The North Riding place-names cited are Scandinavian and came into existence some time after A.D. 900. Those ending in *-ton* are irrelevant for Dr. Ward himself insists that these date from after A.D. 450. Serious study of place-names demands something more definite than this in the way of chronology.

Dr. Ward has some curious ideas on matters linguistic. Of Cæsar's division of Gaul into three parts, we are told: "These three languages have persisted. In the north of Cæsar's Gaul, now known as Flanders, are remains of the Belgic tongue, i.e. Flemish. In the centre we have the Celtic, known later as the Langue d'Oil. This became the official language of France and pushed back the third, the Aquitanian or Langue d'Oc, into the Pyreness where it remains among the Basques." The Aquitani probably spoke an Iberian language which has developed into Basque, but it was not the Langue d'Oc. Nor was the Langue

¹ *qui omnes fere eis nominibus civitatum appellantur quibus orti ex civitatibus eo pervenerunt* (*de Bello Gallico*, V, 12, 2).

d'Oil the language of the Celts. They spoke Celtic but later, as Gaul became more and more Romanized, they abandoned their own language and adopted Latin which ultimately developed into Old French, with two distinct dialects, the Langue d'Oil in the north and the Langue d'Oc in the south. That Flemish derives from Belgic is an unproved assertion. Celtic scholars have been unable to discover any difference between the languages of the Celts and the Belgae and group all words due to either as Gaulois.¹ Dauzat gives distribution maps of the Celtic elements *duros* "forteresse" and *-oialos* "endroit". The latter is more extensive than the former, but through the area of maximum density of each flow the Seine and the Marne. These Celtic elements were equally at home north and south of these rivers, in Gallia Belgica and in Gallia Celtica. Ward's map on p. 15 is misleading and does not conform to Cæsar's boundaries. The area of the Aquitani was much smaller, that of the Belgae much larger. Aquitania was bounded by the Garonne, the Pyrenees and the Atlantic. The Gauls inhabited an area stretching from the Rhone to the Garonne and the Atlantic (thus including Provence), north to the Marne and the Seine and east from the Seine to the Rhine, including part of Switzerland (Helvetii). North of the Marne and the Seine, with the Rhine as their eastern boundary, lived the Belgae (*B.G.*, I, 1). This is a much more extensive Belgium than Dr. Ward allows for and obviously must have an important bearing on the distribution of Belgic place-names.

There is a looseness of terminology in referring to the Belgae which is not only confusing but, at times, conducive of error. They are equated, without proof, with the Ingævones and the Frisians, and, after A.D. 43, with the Romano-Britons. Cæsar knows nothing of the Frisians. It was the Belgae who had crossed the Rhine and settled in Gaul. But, "the Belgae were in fact Frisians . . . and had subsequently acquired the name of Belgae" (c. 100 B.C., pp. 23-4). Then they become Ingævones or Frisians (pp. 19-20, 41). Pliny the Elder mentions the Frisians as living on mounds in a district flooded twice every day by the tides (c. A.D. 77). Tacitus refers only once to the Ingævones (A.D. 98), who lived nearest the Ocean (*Germania*, 2, 3) and, as he mentions the Frisii separately as living in the modern Friesland (*ibid.*, 34, 1), the two tribes must have been distinct. A much later reference is that of Procopius (c. A.D. 550) who tells us that the Britain of his day contained three nations, Angles, Frisians and Britons. "The Angles were presumably the mixed races who gave us the name of England and the Britons the Celts of the far west. This leaves the Frisians to represent the Belgae" (p. 21). R. H. Hodgkin takes a different view: "By taking the Angles to mean both Angles and Saxons, and by a

¹ C. Rostaing, *Les noms de lieux* (Paris, 1945), 39; A. Dauzat, *Les noms de lieux* (Paris, 1947), 97-8.

simple subtraction sum, it is found that the Frisians of Procopius may be equated with the Jutes" (*Hist. Anglo-Saxons*, I, 82). There are undoubted archaeological parallels between Frisia and England but these, and also the Frisian influence found in Kent by Baldwin Brown, E. T. Leeds and J. N. L. Myres, is due to the Frisians of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.

That Frisians were among the settlers in England is proved by place-names: Freston (Suffolk) "the Frisian's *tun*", Frieston (Lincs), Friston (Suffolk) "the Frisians' *tun*". These Frisians came over with the fifth- and sixth-century Anglian invaders, but those who have left their name in Friesthorpe (Lincs) and Frisby (Leics) were among the ninth-century Scandinavian invaders. The need to examine each name individually is proved by Fryston (WR Yorks), *Frythetune* 963 which was the *tun*, not of any Frisian, but of a man named *Frithe*.

On the interpretation of place-names Dr. Ward is no safe guide. He lists 23 place-names from the Oxford Dictionary of Place-names, with Ekwall's explanation of each, and adds: "most of these interpretations are almost valueless—a fact by no means unknown to the author of them" (p. 37). He makes great play with etymologists who do not know the difference between a landing-place and a harbour and insists that Lambeth was merely a landing-stage—which is probably correct. But OE *hyth* did mean "port, haven". It is frequently glossed *portus*. Aelfric has "Hyth *angiportus*" and "Hyth *portus*". The Kent Hythe was formerly *Portus Lemanis*; Bulverhythe was the old harbour of Hastings; Hythe has replaced Old Heath (the Essex form of *hythe*) as the harbour of Colchester. For Lambeth, Dr. Ward does put forward an etymology, the landing-place of "Mr. Lamb", oblivious of the fact that *Lamb* is unknown as a personal-name in Old English. The existence of the Scandinavian byname *Lambi* in the twelfth century provides no support, nor does the modern surname *Lamb*, for this is a post-Conquest creation.

To prove his theory, Dr. Ward should have begun with an analysis of names in *-ham*, separating those in *-hām* from those in *hamm*. When the etymologies had been established, he should have based his theories on the facts discovered. He does not do this. He produces long lists of place-names from England and the Continent, adding: "the writer has not dared to put any interpretations of his own into the list. They are all quoted from recognised authorities" (p. 48). But his authorities derive the continental names from Frisians of the fourth or fifth century A.D. and the Kent names from Anglo-Saxons of the fifth or sixth century A.D. Dr. Ward assigns the lot to the Belgae c. 100 B.C. or earlier. Not one of them is recorded before the seventh century A.D. The most amazing point of all is the calm assumption, without any attempt at proof, for which he claims sole credit, that *-ham* is Belgic

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and had ceased to be used as a place-name element before A.D. 450, whilst *tun* is Anglo-Saxon and was in common use from 450 onwards. If this is true, all the names in *-ham* plotted on the map of p. 63 must be Belgic and the Belgae must have settled throughout England, from Devon to East Anglia and from the Isle of Wight to the Scottish border. Dr. Ward has failed to establish his theory and remains a solitary voice crying out in the wilderness. The archæological material adduced applies to the Belgae whether they were Teutons, Celts or a mixture of both. But it does not affect the issue. It throws no light on their language or their place names.

P. H. REANEY.

Curiosities of British Archæology. Compiled by Ronald Jessup. Pp. xii +215. Butterworths, 1961. 25s.

The majority of compilers of anthologies seem unsure of their abilities to please, for they hurriedly appear before us, cap in hand, explaining and excusing why they have included this, excluded that, or limited their choices. Ronald Jessup makes no such apology for this collection; the selection, he tells us, is a personal one and made from his own notes and extracts "which relate, in a broad sense, to the history and progress of British archæology". One can equally admire the wealth of his reading over many years and the choices which he has made for our delectation.

For this is a delightful book; of that select order which should be kept by bedside or desk ready at hand to be picked up and enjoyed for many years ahead. And members who know the compiler as an old friend and associate in the Society and its sometime Editor will particularly savour his offering.

For here come our spiritual ancestors, the antiquaries, touring, and digging in the field, observing in church, chapel and abbey, propounding, theorizing and arguing in study; here also are Lost Causes, Fakes, Fable and Legend, tomb and bell inscriptions, extracts from registers and the like. Nor are the novelists and the poets missing. A good deal of delightful nonsense, mixed with sound common sense. And lastly a few of our modern archæologists (who, of course, never talk nonsense, even in fun). In short, Ronald Jessup's compilation rates the "joy-for-ever" class.

J.H.E.

The Eastern Rother. By Robert H. Goodsall. Pp. 164, 60 illustrations. Constable, London, 1961. 21s.

In this volume the author sets out to complete his river wanderings in the south-east corner of England by exploring the country of the Eastern Rother.

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The skill and charm with which he brings to his readers the pathways he takes, are well known to our members. Inevitably, his journeyings to the Rother source begin in Sussex, at Rotherfield, and take him some forty miles, as the crow flies, to Hythe in south-east Kent. In doing so, he strikingly illustrates the interesting difference between the higher lands of the Rother, where every place, field and house name, together with the presence of hammer ponds, reflect the story of Wealden Iron, and the lower reaches which meander across rich alluvial levels, with the open, windswept pastures of Walland Marsh, which reflect quite another story.

In a leisurely and informative way, the author describes a wealth of fascinating details of mediæval churches, manors, old farmsteads, of historic families, old inns, of smugglers and smuggling, and even of suffragettes' hostile attacks at Littlestone Golf Club House on Mr. Asquith and Mr. H. E. Gladstone. Whether he is writing of castles, religious foundations, wriggling streams, bridges or bloomeries, the author reveals markedly the profound influence a river has on the whole way of life of the adjacent countryside. He reveals, too, his intimate knowledge and abiding affection for the Kentish scene.

It seems churlish to find fault with a book that has given a reviewer so much pleasure, and one that illustrates the immeasurable value of place and field names in local history, but the Romans did not build the Dymchurch Wall, nor the Rhee "cut", and the earliest of the Marsh churches is not Hope but Lydd, which is of Saxon origin.

This volume is a welcome and worthwhile addition to an already impressive list of the writer's Kentish books. It is excellently produced, paper, printing and format are most acceptable, and the carefully chosen illustrations, and the Bewick-like chapter headings bespeak no small knowledge of photography and sketching. It should encourage many to explore the enchanting byways of local topography and should have an appeal far beyond the Kentish border. A.R.

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