

Book Reviews

GRAHAME CLARK, *World Prehistory in New Perspective*. 3rd edn. C.U.P., 1977. xx + 554 pp., 31 tables, 305 illus., 33 maps. £16 (£5.95 paper).

This third edition of Grahame Clark's monumental work on World Prehistory contains a more detailed and up-to-date coverage of particularly America and Australasia than did its predecessors. Besides an introductory chapter on Palaeolithic man and his origins, there are two chapters on the prehistory of Europe, two on North America, two on Asia, and one on each of the three continents Africa, South America, and Australia-Oceania. The text is nicely reproduced, comprising maps of distribution, tables of radio-carbon datings and chronological sequences, drawings of types of artifacts, reconstructions of famous examples of prehistoric architecture, and a great number of photographs of different items. In the margins are references to a selected bibliography, placed at the end together with an index.

No other archaeologist would probably have been capable of covering all aspects of the archaeology of the world so well as Professor Clark. He is extremely well informed about all kinds of recent publications, including bioarchaeological as well as sociological views, his interest is focused on the adaptive capacity and inventiveness of men, and he assumes that every pattern of culture has its own value. Though diffusion and migration can hardly be ignored, they can—according to his introductory remarks—no longer be accepted as blanket explanations of change. This is an important statement by the grand old man of European archaeology, because it means that the cultures of remote parts of the world are no longer to be evaluated exclusively from the white man's standpoint.

However, the inventiveness of men seems not to have been shared by their women in prehistory. Astonishingly enough from the archaeological literature we learn little about the activities of the sex represented in pictures of clay figurines and mother goddesses. Were the flint blades and scrapers used by women as well as by men? What did the housewives do with their pots and baking-utensils, their needles and spinning-whorls, their digging-sticks and net-bags? Were they worshipped as mistresses and goddesses all the time?

Archaeological science was started by men. And men's views are still dominating the subject with their predominant interest in hunting and fishing, bows and arrows, harpoons and dugouts, axes and adzes, spears and clubs for fighting and ceremonies. The tiresome daily work of digging up roots and collecting edible plants, weeding small cultivated plots, winnowing and sieving the grain, grinding it,

and baking bread is not the subject of this book, because its aim is first and foremost to provide us with exact datings and a structure upon which we can hang all such activities.

Still it is felt by the reviewer that such archaeological evidence as plough-marks, ard-ploughs, digging-sticks, and wooden spades should be given space alongside chariots and harnesses, graves and garments, wild and domesticated animals because they provided the fundament of subsistence. In a way this only reflects how neglected the techniques of agriculture in the past have been until quite recently. Until about two decades ago specialists in the study of ploughing implements were almost exclusively concerned with the classification of those items, based on their unimportant details, instead of their ability to till the field. It is now an urgent task for scholars in agricultural history to observe what marks are left on the tools because of the process of wear, and what can be observed in the field of fossil marks of the spade and the plough, plough pebbles and shares, coulter, and relics of the plough itself, and to study them in comparison with written sources, for example from the antiquity of China, and the classic cultures of the Mediterranean area.

However, this has not been the purpose of Grahame Clark. What he has given us is an excellent handbook which should be used by everybody concerned with a special study, whether it be the development of agricultural techniques or a special area or country. He provides us with reliable facts about different cultures and their sequence, their characteristic features and geographical distribution, as well as their interrelationship with other cultures and their exact datings. With Grahame Clark as a companion you always feel on safe ground.

AXEL STEENBERG

G. E. FUSSELL, *Farms, Farmers and Society, Systems of Food Production and Population Numbers*. Coronado Press, Lawrence, Kansas, 1976. x + 332 pp. \$15.

In this book George Fussell sets out to distil his vast reading in agricultural history into a comprehensive account for the general reader of "at least some part of the relation between the development of farming technique and the social organization that was able to expand as the farmers were able to produce enough food to supply a large non-agricultural population." The problem in writing this kind of study is to decide at what level to pitch it, and in some respects Dr Fussell has been too modest: he addresses himself to the general reader, but has a tendency to underestimate how much knowledge he

has taken for granted. There is thus a risk that general readers will not always fully grasp all the implications of his statements.

It was an ambitious task to tackle the entire agricultural history of the world, from the origins of farming to the present day, and it is thus not altogether surprising if the treatment is somewhat uneven. In fact, Europe and the lands of European settlement occupy most of the stage. The method is by straightforward chronological progression, though it is interesting to note that the chapters tend to get shorter as the book progresses. The largest chapter (forty pages) is devoted to prehistoric, ancient Greek, and Roman agriculture. This was a wise choice because most readers will probably know less about this period than the others, and it is the one where Dr Fussell's expertise is most telling. The medieval period is also well covered (indeed about half the book relates to the period before 1500). The range of Dr Fussell's reading (in several languages) is amazing, with 799 items being cited in the bibliography in addition to scores more in the footnote references. With such a mass of documentation behind the book it can hardly fail to be an interesting compendium, but the variety of information can sometimes be bewildering. The tendency towards compression in a study of this kind is unavoidable, and it is to be hoped that readers who are unfamiliar with agricultural history will find it a tempting hors-d'œuvre. If they wish to take the subject further, Dr Fussell has provided them with a veritable feast of bibliographical references.

MICHAEL HAVINDEN

MARY HARVEY, *The Morphological and Tenurial Structure of a Yorkshire Township: Preston in Holderness, 1066-1750*. Department of Geography, Queen Mary College, University of London, Occasional Paper No. 13, 1978. 32 pp. No price stated.

Until parliamentary enclosure, the low-lying Holderness region in the eastern extremity of Yorkshire was farmed upon a distinctive system, remarkable for its simplicity of form. Although the arable covered the major part of each township, it was divided into only two fields and farmed on a two-course rotation. Almost all the lands in each field were aligned in the same direction, even where they crossed streams or tracks, so that their length commonly exceeded 1,000 yards. Eighteenth-century terriers show that although the Preston fields were subdivided into seven bydales, these units were different from furlongs in that they were not cropping divisions, their bounds were not marked by changes in direction, and as they were much larger than furlongs, they were fewer in number.

The terriers reveal a regular ordering of holdings throughout the fields, with each bydale containing a

complete cycle of the order of named lands. Parcels belonging to each holding always lay in the same relative position, with the same neighbouring parcels. The possibility that the lands and bydales conformed to some regular ancient measurement reinforces the impression that the field layout was deliberately planned. Lack of documentation makes it impossible to date this planning accurately, but the author suggests a late eleventh- or early twelfth-century date, shortly after the "harrying of the north", when Holderness formed part of the fee of the Duke of Albemarle. The paper is set out with admirable clarity and has important implications for the study of other planned landscapes.

DAVID HEY

HAROLD RICHARDSON (ed.), *Court Rolls of the Manor of Acomb*. Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, II, CXXXVII (for 1975), 1978. xiv + 216 pp. No price stated.

The cost of publishing has spotlighted a dilemma which has long faced local record societies. On the one hand there is their concern to publish scholarly editions of texts whose interest will transcend county boundaries; and on the other there is the need to produce publications of sufficient interest to the ordinary member to ensure the societies' survival. To marry these is difficult but not impossible. Unfortunately, this book falls neatly between the two stools. The first question asked by university researcher and by ordinary member alike is surely, "Is it interesting?" Reluctantly, the answer here has to be, "No". The only possible justification for publishing seems to have been that someone had done the work; but that work has not extended to providing any editorial comment on the records themselves or on the individuals recorded in them. While there are obvious advantages for the historian of Acomb and for the genealogist, this volume is far too parochial, its time-span far too great, to make any serious contribution to the history of manor courts. With no editor to guide the casual reader through the maze of surrenders and admissions, members of the Y.A.S. may justifiably feel rather hard-done-by for their year's subscription.

ANDREW JONES

MONIQUE CHAUVIN, *Les comptes de la châtellenie de Lamballe, 1387-1482*. Université de Haute-Bretagne, Rennes II, Institut Armoricaire de Recherches Economiques et Humaines, no. 24, Paris, Klincksieck, 1977. 349 pp., 11 plates, 4 maps. 75 Fr.

This is the first serious modern study of seigneurial accounts in Brittany in the later Middle Ages to be published. Briefly outlining the disturbed political history of Lamballe (one of the constituent parts of the great *apanage* of Penthièvre lying to the south

and east of the bay of St Briuc) and general problems relating to Breton monetary changes during the period, the author passes on to a rigorous analysis of thirty-three discontinuous accounts which are her main source. The mechanism of account is clearly set out. Receipts are examined in great detail, especially from the evolution of rents and renders in kind (wheat and rye are the main crops), and the farming out of thirty-four seigneurial mills (including three fulling mills and a tannery). Upkeep of mills and market halls, wages of officials, pensions to religious houses and others were regular items of expenditure, but by far the largest category was payment by "my lord's letters" without further detail supplied. In 1471, for instance, 4,600 *livres* out of 7,700 *livres* was spent in this way. As a result, although the author concludes that the castellany was exploited efficiently, and accounts generally show a credit balance, there is no means of establishing actual profits. In this respect, as in so many others, these particular documents, of which extensive extracts are provided both in footnotes and in an appendix, are typical of those which survive in surprisingly large numbers for the estates of other leading Breton families, although few comparisons are attempted.

MICHAEL JONES

R. MACHIN (ed.), *Probate Inventories and Manorial Excepts of Chetmole, Leigh and Yetminster*. University of Bristol, Department of Extra-mural Studies, 1976. 171 pp. £1.

This cyclostyled volume reproduces 141 probate inventories from the Peculiar of Yetminster in Dorset, ranging in date from 1576 to 1769; the majority (some eighty) are from the second half of the seventeenth century. The excerpts record transfers on the court rolls of customary tenures which were "in practice virtually freehold." Mr Machin provides a valuable introduction in which he analyses the evidence from the inventories, including a particularly valuable section on the evidence for lending. He also uses the excerpts and inventories to describe the family cycle of the tenants and to reconstruct the plans of their houses. In four cases he has been able to relate this documentary evidence to surviving houses whose plans are given. He has also contributed a most useful glossary and an index of persons. This is an extremely valuable book at a most reasonable price.

J. P. COOPER

VICTOR SKIPP, *Crisis and Development: An Ecological Case Study of the Forest of Arden, 1570-1674*. C.U.P., 1978. xii + 132 pp. £6.50.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the British population doubled in size, growing faster than that of any other European country. In the

early fourteenth century a population of four to five million could not be sustained, yet this time the threat of a Malthusian check was averted. How was the barrier surmounted?

With admirable clarity, Mr Skipp has presented a convincing account of the demographic and agrarian history of the five north Arden parishes that he wrote about in the Finberg *Festschrift* published by this Society in 1970. His demographic analysis, based on several years' work by extra-mural classes, reveals a rapid growth of population in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, leading to a serious imbalance between population and resources. A mild check on growth between 1613 and 1619 reduced the local population by about 10 per cent, but recovery was rapid, and the total number of people rose from about 3,100 before the check to about 3,400 in 1640, remaining near this level for the rest of the century. Though life for the numerous landless cottagers was undoubtedly harsh, no further Malthusian crisis developed.

A considerable exodus of refugees in the 1610's and 1620's and continued later emigration partly account for this success, but more positive responses were necessary to deal with the previous influx. The new landless cottagers were accommodated by subletting and division of property as well as encroachments on the waste, and the whole nature of the agrarian economy was transformed so that food could be provided for those without facilities for producing their own. From about 1610 onwards probate inventories reveal a pronounced shift from a pastoral economy to one much more geared to arable production. Convertible husbandry, intensive enclosure activity, improvements such as marling and liming, and a concentration on kine rather than beef cattle improved the local food supply and provided fresh employment. At the same time, though here the evidence is less clear, the number of craftsmen increased considerably; the chief group were the landless weavers, who were quite different in character from the craftsmen-farmers of the old economy. Thus, agricultural and industrial developments can best be understood as a response to demographic pressures.

It is a pity that Mr Skipp stops in 1674 and takes no account of A. Gooder's article, 'The Population Crisis of 1727-30 in Warwickshire', in *Midland History*, 1, 4 (1972), pp. 1-22, which is very relevant to his thesis. Nevertheless, his book is an important contribution to our understanding of early modern agrarian history, and it should stimulate and direct much further research. How pleasing it is to read a demographic study that is not divorced from the social and economic history of the region, and how rewarding are his efforts to explain the interactions of demographic and agrarian change. The experience of these north Arden parishes may well have

been typical of many other parts of the country, though, as Mr Skipp is careful to point out, we obviously need to establish a typology of reaction among different types of community. In north Arden, where a significant body of landless cottagers established themselves, we have what the author calls a "high pressure" positive reaction; where sufficient land was available to absorb immigrants a "low pressure" solution on medieval lines was all that was necessary; elsewhere parishes reacted negatively, and refused to support additional numbers. Mr Skipp puts forward several "general propositions" which will help to focus research and to provide a framework of understanding. The biggest problem is to trace the movements of the landless; shall we ever know where the north Arden emigrants finally settled or where the immigrants in "low pressure" regions came from? The equation is unlikely to be simple.

DAVID HEY

JOAN THIRSK, *Economic Policy and Projects: The Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England*. Clarendon Press: O.U.P., 1978. vi + 199 pp. £6.

The economy and society of early modern England are commonly associated with underdevelopment, chronic underemployment of labour, and inflation, rather than with significant developments in the shaping of a consumer society, which appears as the predominant theme or sub-title of this major revisionary work in English economic and social history.

To date it has been left to Professors John and Eversley to stress the importance of an expanding home market in stimulating the production of consumer goods between 1700 and 1780. Now Dr Thirsk questions very strongly the convention of treating "the mass market for consumer goods as a product of the Industrial Revolution, insignificant before the later eighteenth century," involving initially a middle-class demand which "gradually filtered down to the working class." The roots of this significant economic development are to be traced back to "the first half of the sixteenth century, when a deliberate policy decision was taken to encourage consumer industries, in order to reduce imports, and to give more work to the poor," so that by 1600 "goods that had been deemed rich men's luxuries in 1540 were being made in so many different qualities and at such varied prices that they came within the reach of everyman." Thereafter, during the seventeenth century, "home demand for cheap goods was as stimulating and expansive as the demand for expensive quality wares, probably even more so." There developed before 1700 "a consumer society that embraced not only the nobility and gentry . . . but included humble peasants,

labourers, and servants as well" (pp. 8, 125, 179).

Economic Policy and Projects represents in essence the Ford Lectures which Dr Thirsk delivered at Oxford during 1975. It places in a wider economic context the emergence of new industries and new kinds of employment during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, centred around the basic argument that "throughout the seventeenth century the production of new consumer goods absorbed an increasing quantity of the nation's economic resources" (pp. v, 158).

"Project" and "projector" are two key words associated with the seventeenth century and, following an important introductory chapter, the next three chapters explore in considerable detail the industrial and agricultural projects which were begun between 1540 and 1630. Chapter v examines the quality of goods which were produced, and the types and depth of demand which they attracted. How they were viewed and assessed by political economists up to and including Adam Smith forms the subject matter of Chapter vi.

The "new" projects or occupations, whose economic significance is measured in this study, were of two kinds: some were entirely new, whereas others enjoyed a new success on account of technical advances. On the industrial side were stocking-knitting, button-making, pins and nails, salt, starch, soap, knives and tools, tobacco-pipes, pots and ovens, alum-mining, ribbon- and lace-making, linen-weaving, the brewing of ale and beer, and the distilling of *aqua vitae*. On the agricultural side they included the growing of rape for the sake of the oil; flax and hemp, partly for the oil, but more for the making of thread, linen, and canvas; woad, madder, and weld for dyes; tobacco, flowers and vegetables, vines, and mulberries for the feeding of silkworms.

Although not all projects succeeded, their introduction had many unforeseen but profound consequences, not least in creating employment both in rural areas and in towns. Dr Thirsk's study abounds with local examples of places or communities which benefited materially from the introduction of new occupations. Staffordshire, for instance, became "a county brimming with rural industries," while "to satisfy the home and foreign demand for stockings in the 1690's, 15.3 per cent of labouring and pauper families could have supplemented their living by knitting as a by-employment" (p. 168).

There is much to interest the historian of agriculture and rural economies in Dr Thirsk's book. The early 1580's saw the development of a considerable interest in woad (pp. 3-4, 28-30). Here was a crop which spread with astonishing rapidity throughout southern England, so that in 1586 4,910 acres in twelve southern counties were sown with woad. Here was work for about 20,000 people,

"equivalent to the *total* population of 25 modest market towns of 800 inhabitants apiece, or 100 villages of 200 inhabitants each." In the knowledge that cole-seed and hemp were excellent crops on newly drained fen, plans to produce oil at home, originating successfully during the 1570's, were linked with drainage projects "and gave fresh encouragement to yet another group of inventors and projectors—those who were commending their designs for windmills and drainage engines." During the seventeenth century "the cultivation of rape-seed, and the crushing of rape oil, became two commonplace occupations in the eastern half of England," with Cambridgeshire as the leading county and Wisbech as the principal port, having seven seed-crushing mills at work in 1735: "no wonder that Wisbech could afford street lighting with oil lamps before York, Coventry, or Birmingham" (pp. 30, 69–72). In relation to the linen industry, hemp and flax developed in scattered villages all over England on a scale sufficient to support a substantial local industry.

Tobacco was introduced as a new field crop to Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, in 1619. Despite a government ban on its cultivation at the end of that year in order to encourage the settlement and prosperity of the Virginia plantation, seven years later it was still being grown in thirty-nine places in Gloucestershire, while fifty years later in 1670 it was being cultivated in twenty-two counties in England and Wales. It proved to be a superbly profitable crop, being generally recognized from the late 1620's "as a poor man's crop that yielded him a good profit in return for much hard labour." Tobacco-growing forged ahead as a peasant activity to become an occupation that employed hundreds of poor people during the 1640's and 1650's (pp. 87–8, 102–3, 136, 141).

Projects not only "diversified industry and agriculture to an unprecedented degree," but their reality influenced political economists and their essays during the second half of the seventeenth century, causing them to emphasize the potential benefits of home-based production, including "systems of farming that employed labour intensively." In political and economic thinking new consumer industries and the success of industrial occupations combined with farming in rural areas introduced "new propositions that displaced some long-established tenets of the old political economy," such as sixteenth-century preoccupations with overseas trade or the notion that "cereals were the staff of life and ploughmen formed the backbone of the nation" (pp. 8, 147–8).

In arguing that projects initiated during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produced more goods in greater quantity than ever before, and thereby promoted the growth of a consumer

society, Dr Thirsk stresses that "their success is readily demonstrated in any random comparison between the standard household goods of husbandmen living in the first half of the sixteenth century and those living in the later seventeenth." In personal wear, household goods, and diet there was more choice. Country wares were made for common people but how could they afford them and how was their diffusion achieved?

During the seventeenth century the incomes of the lower classes improved, especially since wages earned by wives and children were added to those of their husbands. Seventeenth-century market-towns grew in size, assumed a grander role in trading and social and cultural life, and "the lively demand for consumer goods that was maintained there was fuelled by the purchasing power of yeomen and gentry from a wide rural area" (pp. 173, 175). Because pastoral areas came to support dual economies, more agricultural wealth was being created in pastoral than in arable country. Overall, even "if we cannot speak with certainty of rising *per capita* incomes throughout the population in the seventeenth century, we can point to numerous communities in the kingdom, especially in towns and in pastoral-industrial areas, where the labouring classes found cash to spare for consumer goods in 1700 that had no place in their budgets in 1550—brass cooking pots, iron frying pans, earthenware dishes, knitted stockings, even a lace frill for a cap or apron" (p. 175).

Another important theme in Dr Thirsk's book concerns the expansion of rural industrial by-employments, especially in pastoral areas. Rural industries flourished because they offered a lot of serviceable goods—"nothing expensive, just everyday necessities, plus some fancy wares that were cheap and cheerful, and came within the purses of working men and women" (p. 118). It is "the simplicity of the industrial structure supporting substantial rural industries [which] requires emphasis, for some economic historians have a strong desire to turn it into something far more elaborate, and look for capital accumulation where nothing so grand was needed or was taking place" (p. 111). Fixed capital costs were tiny in most of the new consumer industries, so that "the carefully planned financial organization of industry that we take for granted in the nineteenth century was rudimentary in the seventeenth," when "industrial enterprises were launched . . . without calling for investment in expensive fixed equipment," when "makeshifts were just as serviceable," when woad could be adopted as a new crop one year to disappear the next (pp. 169, 171). Most consumer occupations were started on a shoe-string and they grew rapidly because they quickly attracted many individuals operating independently (p. 172).

In the final analysis it is readily admitted that the quantitative contribution of the new industries and new crops cannot be precisely measured, but equally the same difficulties of accurate measurement apply to the old products. The reviewer cannot but agree with the author's lament that "the theme of this book would be satisfyingly rounded off, if it were possible to measure the value of the contribution made by new consumer industries and new crops to the total production of the nation" (p. 177).

Dr Thirsk's *Economic Policy and Projects* is much to be welcomed; not only is it beautifully written but it covers much unfamiliar ground on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and suggests several new openings for research. It is clearly a major revisionary work, which points to new interpretations of England's early modern economy in the light of what followed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

JOHN WHYMAN

CENTRE D'ESTUDIS HISTÒRICS INTERNACIONALS,
Estudis d'Història Agrària. Vol. I. Barcelona,
Curial Edicions Catalanes, 1978. 284 pp.

The end of *Franquismo* in Spain has seen the emergence of a number of new journals dedicated to the study of economic and social history. Nowhere is this more evident than in the field of agricultural history. In 1976 the Ministry of Agriculture in Madrid began to publish *Agricultura y Sociedad* which among other things is notable for its re-editions of important historical documents with particular relevance to the Spanish countryside.

Now the Centre for the Study of International History at the University of Barcelona and Curial, publishers of the excellent historical review, *Recerques*, have brought out *Estudis d'Història Agrària* (Studies in Agrarian History). The aim of the new journal, according to its editor, Emili Giralt, is to provide an outlet for the numerous projects in rural history that are at present being undertaken throughout the peninsula, in Galicia, Andalusia, Euskadi, Madrid, Catalonia, and Valencia. Particular attention is to be paid to problems of theory, methodology, and interpretation. Giralt states at the outset the desire of the review's collaborators to encourage healthy polemic.

The first edition augurs well for the future. There are articles by Slicher Van Bath on technical developments in European agriculture, by Rodney Hilton on the peasantry as a class, and by Joan Martínez Alier which poses the question: Does the development of capitalist agriculture imply the proletarianization of the peasantry?

The review has also gathered in a rich harvest of articles on a variety of topics covering the last millenium and a half of Spanish agricultural history. Miguel Barceló studies the plagues of locusts in

Carpenteria between 578 and 640, and corroborates the opinion of P. D. King that the reduction of population in Hispania in the sixth and seventh centuries induced the aristocracy and the monarchy of Toledo to increase their hold over an already enslaved labour force.

An article on the Church lands in Zamora in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries by José-Luis Martín shows how the kings, bishops, abbots, and others repopulated the area according to a feudal model, maintaining numerous peasants in dependence during periods of apparent predominance of personal freedom.

Agricultural production and productivity in seventeenth-century Catalonia is researched by Eva Serra i Puig from decimal and cadastral sources, while Esteban Canales has worked on the patrimonial archive of the House of Moya, which shows the yields of two plantations in the district of Massanet de la Selva (Gerona) between 1616 and 1859. Both accounts demonstrate the prime significance of cereal cultivation, particularly wheat, and the fluctuating roles of other crops.

Relative yields of different crops in Barcelona and the Baix Llobregat in the mid-eighteenth century is the subject of a detailed account by Elisa Badosa i Coll.

A. Sopeña, Ramon Garrabou, and Teresa Carnero i Arbat offer three studies of the nineteenth century. Sopeña compares the differing fortunes of two estates in the Baix Noguera (Catalonia) from 1830 to 1860, both of which experienced increases in cultivation. Garrabou, one of the leading writers on agrarian history in Spain today, analyses the accounts of three estates in inland Catalonia which he finds representative of the whole "comarca". Finally, Teresa Carnero writes on the Great Depression in Valencian agriculture during the 1880's, showing how the agrarian middle classes rejected technical improvements in rice cultivation, preferring instead to lobby for increased tariff protection.

In short, *Estudis d'Història Agrària* promises to be an invaluable and comprehensive work on Spanish agriculture, and deserves every encouragement.

JOSEPH HARRISON

M. W. FLINN *et al.*, *Scottish Population History from the Seventeenth Century to the 1930's*. C.U.P., 1977. xxv + 547 pp., 3 maps, 23 figs. £19.50.

In 1968 Professor Flinn and his colleagues were awarded a grant from the S.S.R.C. to investigate the *terra incognita* of Scottish population history, and all concerned must be warmly congratulated on their remarkable feat of achieving so much within a comparatively short space of time. They have faced and, as far as can reasonably be expected, overcome some

grave difficulties arising out of the deficiencies of their source material. Since, apparently, not a single parish register can be found of a quality suitable for family reconstitution, there are little more than tantalizing glimpses of possible increases in procreation and family size during the eighteenth century, and estimates of the prevailing rates of fertility have to be inferred by recourse to the somewhat adventurous method of invoking and applying the regional model life tables of Coale and Demeny, as demonstrated by Hollingsworth in his *Historical Demography* (1969). In the circumstances the contributors prefer to focus on fluctuations (rather than levels) of mortality, using for this purpose an index constructed by aggregating the burials in 115 registers. This has some obvious shortcomings (notably the under-representation of some regions), but is used to decidedly good effect. Of course, the situation with respect to sources was transformed with the advent of civil registration in 1855.

Part I offers a convenient summary view of long-term changes, and prefaces more detailed accounts of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth and twentieth centuries, written by Professor Smout, Miss Mitchison, and Professor Flinn respectively. In short, they show that, like its predecessor, the seventeenth century was marked by frequent mortality crises culminating in that of the "ill-years" of the 1690's (the last occasion on which people died of hunger in large numbers), which effectively prevented population growth. The virtual disappearance of such crises during the eighteenth century is tentatively ascribed to improved trade which mitigated local famines, to some autonomous decline in the frequency or virulence of disease, and to a noticeably higher sense of responsibility among landlords (more especially in the Lowlands) than they had hitherto evinced. Population growth appears to have commenced about 1750, and was assisted by vaccination after 1800. However, the balance of population was shifting townwards, eventually engendering environmental problems with which contemporary authorities were unable to cope. The increases in mortality after about 1830 were not reversed until stronger public health measures and higher living standards began to take effect some forty years later. A subsequent fall in mortality was then accompanied, as elsewhere, by a decline in fertility, and by the 1920's Scotland's population had ceased to grow. There is a good deal of useful material on migration within and beyond the borders of Scotland, which in every decade during the nineteenth century grew more slowly than England and Wales, and which, strikingly, lost some 44 per cent (net) of its natural increase between 1895 and 1938.

The study addresses itself to a number of matters of special interest to students of agricultural history

and rural society. It is suggested that agrarian improvements can have had little impact on mortality before the 1790's. There is an interesting section on illegitimacy in the nineteenth century, and its connection with variations in the pattern of farm service and rural housing. Appendix B makes available the fiars prices (annual statements of the accepted prices of basic farm products) for a number of counties through the period 1619-1826. And, with the study throughout emphasizing regional differences, particular attention is paid to the Malthusian pressures invited by the growth of population in the Highlands and islands after the middle of the eighteenth century. Cattle-raising, kelping, and fishing were each part of the reaction, as were emigration and the subdivision of holdings. As in Ireland, the cultivation of the potato became a major feature of peasant subsistence, and is adjudged to have offered a fifty-year breathing space between the 1780's and the 1830's. Although the famine of the late 1840's did not have an impact so dire as in Ireland (the scale of the problem was more manageable and institutional, and geographical circumstances more favourable), it did, nevertheless, presage responses very reminiscent of those described by Connell and Kennedy for Ireland. These included regular emigration, an imbalanced sex-ratio limiting the incidence of marriage (in this case, however, a deficit of males), and a somewhat late age at marriage, all of which worked to reduce crude fertility rates in the hitherto hard-pressed areas.

It was the aim of the authors to provide a general framework serving as a springboard for future inquiries, and the vast amount of informed comment on the sources will be a boon to intending researchers. They also aspired to make a contribution towards the understanding of demographic processes, and to interest those concerned with the social history of Scotland. In all these aims they have succeeded admirably, and the product of their labours must be accounted a splendid contribution to the demographic history as a specialist discipline, and to British social history in the wider sense.

W. A. ARMSTRONG

M. L. PARRY, *Climatic Change, Agriculture and Settlement*. Folkestone, Dawson/Archon Books, 1978. 214 pp., 44 figs., 8 plates, 4 tables. £9.

In recent years the concept of climatic change has gained widespread acceptance and the nature of present and future change has been the subject of considerable speculation. Much of the debate has centred on the effects of such changes on agricultural production and food supply, for in a world struggling to meet the dietary needs of an ever-expanding population, the impact of climatic fluctuations could well be of major significance. The

evidence from the past presented in this volume suggests that there is considerable cause for concern.

Attempts to assess the influence of climate on human affairs have seldom met with much success, but in presenting the results of his work Dr Parry has done much to change that situation. The opening chapter on new evidence and old attitudes, plus the excellent survey of current thinking on the process and chronology of climatic change, together provide a useful perspective for the more detailed study that follows. The latter focuses on the upland area around the Lammermuir Hills in south-east Scotland, a region in which agriculture and settlement were particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of climate, yet it is far from parochial in its outlook, with well-integrated accounts of similarly affected areas in Scandinavia, Iceland, and North America. In the climatically marginal areas of northern Europe the important elements influencing agricultural activities, particularly cereal production, are identified as exposure, summer wetness, and summer warmth, and using climatic data from south-east Scotland these elements are combined to produce a map of the marginal land in that area. Similar maps for Britain and northern Europe were also produced to identify areas most likely to experience environmental stress during periods of climatic change. South-east Scotland provides abundant evidence of the effects of climatically induced stress working through such factors as site viability, crop yield, and harvest failure, and this has been used to illustrate the significant contribution of climatic change to shifts in cultivation and rural settlement. An examination of comparable conditions elsewhere in northern Europe reinforces the conclusions reached from the Scottish evidence, and several short accounts of the changing situation in the Great Plains of North America, where the critical climatic elements were different from those in Europe, provide useful comparison. The study concludes with a short assessment of the impact of short-term climatic fluctuations in climatically marginal areas.

In examining the relationship of former climatic change to agriculture and settlement, Dr Parry has made an important contribution to a largely neglected sector of historical geography. A major part of the contribution is technique, for this is the first major attempt to quantify the elements involved. Given the complex nature of much of the data and their questionable accuracy in some cases, this is no easy task, but Dr Parry has been generally successful in remaining within the limitations of the data while presenting a quantitative framework for the role of climatic change. Adequate consideration is also given to the socio-economic, cultural, and technological factors that might be expected to influence agriculture and settlement.

The overall structure of the book is good, although a final chapter summarizing the conclusions and the implications of the study would not have been out of place. Documentation is excellent, both extensive and up to date, with some thirty-three pages in this relatively slim volume devoted to notes, references, and bibliography. In contrast, the quality of the illustrations is mixed. This may be due in part to printing (as in Fig. 16, where the moorland symbol is far from distinct) but more often it is due to lack of standardization in the use of symbols. In several cases similar types of shading are used to indicate different conditions on adjacent maps (e.g. marginal and sub-marginal land in Figs. 19 and 20), which could lead to confusion. For the most part the illustrations are well integrated with the text.

Dr Parry has produced a book which will appeal not only to historians and climatologists but to a much wider readership as well. His detailed quantitative approach will surely be adopted by others which can only lead to an improved understanding of the impact of weather and climate on human activities in the past—an improvement long overdue!

DAVID KEMP

E. J. T. COLLINS, *The Economy of Upland Britain, 1750-1950: An Illustrated Review*. Univ. of Reading Centre for Agricultural Strategy, 1978. 116 pp., 37 plates. £2.20 post-free.

The upland zone of Britain discussed in this book consists primarily of the upland parts of Scotland (including Aberdeen and Perthshire), upland Wales, and upland northern England. The text itself is brief, occupying nineteen pages; there follows a very interesting collection of photographs, stretching well back into the nineteenth century, and a comprehensive set of appendices with maps and statistical tables on the population, land use, livestock population, crop yields, and mineral deposits of the upland zone.

Despite the brevity of his text, Dr Collins succeeds in giving a lucid account of the role of agriculture, extractive industries, manufacturing, fishing, and forestry in the upland economy, together with recent developments in hydro-electricity, water supply, forestry, and recreation. In the industrial revolution the uplands played an important part in supplying food, raw materials, manufactures, and manpower to the lowlands, and thereby supported a considerable population. The decline of this role, after 1880, created the regional problems which persist today. Trade and investment flows, the author remarks, assumed a pattern similar to those between rich and poor countries, and primary and secondary producers in the world economy. Since the 1930's government intervention has sought to counter the depressing influence of

market forces. But "the emptiness of the upland landscape—the abandoned mines, derelict factories and deserted farmhouses—testify to the unevenness of the struggle."

G. E. MINGAY

DAVID W. HOWELL, *Land and People in Nineteenth-Century Wales*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977. xv + 207 pp. £6.95.

Agricultural historians have every reason to welcome these new Studies in Economic History, edited by Professor F. M. L. Thompson. We have already had Eric Evans's *The Contentious Tithe*, now we are offered David Howell's excellent general survey of nineteenth-century Welsh agriculture, and more volumes of direct interest are promised soon.

Studies of various aspects of Welsh agricultural history have appeared in print before, but this is the first book that deals with the whole of the country during this period. We are told that the title is meant to stress that the study is an economic history with a strong emphasis on human factors. In this it succeeds admirably, covering all the themes and topics that one expects in a book on farming, with frequent comparisons with other parts of Britain. It will be essential reading not only for those concerned with the history of Wales but for all students of modern agricultural history.

Dr Howell has made extensive use of the private papers of landowners, and this has undoubtedly given him a new perspective, allowing him to argue persuasively that the rift between anglicized, C. of E., and Tory owners and Welsh-speaking, Nonconformist, and Liberal tenants has been greatly overplayed. Wales was a country of estates that were mostly let in small parcels to tenants. Letters show that although landlords rarely managed their estates personally, they were in regular touch with agents and other officials over everyday affairs, and it is untrue to say that they were largely absentees. Letters from agents to landowners on behalf of tenants show, too, that they were not the harsh figures that some would have us believe. In difficult years tenants were often allowed to run up high arrears of rent. The complex progression from leases for lives to yearly tenancies met with little opposition, and did not result in holdings frequently changing hands. Indeed, the author stresses that throughout the century families remained tenants on the same farms from generation to generation to a remarkable degree. By the mid-century yearly agreements had become the basic form of land tenure, under which the landlord was made responsible for improvements. Estate accounts show that during the second half of the nineteenth century large owners in many instances invested 20–25 per cent of gross income, and received only a

small return through rent increases. All this demonstrates that much of the criticism by the Nonconformist radical press was ill-founded. The number of political evictions was grossly exaggerated, and the Welsh Land Question was to a considerable extent the product of sectarian and political grievances.

Thus, the author argues that the undoubted backwardness of Welsh agriculture was only marginally a consequence of imperfect tenurial relationships. More important constraints were those of physical geography, poor communications with potential markets in the great centres of trade and manufacture, the language barrier restricting diffusion of ideas and information, the lack of capital, and the conservative peasant mentality. The traditional Welsh ideal was that of the small family farm, but with the rise of population this became increasingly difficult to attain. Land hunger kept farms small, and the Welsh farmer could survive only by relentless hard work and frugal living. The sale of stores paid the rent, and sales of butter, cheese, eggs, and spare poultry paid for current expenses. At least he was shielded from the drastic fluctuations experienced in some English counties. Dr Howell portrays the Welsh peasant as short of capital, ill-educated, wanting in enterprise, wedded to traditional methods, and suspicious of change; his basic concern was to keep down the rent, and even the coming of the railways did not inject a spirit of enterprise and capital. Perhaps it is as well that this assessment comes from an author who is unmistakably Welsh, and who reminded us at a recent conference of the society that there are two levels to life: the material and the spiritual.

DAVID HEY

RICHARD PERREN, *The Meat Trade in Britain 1840–1914*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978. x + 258 pp. £7.50.

The production of meat accounted for a large part of total English farm output in the nineteenth century (30 per cent in 1867–71, and 36 per cent in 1894–8). By 1910–14 the 1½ million tons of domestic meat consumed in the United Kingdom were supplemented by over a million tons of imports, and consumption per head, 87·3 pounds in the 1850's, had risen to almost 127 pounds.

Richard Perren's monograph deals with an important subject, and plugs a notable gap in the existing literature. More than this, the range of topics which he covers is considerably wider than his title might suggest. In addition to the trade in domestic livestock and dead meat (including the horrifying trade in tuberculous carcasses), and the import trade from Europe, Australasia, and the Americas, the book deals also with the changes in the internal distribution of meat and the markets of

London and the provinces. An important element in this changing picture was the contemporary developments in steam shipping and cold storage. (The first cold store in Britain appears to have been one started in 1877, and for some time the chilled beef imported from America had to be distributed rapidly or kept on board while a customer was found.)

Of particular value to the specialist are the book's many statistical tables. And many of the figures slipped into the tightly packed text are extremely striking: to take but one small example, the thirteen million sheep and mere half a million people of the New Zealand of 1880, where, before the export trade, a sheep had little value beyond that of its fleece; and when the frozen-mutton trade began a return of 1½d. per pound was sufficient to cover the New Zealand farmer's expenses and make export worth while, though at Smithfield his mutton was sold at 4d. or 5d. a pound. A vast amount of research has gone into the making of this deceptively slim volume which now becomes an invaluable source for the period.

G. E. MINGAY

MAISIE and RICHARD CONRAT, *The American Farm*.
Scolar Press, 1977. 256 pp., illus. £12.50.

The work of more than eighty photographers, some well known, the majority obscure, occupies most of the pages of this book. The text has a supporting and explanatory role, and though brief is full of penetrating observations illuminated by the words of those who actually worked the land. It is certainly not a makeweight but a commentary worth reading in its own right. Still, it is the photographs which really give the book its unique character. For the most part they are unfamiliar, and range from the sowing of grain by hand in the Maine of 1888 to southern cotton pickers of the 1860's, Nebraska plains sodhouses of the 1880's, and migratory pickers of California fruit, lettuce, and peas in the 1960's. The immediacy of the photograph brings out more vividly than any text the enormous variations in American farming and its progress from bullock-ploughs and wooden shacks to the huge, mechanized, agro-business complexes of today. The isolation of western farmsteads, the back-breaking labour of the early years, the hardships of cultivating virgin land in primitive conditions are brilliantly portrayed. Many of the pictures have a sombre, pathetic quality—there is not much happiness in their scenes—the dust-bowl farms, abandoned Montana farmhouses, derelict shacks which were once homes in Oklahoma. Others show rich wheat lands, huge orchards, and vast plains of lettuce, their cultivation making fantastic patterns across the landscape. But it is the faces which linger in the memory long after the book is closed: faces

of poverty, suffering, and endurance. Here is the visual element which truly brings to life the prosaic under-statements of the textbook.

G. E. MINGAY

HEATHER GILBERT, *The End of the Road: The Life of Lord Mount Stephen, Vol. II, 1891-1921*. Aberdeen U.P., 1977. xiii + 442 pp., illus. £10.

This book concludes Mrs Gilbert's biography of Lord Mount Stephen. (The earlier volume, *Awakening Continent: The Life of Lord Mount Stephen, Vol. I, 1829-91*, was noted briefly in this REVIEW, vol. xv, 1967, pp. 61-2.) Its strength lies in Mrs Gilbert's exhaustive search through the available primary materials, and her painstaking reconstruction of events from 1891 to Stephen's death in 1921. In my view, however, this volume is much less successful than the earlier book, which focused on Stephen's powerful leadership in the construction and early operation of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and was informed by the surviving voluminous correspondence between Stephen and Sir John A. Macdonald. Unfortunately, vol. II lacks both a tight, thematic focus and the flavour which Stephen's correspondence would have given it. Stephen destroyed the bulk of his papers, and Mrs Gilbert has had to rely on correspondence by his friends and business colleagues, notably Gaspard Farrer, a London merchant banker and a close friend of Stephen for more than forty years. Farrer's papers would have been an invaluable supplement to Stephen's, but as the principal source for the book they fall short. Stephen seems to loom in the background as a financial *eminence grise* and a generous and good friend, but he never comes to life in this book as he does in vol. I, and this is a serious flaw.

Why produce a biography of Stephen anyway? The motivation behind the first volume seems clear enough: Stephen as the builder of the C.P.R., the cornerstone of a transcontinental Canada. To the extent our interest lies in Stephen as a businessman, vol. II is disappointing because it contains so few insights into his reputed financial skills and expertise in business management, and makes no attempt to assess his strengths and weaknesses as a businessman. It is not clear that, after his participation in the C.P.R. ended, Stephen's life as a businessman is of particular interest. Instead of probing and assessing his business acumen, Mrs Gilbert regales the reader with anecdotes and incidents from Stephen's life. He offered advice, bought and sold securities, clipped coupons, made generous charitable donations, especially to the King's Fund, and—as a final index of success—paid death duties of £710,000. But so did many others! What was different or unique about Stephen's contribution to the development of business? What explains his great

success as a business practitioner? One illustration comes to mind. On page 289 we learn that he was "always afraid of debt." Did this fear influence his views on appropriate capital structures for large corporations? Did it colour his advice to business associates? There are no answers to these and other relevant questions. Perhaps there never can be without Stephen's papers and specific corroborating evidence.

In my opinion this book is of limited interest to economic and business historians, although certain sections may prove useful to specialists in financial and railroad history—for example, the parts dealing with the establishment of the Northern Securities Company and with relations between the Great Northern and Northern Pacific Railroads. And social historians may appreciate Mrs Gilbert's portrayal of personal relations among the Wolseleys, or her discussions of Frances Wolseley's promotion of women's gardening and Stephen's charitable interests. But overall the book fails to provide much insight into Stephen himself. Not that this failure is due to Mrs Gilbert. On the contrary, she has made the most of a difficult subject; the book's failure can be traced directly to Stephen's insistence on privacy and the destruction of his personal records.

PETER GEORGE

MICHAEL FENTON, *Farmers and Farming in Lindsey 1900-1914*. Centre for the Study of Rural Society, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln, 1978. iv + 47 pp. £1.10 post-free.

An established county of arable farming, Lincolnshire saw only a small decline in its cropland in the period covered by this study (from 67 per cent to 65.3 per cent). Also remarkable is the rise in the area occupied by tenants; this increased by over 12,000 acres in the early years of the twentieth century, and fell back to below the 1900 level only in 1911-14. The scope of Michael Fenton's concise but detailed and amply footnoted discussion is broad, and it inevitably focuses much more on the county as a whole than on Lindsey. On a county scale he covers land use, yields, and price movements (all illustrated by graphs), as well as tenancy holdings, and there is, too, a useful account of the formation of the Lincolnshire Farmers' Union, the forerunner of the N.F.U. Of particular interest is his examination of the cost and supply of farm labour. He notes the difficulty in generalizing about wages, and points out the superior working conditions enjoyed by yearly paid men. Although fears of a scarcity of labour haunted farmers, the migration from the land was exaggerated: the county figures show only a small decline (from 34 per cent to 32 per cent in the proportion of labourers in the important 15-25 years bracket. Farm labourers, incidentally, worked longer than in other occupations: between the ages

of 25 and 55 they constituted only about 16-17 per cent of the whole of the county's work-force; between 55 and 65 years, however, the proportion rose to over 19 per cent, and over 65 years to as high as 25 per cent. As an occupation, farm work was growing: between 1901 and 1911 the number of farm labourers in Lincolnshire rose by over 4,400 to a total of 38,866.

G. E. MINGAY

WILLARD W. COCHRANE and MARY E. RYAN, *American Farm Policy, 1948-1973*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1976. xiv + 431 pp. \$18.50.

This useful volume sets out not only to record the experience of U.S. farming policy in the period 1948 to 1973, but also to appraise its effectiveness, and to draw some lessons for future application. As is well known, the main tool of farm policy was price support. This was not only extremely expensive to American tax payers (who paid out an average of \$3.7 billion a year between 1948 and 1973) but it tended to exacerbate American agriculture's main problem: persistent over-supply of food in relation to inelastic demand. Superficially the policy was rather unsuccessful. Despite its huge cost it failed to prevent a sharp contraction in the size of the farm sector, and it failed to enable farmers to enjoy increases in income commensurate with their 60 per cent rise in output; yet the authors argue that without the government's support policies the situation would have been far worse. Agricultural prices would have had to fall by as much as 40 per cent, in their estimation, to have reduced production to the level which would have been demanded in a free market. They believe that this would have brought ruin and despair to large areas of rural America, and would have been quite unacceptable socially and politically, as well as economically. Even with prevailing agricultural policies the number of farms fell from 5.8 million in 1948 to 2.8 million in 1973, with the inevitable swathe of bankruptcies such a rapid decline entails. Those who remained in farming pushed their average gross farm incomes from \$5,983 in 1948 to \$16,850 in 1968, only to see their retained net income go from \$2,745 to a mere \$3,978—that is, to see it fall from c. 40-5 per cent to c. 20-5 per cent of gross receipts. Only in the exceptional year of 1973, when all prices rose, did it rise to \$11,332, but even this was only 33 per cent of their gross sales. The authors are thus under no illusions about the intractable nature of the American farm problem but they believe that with suitable modifications and improvements, government policy can maintain a prosperous agriculture without some of the most acute problems of stock-piling experienced in the past.

MICHAEL HAVINDEN

WILHELM ABEL, *Agrarkrisen und Agrarkonjunktur: Eine Geschichte der Land- und Ernährungswirtschaft Mitteleuropas seit dem hohen Mittelalter*. Hamburg and Berlin: Verlag Paul Parey, 1978. 323 pp, 76 diags, 28 tables, bibl., index of authors. 3rd revised and enlarged edition. DM 98.

It surprises me that this important book—published first in 1935, brought thoroughly up to date in 1966, and again in the current edition of 1978, maintaining its basic positions for more than forty years—is not more often quoted in this country. Can it be that these words in the subtitle: “a history of agriculture and food production in Central Europe since the high Middle Ages” have put off some readers? England, and indeed France, Italy, the Low Countries, and Scandinavia, occur so frequently in the book that they, but particularly England, appear as honorary members of a central Europe which seems to consist of Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. Indeed, Abel thinks in terms of a European continuum which only a serious war can upset. Since Abel's great work has already appeared in French, Italian, and Japanese, it is good to know that an English translation is to be published by Methuen.

The volume is a presentation of quantities, prices (mainly of grain), wages, the consumption of the main foods through seven centuries, stating prices in terms of silver to achieve continuous comparable series. Abel explains his methods in an appendix. It is not quantitative in the sense that the statistics have been subjected to violent manipulation. Virtually every sentence contains figures, in this edition based on the latest knowledge, for on nearly every page two or three references are to material published during the ten years since the second edition. This new information confirms the periodization of agricultural history established in the first edition, and gradually adopted by agricultural historians all through Europe. The new material completes, and expands, the picture presented in the first edition, providing firmer detail, but never overloading, a volume that fully validates the relatively straightforward picture drawn forty years ago.

The author, one gathers, has tried to keep the volume a rigorous statement of the facts of prices, wages, population numbers, and available food. He adumbrates the ideas available as explanations, but eschews dogmatic assertions. At one moment he notes a fall of population, at another, growth, at one date bad harvests or even climatic change, later a distinct improvement of agricultural techniques. The reader is led towards possible explanations, and could only dare to disagree if he could produce a better set of figures. Many may welcome this procedure for it quite clearly indicates where further research is necessary.

Nevertheless, the author prefers natural and

social explanations related to population changes, to the weather, to pestilence, to changes in feudal or landownership conditions, and rarely gives credence to monetary explanations. This will attract the sympathy of agricultural historians near to the soil, the crop, the animal, and the farming man.

This volume is deliberately dry: it has many figures, graphs, and tables. The reader, himself, works up his own excitement, aided by telling anecdote, and a host of minor insights in the rewarding small print. The graphs are simple and straightforward, essaying no optical effect. Except for one or two utterly unimportant misprints, there are no obstacles to reading, for the book is simply written. It is full of place-names, and would have benefited by more maps, and so the reader not enjoying an excellent knowledge of European geography must use a good atlas, for much of the detail makes full sense only when tied to a locality. The bibliography is thoroughly up to date, but the index lists only authors cited: it is hard to see how a subject index could have been compiled.

Professor Abel's three major works are pivotal to the labours of an agricultural historian in Europe. He has written of German agriculture from the early Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, of poverty and starvation in pre-industrial Europe, and in this book of the ups and downs of farming with figures extended to the 1970's. All three are masterfully lucid and terse. They establish the solid framework, much of the detail, and the statistics of the history of agriculture in central Europe and its margins. But, while Professor Abel makes his focus the state of affairs in central Europe, a reader in Britain can quite fairly pretend the book is about Britain, for its account of Britain is secure, and calibrate his picture of Britain against conditions in a peripheral Europe.

D. J. DAVIS

ANNE DIGBY, *Pauper Palaces*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, Studies in Economic History, 1978. x + 266 pp., 15 figs., 3 maps, 20 photographs. £6.95. *Pauper Palaces* is not, as one might think, a popular or superficial account of old workhouses: it should be subtitled “A Study of the Poor Law in Norfolk in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries”. The book is, in fact, a thorough and highly detailed examination of the influence of the local landed interest and local economic conditions on the development of poor relief. Norfolk was one of the East Anglian counties noted for its eighteenth-century incorporations. In these private arrangements the union of parishes, the building of a large “house of industry” (the “pauper palace” of George Crabbe), and its supervision by a body of guardians, foreshadowed the measures commonly associated with the New Poor Law. Indeed, as the author remarks,

the Norfolk house of industry had more highly developed welfare arrangements for the impotent poor, and measures for the productive employment of the able-bodied, than had the post-1834 workhouse. In accommodation, too, the new regime offered little advance; only a rechristening of the yards and certain rooms was needed to transform the Smallburgh house of industry into a union workhouse.

The incorporations were to be found only in central and eastern Norfolk, where the resident landowners, clergy, and farmers of moderate means had a direct interest in efficient organization of relief; in west and south Norfolk, where most of the county's large estates were concentrated, incorporations were unknown. Long before 1834, however, the incorporations were in decline, and in the Norfolk unions disillusion with centralized control of relief had led to widespread resumption of a parochial system. After 1834 the county was rapidly and expensively brought into conformation with the New Poor Law, the twelve new workhouses built between 1835 and 1839 costing over £75,000. The architectural style was perhaps inappropriately grand, with the Docking workhouse a faint (though suitably humble) reflection of Holkham Hall, and the Aylsham house reminiscent of near-by Blickling.

As a highly agricultural county with some local problems of surplus labour, Norfolk's pauper population was proportionately some 70 per cent above

the national average and *per capita* relief expenditure was comparably high. Though the guardians, as elsewhere, resorted to doubtful means of increasing outdoor relief, the proportion of paupers so maintained (between 80.3 and 84.3 per cent in 1839-47) was below the national average. Detailed study of provision in the workhouses chronicles the development of specialized care for the old, the sick, and the young. Workhouse schools even possessed some advantages over others in the villages (though in one union the farmer-guardians objected to the use of maps in the schoolroom as tending to encourage migration and a fall in the labour reserve for harvest). Adequacy of provision, indeed, was pulled in opposite directions by the humane concern of some guardians and central officials (who included Dr J. P. Kay, later Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth), and the pressure for economy exerted by the ratepayers. Outdoor relief for the aged, for example, fell far short of the modest 4s. 6d. which was thought to be a reasonable weekly allowance in 1895. The chairman of the St Faith's guardians was asked how he expected old persons to live on the average of 2s. 6d. paid in his union. "I tell you it is a miracle to me," he replied, "and they cannot do it without some help or another." A miraculous existence on half a crown a week makes a sad comment on the state of Norfolk rural society at the end of the last century.

G. E. MINGAY

Shorter Notices

Beamish One: First Report of the North of England Open Air Museum. The Museum, Beamish Hall, Stanley, Co. Durham, 1978. 72 pp., 80 illus. £1.75 post-free.

This first *Report* of the North of England Open Air Museum is only in part an account of the Museum's first years of growth (it was opened in 1970); it is also a useful contribution to the industrial archaeology and agrarian history of the region. Illustrated articles deal with the northern chaldron coal wagon, colliery winding engines, and cottage beds, and a longer study by Vera Chapman of farms on the moorland edge is especially valuable for readers of this journal. Three farms, carved out of the moorland by enclosure in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, are discussed in some detail, and there are interesting plans and photographs of the farmsteads and buildings. The creation of these marginal farms and their subsequent vicissitudes make an intriguing story.

GEORGE STURT, *The Bettesworth Book; William Smith, Potter and Farmer: 1790-1858.* Firle, Sussex, Caliban Books, 1978. xv + 325 pp. and x + 230 pp. respectively. £7.50 each volume.

These two books by George Sturt (*alias* Bourne) have been republished through the enterprise of Caliban Books of 13 The Dock, Firle, Sussex. *The Bettesworth Book* is the first part of three studies of Frederick Bettesworth, who as Frederick Grover worked for Sturt as a gardener at Lower Bourne, near Farnham, Surrey, in the 1890's. The new volume is a facsimile of the second edition published in 1902. *William Smith* is Sturt's biography of his grandfather, first published in 1919; Smith's pottery and farm were at Farnborough, Hampshire. Both volumes are illuminating sources, full of Sturt's affection for a now lost countryside, and bring to life a rural society, way of life, and forms of speech which, too, have disappeared.

Notes and Comments

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The spring conference will be held at the College of Ripon and York St John, Ripon, north Yorkshire, from 9 to 11 April. Papers will be presented as follows: Dr E. J. T. Collins (Reading University), 'English woodlands since charcoal iron, 1750-1914'; Mr R. T. Fieldhouse (Leeds University), 'Agriculture in Wensleydale from 1600 to the present day'; Dr P. M. Roebuck (New University of Ulster), 'The rise of the large estate, 1640-1760: the evidence of the Yorkshire baronetage'; Mr D. Byford (Doncaster Metropolitan Institute of Higher Education), 'Agriculture in the south Yorkshire marshlands and Cornelius Vermuyden'; Mr S. A. Counce (Leeds University), 'Farming with horses in the East Riding of Yorkshire: an oral history'. There will be an excursion to Middleham and Masham led by the Secretary. Inquiries about the conference should be addressed to Dr J. A. Chartres, Secretary, BAHS, School of Economic Studies, The University, Leeds LS2 9JT.

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

The ninth Congress of the International Council on Archives is to be held in London, 15-19 September 1980, with the main theme 'The uses of archives'. Details may be obtained from ICAIX Secretariat, c/o Conference Organizing Division, Peter Peregrinus Ltd, 2 Savoy Hill, London WC2R 0BP.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPES STEERING GROUP

A steering group has been formed to further awareness of, and encourage and co-ordinate research in historic landscapes, and a handbook is in preparation. Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary, Historic Landscapes Steering Group, Department of Geography, Polytechnic of North London, Marlborough Building, 383 Holloway Road, London N7.

SOCIETY FOR LANDSCAPE STUDIES

The inaugural conference of a new Society for Landscape Studies is to be held in Leeds, 31 March-1 April 1979. The society intends to publish the proceedings of this conference as the first volume of a new periodical, *Landscape History*, to appear annually from 1979. Inquiries about membership of the society should be addressed to its Treasurer, Dr R. T. Smith, School of Geography, The University, Leeds LS2 9JT.

FACTOR PRODUCTIVITY IN AGRICULTURE IN INDUSTRIALIZING ECONOMIES

A limited number of complete sets of the papers on

this subject, which were presented to the International Economic History Congress at Edinburgh in August 1978, are now available. The papers are: William N. Parker and Stephen J. DeCania (Yale), 'Two hidden sources of productivity growth in American agriculture, 1860-1930'; B. A. Holderness (East Anglia), 'Productivity trends in English agriculture, 1600-1850: observations and preliminary results'; G. P. H. Chorley (London), 'Nitrogen legumes and crop productivity in northern Europe (1750-1880)'; Roger Price (East Anglia), 'Labour productivity and agricultural revolution: the case of France, c. 1852-c. 1882'; P. K. O'Brien and D. Heath (Oxford), 'Agricultural efficiency in Britain and France, 1789-1914'; Radha Sinha (Glasgow), 'Agricultural productivity in Meiji Japan'; Cormac Ó Gráda (University College, Dublin), 'On some aspects of productivity change in Irish agriculture, 1845-1926'; Irena Kostrowicka (Warsaw), 'Changes in agricultural productivity in the kingdom of Poland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries'; Giorgio Porisini (Bologna), 'Results of research into wheat yields in Italy from 1815 to 1922'; Donald N. McCloskey (Chicago), 'Comments on the papers delivered to the session on agricultural productivity'. The set is available for £3, which includes postage by surface mail. Anyone requiring a set should write to the Director, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, Senate House, London WC1E 7HU. Cheques should be made payable to the "University of London".

WINTER CONFERENCE

The winter conference was held on 2 December 1978 at the Polytechnic of Central London, New Cavendish Street, and had as its theme 'Recent views on enclosure'. Some eighty or more members of the Society, and of the Historical Geography Research Group of the Institute of British Geographers, heard papers from Professor Maurice Beresford on 'Enclosure records within the Tudor and Stuart Chancery and Exchequer'; Dr John Chapman, 'Regional variations in parliamentary enclosure'; Dr Michael Martin, 'The small landowner and parliamentary enclosure: some Warwickshire evidence'; and Dr Michael Turner, 'Landownership and parliamentary enclosure'. The papers shed much new light on the nature and handling of evidences on enclosure, its economic and social costs, and on the fashionable issue of its economic determinants. Discussion was necessarily truncated in a one-day conference, but valuable none the less. It was one of the most successful winter conferences of recent years.