

## Book Reviews

STUART PIGGOTT (ed), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. I, Part I; Prehistory*. xxii + 451 pp. 14 plates, 66 figs, 9 tables. CUP, 1981. £27.50.

As an aspect of the study of our early past, agrarian prehistory is unquestionably fundamental, for the relationship between man and the soil is the quintessence of human affairs. Its development has combined some of the more remarkable elements of archaeological discipline. There is primarily the pioneer field archaeology of O G S Crawford and Eliot and E C Curwen, in Wessex and on the Sussex Downs, that formulated the concept of the 'Celtic' field which became a label for all ancient fields that were not patently mediaeval. To this can be added the ideas of Harold Peake, the prehistoric geography of Sir Cyril Fox, the economic and biological prehistoric archaeology of the Cambridge school, as epitomized by Graham Clark's *Farmers & Forests*, as well as a broad spectrum of work, direct and indirect, of a botanical and zoological nature. For many, its materialistic undertones, and occasional scientific gloss, may not have been without attraction. Nonetheless, it gained characteristics to a point where it has given us insights even into the elusive social dimension of our studies. Much of the impetus of recent years has been brought about by the absolute agriculture of our own age, busily eradicating vast acreages of ancient fields, as well as the farms and settlements integral to them. Two conferences have made a considerable contribution to this subject, their published papers having preceded this volume, for its *accouchement* has been protracted. Notwithstanding, the advent of this virile scion of a prestigious publishing house is to be welcomed for it will impart to agrarian prehistory the substance necessary to its place in our establishment.

The book, soundly bound in green cloth and labelled across its spine, is the work of an accomplished triumvirate: Stuart Piggott, the editor, examines *Early Prehistory*, the *Mesolithic* and earlier *Neolithic* considerations in 59 pages, Peter Fowler, *Later Prehistory*, the pattern of progress from the Boker horizon to AD 43 in 239 pages, and M L Ryder gives 112 pages to *Livestock*, from the presumptive *Neolithic* import of animals to Roman and Saxon times, thus augmenting vol I ii (AD 43–1042), published in 1972. Stuart Piggott's contribution is an elegant prologue, and M L Ryder's an epilogue, to that of Peter Fowler, which is the lion's share. Indeed, that portion could, without much emendation, stand as a book in its own right, for it treats comprehensively all the more immediate aspects of prehistoric agrarian archaeology in a way that will at once endear it to those who grapple with primary evidence in the field. Like the other sections, it has its own integral chapter system. It is a good book to read

(page-footnotes are an almost forgotten luxury). Stuart Piggott's urbane and perceptive prose, Peter Fowler's fresh and fulsome narrative with its undertones of trodden grass and acrid chalky plough-soil, and M L Ryder's acute account of the creatures that still, largely, sustain us, amply compensate for its *in tres partes* character. Odd infelicities occur; Fig 1 is upside-down, a writer's comments have been left on a diagram, there is an incorrect text-figure reference, while 'tracks' appears for 'tracts'. All these are probably a by-product of the prolonged production process which is reflected in Peter Fowler's appendices. Whereas one can see the logic of relating appendices and lists to a specific section, the middle of a volume is an unaccustomed place for them. The plates are in two packages, and, as would be expected, they are of good quality, apart from the mistiness of that depicting men with animals, and without exception they relate only to *Later Prehistory*, heightening the sense of a separate book within the volume. Although the key diagrams (pp 70–71) are cramped, the clear line drawings for the most part adhere to a common convention. *Early Prehistory* has only 2, *Livestock* only 6, but *Later Prehistory* uses 58, proportions which make for an imbalance, as there are aspects of the more modest sections which could have been enhanced by illustration.

Despite the minor discords this book is a notable accession to the literature of our studies, for while, on the one hand, it sets the stage for subsequent agrarian history, on the other it unifies much that is dispersed and often obscure, difficult of access, or not even published. Conjectures have no place here, one is confronted only with sustainable, although often incidental, evidence painstakingly assembled and scrupulously balanced. Its ideas and instances are also applicable to a more recent past. More detailed survey and record is an imperative if the information potential of the English landscape is ever to be exploited as it should be.

This volume's double-elephantine gestation cannot have done other than cause it to lack some of the impact that it would have had, for it is manifest that research has moved on. Those sections by Stuart Piggott and Peter Fowler were written in 1975, although appended afterthoughts advance to 1979, and that by M L Ryder, as he records, was completed in 1970. It is no fault of theirs that considerations and concepts, to the fore in 1981, are not fully developed or have found no place and it is an impracticable (and almost impossible) task even to try an excursus in terms of time past. One must therefore view the many qualities, the manifold strengths, and the few surprising omissions.

The advent of our country's *first farmers* has exercised prehistorians for the past half-century and it embodies the purport of the term *Neolithic*. This field of studies is almost synonymous with Stuart Piggott, for its inception, in modern form and development are largely his own. Following Humphrey Case, we have for long envisaged skin-boats, laden with seed-corn, animals and eager immigrants, making landfalls on our shores. An alternative to this would be the acculturation and change of our land's *Mesolithic* indigenes, yet, apparently, there is little to connect them with the *Neolithic* communities. Nevertheless, earlier usages survived and can be seen in the flint and stone industries, a predilection for venison, etc. Indeed, it could be maintained that the palpable absence of unequivocal houses and the fact that almost all evidence of occupation is no more than scattered hearths, pits, occasional post-structures with pottery, flints, stones and other rubbish, might be more indicative of a *Mesolithic* character than has hitherto been supposed. For, as Stuart Piggott has said, the transition from *Mesolithic* to *Neolithic* was not an inevitability, involving concepts of progress, people did not *have* to change. Yet profound changes did take place and thus there should be reasons for them, for their inception, acceptance, and ultimate ubiquity.

A clue to the nature of the changes may be the long barrows which were integral to the earlier *Neolithic* communities, and cover traces of tillage or stand on field boundaries. They often contained deposits, sometimes of occupation earth, rather than burials in the strict sense, and have been thought of as a panacea for soil deterioration. Another characteristic is their similarity to the long houses of the *Linear Pottery* people of the European mainland (whence our English agriculture would have been derived), a similarity so close that conscious imitation might be suspected. Thus it is conceivable that agriculture, in the first instance, was imitated, for there would have been long periods when there were interchanges across frontiers between *Linear Pottery* farmers and *Mesolithic* indigenes. Imitations of long houses, the long barrows, could have been a part of crop agriculture for they embodied the form rather than the substance. In like manner, our causewayed enclosures could have been conscious imitations of the earthworks surrounding some *Linear Pottery* settlements. For, as Stuart Piggott has said, agriculture was a novel form of subsistence but not necessarily more effective than that which it superseded. However, its potential may have been realized by *Mesolithic* burning which had created a parkland environment that facilitated the first imitative undertakings and ensured their ultimate success and dissemination. Sometime during the later *Neolithic* irrevocable change took place and thereafter men were truly farmers.

Farmers producing a surplus might have stimulated

the emergence of what Peter Fowler rather shyly labels as '*focal community monuments*'. The mighty earthworks and their timber buildings, with the stones of Stonehenge, are the achievements of an explosion of energy such as can only be ascribed to an increased population and a sophisticated social hierarchy. These can, in principle, be compared with the palaces of the Eastern Mediterranean and could have demanded a planned agrarian endeavour to sustain them. As he so rightly remarks, the Wessex floruit of the round barrows marked the zenith of henge-centred society. They were abandoned and, by the latter half of the second millennium BC, even the timber component of Stonehenge may have been dismantled. Thereafter the scene is dominated by small enclosures, with circular timber buildings, overt farms with their attendant fields, worked by men of a new, but modest, status. Large-scale landscape organization seems likely and hill-forts betoken a network of rural centres, many of which are also surrounded by fields which continued to proliferate in the countryside. By the later centuries BC, extensive *oppida*, urban in character, are the centres of power, with a considerable population and a market economy, while the country has a surplus of corn, cattle and other commodities for export. These are broadly Peter Fowler's conclusions based upon the agrarian evidence, which is heartening, for the present writer's own work produced something of the same order. He has given us an explicit prehistory from his sources in a way which shows the overwhelming importance of landscape evidence, particularly the quantity still surviving in the highland zone. Excavation, however large or spectacular, can elucidate no more than a microcosmic proportion of the total.

Perceptive evaluation of field archaeological material is to be expected in Peter Fowler's works and readers will not be disappointed for there is much to reflect upon and pursue. There are also equally acute appraisals of excavated sites and material: a good example is the commentary upon the difficulties inherent in the exposition of an individual farm, for the detailed evidence for the function of particular buildings, byres, stables, sties, etc, is either ambiguous or absent. A notable example is the surface churned by trampling at Hod Hill which should lead the observant to look for fossil pig-wallows and the like. The numerous drains, ostensibly for ground-water, which are a feature of certain chambers of the courtyard-houses in Cornwall and on Scilly, could have served for the housing of livestock, which would have made the interiors dirty and smelly, but warm. Matters of prehistoric demography are treated realistically, although warily, as R. J. C. Atkinson's population estimates for the *Neolithic* and *Bronze Age* assume that barrows were mausolea, a function that the long, and many of the round, may not have had.

M. L. Ryder stresses that much of what he has to say

is of an interim nature and that we are moving towards the notion that the bond linking early human communities to their livestock was a part of the wider pattern of ecological relationships common to living things. Domestication, following F E Zeuner, is a matter of deliberation, although C D Darlington's evolutionary contentions find a place. It is a measure of the material that it has worn so well for, although we contemplate man-animal relationships in *Advanced Palaeolithic* and *Mesolithic* times, it is possible that there may have been gradually intensifying stages leading to domestication and that there was a symbolic moment when certain animals might have been really *domestic*. Animal husbandry, in terms of archaeological periods, is not always easy to follow, and the inclusion of material appropriate to Part II, at the cost of expansive detail in this part, is questionable. The contentions regarding *Mesolithic* clearance were current in 1970, thus the observations regarding cattle, pigs and goats in forests could have been qualified, while the underlying ideas of archaeological diffusion read oddly. The strength and attraction of this section are the discerning details of characteristics, habits and needs that it contains; acorns were for pigs and even they rebelled at horse-chestnuts! Species are discussed, perforce beyond prehistory, and, clearly, many of the comments are going to be cited for years to come. The inclusion of poultry was a happy thought and here one might profitably look back to the fowling of the *Mesolithic* communities and, as in other places, consider the nature of *domestication*. Honey bees find a place and one should think of the survival and recognition of wax, important because of *cire perdue* casting on archaeological sites (some was found at Sutton Hoo) and how else evidence of early apiculture might present itself. As O G S Crawford once observed, the frequent occurrence of *honey-ways* in Anglo-Saxon charters needs explanation!

Agricultural activity has been a human prescription from time out of mind. Fields are probably the best-known features of our landscape and even the most deprived urban dweller no longer insists that milk comes from a clean tin rather than a dirty cow. Its ancient remains are still, despite incalculable damage, a prime source of information regarding our ancient past and it was then that complex processes were set into motion. The editor of this volume once reminded us that '*Custom not Calory is King*', which factor has eventually determined the usages of our own times, not to mention an uncertain feature. Naturally, much remains to be done — more fieldwork before it is too late, the maintenance of apposite biological and ecological studies, the planning of experiment, the appraisal of historical sources and recent farming practice, etc, to name some of the main fields of research. This volume, because it is an assemblage of considerable knowledge and detail, has no peer and can

be assured of a long, active, and efficacious use-life.

Stuart Piggott, as has been observed above, remarks that the new form of subsistence may have been no more efficient than that which it superseded. One is irresistibly reminded of Rudyard Kipling's poem, that sorrowful story told in *The Legends of Evil* (1890), in which the nature of the agrarian yoke is concisely expounded.

PAUL ASHBEE

ANDREW SHERRATT (ed), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Archaeology*. CUP, 1980. 495 pp. 120 maps in colour. £18.50.

Fifty-five authors have contributed to this abundantly illustrated book, all of them specialists within their branches and areas of archaeology. It is not a normal encyclopedia in the sense of an alphabetical compendium, but relates facts in a similar way without much speculation about the life they reflect. It covers the history of man from the emergence of the first hominids to the end of the European Middle Age, divided in a broadly chronological and geographical sequence and including all parts of the world.

The first part gives a short outline of the development of modern archaeology including the movement called 'New Archaeology' which spread from USA as an attempt to transform archaeology into a natural science, aiming to reveal the laws which have inevitably determined the development of mankind from the oldest times. Of course, the stressing of man's relationship to his environment is a fertile basis, although it is not so new as enthusiastic young scholars, ignorant of European trends in the 1930's, think it to be.

But what archaeologists — 'new' as well as 'old' — often forget is the danger emphasized by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in an article in *Antiquity*, 1952 (p 180) that 'the archaeologist will find the tub and will completely miss Diogenes'. They are keen on reconstruction of patterns of society and trade, but they do not only miss Diogenes, they even miss the most fundamental matter of life: how to produce food enough for hungry mouths, not only those of hominids but, from the beginning of cattle breeding, also those of their tamed animals. The editor of this book, Dr Andrew Sherratt, who once worked with the Danish palaeobotanist J Troels-Smith, has proved his great interest in this question in a later publication, and a recently growing interest in 'experimental archaeology' and 'ethno-archaeology' promises an advance in this respect in the future. But readers interested in the development of husbandry will not find much to satisfy them in the book under review.

Still, there are many dispersed new observations on early agriculture, especially in the chapters on the Americas and East Asia. Very well written and

informative is the chapter on 'Early agriculture in the Americas' by Dr Warwick Bray, illustrated with pictures and diagrams showing the slow development of maize, common beans and bottle gourds, from about 6000 BC to about 1800 BC; and in the Tehuacan valley the channelling of slope run-off may date to 4000 BC. There is also evidence of modest swamp drainage and the artificial raising of beds from the Maya lowlands of Yucatan. In the classic period of the Aztecs AD 400-700 there was extensive use of floating gardens in the basin of Mexico, formed by dredging rich silt from the lake bottom and piling it up to form raised surfaces in the shallow lake, as mentioned by John O'Shea (p 389). Craig Morris of the American Museum of Natural History discusses terracing, irrigation and raised fields in the warm valleys and the coastal area of Peru (p 393), and Iris Barry has a very informative table of the major phases in Amazonian prehistory (p 400) indicating the use of manioc from the early second millennium BC, much earlier than one would have guessed.

Although it has now become evident that agricultural techniques did not spread from one centre, ie the Middle East, and although Sir Mortimer Wheeler stressed the importance of independent inventions alongside diffusion, Andrew Sherratt is still too restricted in his view on the early agricultural communities in Europe. How can we be sure that the hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithicum suffered more and more from stress because productive lowlands were drowned along the coasts? According to recent palaeobotanical evidence cattle and small corn-plots already existed in what is called the Ertebolle-period. The cattle were fed by twigs and leaf-fodder but not allowed to browse, and the little corn grown — presumably by the women — did not exclude the hunting, fishing and gathering which were still important activities. However, at just the same time another kind of husbandry was introduced by cattle-breeders who made 'swiddens' by slashing and burning in order to open grazing areas for their herds. This proves that in Central Europe as well as in south Scandinavia two kinds of husbandry existed. Probably some kind of ard-plough was used for breaking the soil — traces have been found in Britain as well as on the continent — while other tools of tillage were used in well-cultivated fields for sowing, etc. This picture will probably be even more diversified when more evidence is published. Concepts of stress and population pressure have been in fashion for a while but they are surely an oversimplification of the situation. Moreover, culture-contacts do not necessarily lead to uniformity, because inspiration from other cultures might produce new ideas.

Much new evidence is related by Ian Glover in a chapter on Agricultural Origins in East Asia, an area as independent of Europe as the Americas, and new and

surprising facts are being published every year. The following chapter on India provides a brilliant illustration showing the citadel and town of Kalibangan dated to pre-Harappan time, ie the early third millennium BC. But again a most important feature is missing from the map, namely the irrigated fields just alongside the cemetery, fields which were tilled exactly like fields in the area today. The reviewer missed pictures of pre-historic ploughing implements, and an opportunity has been missed not only to show some nearly 4000-year-old furrows but also to illustrate how they were tilled by presenting us with a modern ploughman and his camel.

The last part of the book is called 'Pattern and Process', in which there is a popular synthesis of modern dating methods, including dendrochronology.

Despite the criticisms which may be made from an agricultural point of view the *Encyclopedia of Archaeology* presents so much, and such beautifully illustrated, evidence on the development of man in prehistoric and early historical times that it will be an excellent companion for everyone interested in the most recent data in this branch of knowledge.

AXEL STEENBERG

J BAKER and D BROTHWELL, *Animal Diseases in Archaeology*. Academic Press, 1980. 235 pp. £12.80.

In certain parts of the world, even today, the agriculturalist concentrates on plants, and the veterinarian, in addition to specializing in disease, becomes an adviser on livestock husbandry. Indeed, in order to become expert on disease he must be very familiar with all aspects of the normal animal. By the same token the incidence of disease, and its treatment, in the past cannot be divorced from agricultural history, and so the agricultural historian and the veterinary historian are expected to be readers of this book as well as the archaeologist interested in animal remains. It is not only bone diseases for which evidence is found, but diseases of other tissues which can leave remains, and each can elucidate not only the history of a disease but the use to which an animal was put and how it was treated.

This book was the result of an almost chance meeting between a veterinary pathologist interested in archaeology (Baker) and an archaeologist interested in bones and their diseases (Brothwell). The evidence covered comes mainly from Britain, but also from the Americas. It starts with the earliest records — of the second millennium BC — a veterinary papyrus from Egypt, and a description of the dehorning of cattle in Babylonia. Next comes an outline of the appreciable veterinary knowledge of Greece and Rome.

The second chapter deals with the interpretation of mortality, which figures prominently in most

discussions of animal remains in relation to husbandry practices. The authors wisely caution against the too ready assumption that a high proportion of young among skeletal remains necessarily means domestication. Next considered is the natural history of disease, under the headings: the causal agent, the host, and the environment. Chapter 4 covers abnormalities of skeletal development, including holes in the posterior face of cattle skulls which the authors have not seen recorded in the literature, and for which they do not appear to have an explanation. Yet I devoted 500 words discussion to such holes in a description of medieval remains in this journal (vol IX, p 110, 1961).

In describing diseases of the immature skeleton they include 'double scalp' in sheep, without reference to the shepherding custom in which the affected skull is broken in a 'cracking' or 'knocking' operation. An answer to my reporting of this in vol IX, p 42 in fact appeared on p 111 after the above-mentioned discussion of holes in cattle skulls. Next follows details of inflammation, infection and necrosis of bone, and chapter 7 deals with traumatic injury, which, along with diseases of joints covered in chapter 9, is one of the more obvious changes seen in bones.

Chapter 8 deals with neoplasia, and chapter 10 oral pathology, of the jaws as well as the teeth. The treatment then moves on to miscellaneous skeletal diseases, before covering non-skeletal evidence of disease — bacteria in mummified tissue, the eggs of internal parasites, and arthropod external parasites. The last chapter forms a discussion with some conclusions.

There is a good list of references, a helpful glossary of technical terms, and a reasonable index. All in all this is an excellent book. Its pioneering approach brings together items published in a wide range of journals, and it covers more than indicated by the title, notably in drawing attention to pitfalls in the interpretation of animal remains. I was, however, disappointed to find no discussion on zoonoses — diseases shared by man and animals — since these could possibly tell us something about the history of the association of animals with man.

M L RYDER

F A ABERG (ed), *Medieval Moated Sites*, Council for British Archaeology. 1978. 93 pp. £6.

In recent years the Moated Sites Research Group, sponsors of this useful volume, has co-ordinated collection of information on what must be one of the commonest types of medieval rural earthwork. Of the

ten contributions, four on specific areas (Bedfordshire, Essex, Worcestershire, and south-east Ireland) and two more general essays (by C C Taylor and C J Bond) use and discuss the traditional methods of field archaeology: they are concerned with the identification, recording, classification, and mapping of moated sites. H E J Le Patourel, writing on 'Documentary Evidence', shows how certain sources lead towards identification of the owners of moats, but she dismisses too briefly the only common type of document which will ever reveal much about their agrarian and other functions, namely those medieval manorial accounts which painstakingly record costs of upkeep of the barns and other buildings which were part of moated complexes. Then, in 'The Significance of Moated Sites', she and B K Roberts provide the best discussion to date of moated sites not simply as fragile relics but as the reflection of a vital if violent society. One hopes that in the future more attention will be given to three aspects of the subject. First, moated sites need to be considered in the wider perspective of their kinship with other defensive structures once common in areas where building stone was easily obtainable: towers, first-floor halls, enclosures with gatehouses, and, that simplest of defences, the courtyard farm where massive blank back walls of barns served to deter the intruder. In this volume S E Rigold suggests in passing that to see moats as variants of the courtyard farm is perhaps more sensible than their usual classification as diminutives and imitations of the Norman *motte*. Second, a deeper chronological perspective should be sought. Given the prevalence of place-names containing a personal element compounded with Old English *burh* (defended place) or *græf* (trench), one wonders why the idea of the defended homestead is still traced no further back than the eleventh century. Third, the time has come for a more formal enquiry into the social context of moats and other minor defensive structures. The oft-repeated view that moats were for display and not for defence ignores the natural convergence of these two motives: ostentatious expenditure needs to be defended, while defended structures are, in their very nature, a form of display. Moats must surely be seen in the context of the endemic thuggery of the Middle Ages; a brigandage which was by no means restricted to woodlands, though its high incidence in well-wooded areas, together with certain features of their social structure, possibly contributed to the large numbers of moated sites in regions such as Arden or Essex; of aspirations and tensions among a class of minor landed gentry to whom a large proportion of moats once belonged. Nor must it be forgotten that, on occasion, lords needed defence against their tenants. It was for this reason that the lord of The Mote in Kent applied in 1382 for a licence to rebuild his house with new defences; the old one was *per communes nuper insurgentes prolatam*.

H S A FOX

DAVID GRIGG, *Population Growth and Agrarian Change. An Historical Perspective*. CUP, 1980. xi + 340 pp. £20.

In this ambitious book Grigg sets out to trace the classical Malthusian interaction between population growth and food supplies in western Europe from the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries. His argument is fairly conventional, focusing on over-population in the two or three generations before the Black Death, on mounting pressure on food resources in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and on the relief of that pressure by means of agricultural improvements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The tragedy of the Irish famine of the 1840s is added to the general survey of the earlier centuries under the heading 'Malthus justified', while a scrutiny of Holland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries supplements studies of England, France and Scandinavia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to illustrate the theme of 'Malthus refuted'. A final section, under the general heading 'Malthus returns', examines trends in developing countries in the late twentieth century.

These three sections are unified by a common methodology which is set out in an introductory section. Specific criteria for over-population are enumerated: the sub-division of holdings, rising rents and food prices, a growing proportion of the landless in the rural population, and the intensification of land use. Two areas of response to these evidences of over-population are distinguished. First, various possibilities of raising agricultural output are considered: the expansion of the cultivated area, increased frequency of cropping by the introduction of clover, legumes and root crops and the elimination of fallow, and the adoption of higher yielding crops like maize and potatoes; second, the demographic responses of fertility control, the raising of mortality either by the increasing frequency and severity of mortality crises or by the secular rise of normal levels, and migration. The full analysis of these demographic trends is difficult, given the paucity of data, though there is currently rather more information available in print than Grigg has made use of. Nor is it always possible to be sure that a given demographic trend, even where it can be established with confidence, was necessarily a direct consequence of the pressures of over-population or release from them: there were other influences at work.

The migration that Grigg takes account of is, in the main, a rural exodus to the towns, and in importing this phenomenon into his analysis Grigg seriously mars his Malthusian scheme. He clearly interprets the switch from agricultural to industrial occupations in the countryside and migration from country to town as one widely-adopted solution to the problem of rural over-population. In an occupational sense, of course, this was so, but in a Malthusian sense, which is the sense in which his own analytical framework firmly places it,

this was no solution at all. The industrial and urban populations had still to be fed, but Grigg's scheme seems to disregard their food needs once they left their rural, agrarian origins. In stressing the density of rural populations Grigg overlooks the importance of the relationship between the total food supply and the total population of any economic region. It is true, of course, that urban populations tended to have higher mortality rates than those of rural populations, and so contributed to reducing the overall rate of growth of population; and that urban populations tended to have easier access to imported food, particularly in time of harvest failure: but Grigg has nothing to say about these elements in the Malthusian equation.

Since he returns to this theme many times it must constitute a blemish on an otherwise admirable book. Generally the arguments are comprehensively supported with well-selected statistical tables and diagrams. His clear, if simple, analytical scheme has led him to search for, and mostly to find, statistical evidence of trends in his selected variables for the countries and periods that constitute his case-studies. He has read widely and marshalls a considerable body of material with commendable lucidity. His analytical scheme, scrupulously followed in every section, lends a homogeneity to diverse case-studies that is so often lacking when comparative history of this kind is attempted. In so broad a canvas, of course, some specialists will inevitably find grounds for criticism when the author trespasses on their own hunting-grounds. British agricultural historians, for example, will be disturbed to find the rise in grain prices up to 1813 attributed, apparently, wholly to population pressure, as though the blockade and wartime monetary inflation were of no relevance. The subsequent sharp fall in prices in spite of continuing population growth is not noticed, though it clearly had some bearing on any analysis of the pre-1813 price rise. The value of the book, however, lies not in its detailed observations but in its conceptualization and broad analytical framework. It usefully complements Abel's great study of European agricultural fluctuations, an English translation of which has appeared almost simultaneously. With the one qualification mentioned above, this is a most admirably conceived and executed book.

M W FLINN

I J GENTLES and W J SHEILS, *Confiscation and Restoration: the Archbishopric Estates and the Civil War*. Borthwick Papers, No 59. St Anthony's Hall, Peasholme Green, York, 1981. 53 pp. £1.20.

Research in the last 30 years or so has made us familiar, in general outline, with events surrounding Parliament's confiscation and sale of estates during the Civil War, and their restoration after 1660. But detailed

examples like this one are always welcome. The two authors, each with a different expertise, have collaborated to tell the fortunes of one large ecclesiastical estate — that of the Archbishop of York. Professor Gentles examines the sales mostly from central records, while Dr Sheils uses the unusually detailed evidence from the Archbishop's muniments in the Borthwick Institute to explain the method of the restoration after 1660.

The previous work of Professor Gentles and others has prepared us for most of his conclusions. Considered by value, almost half the Archbishop's estate (mostly lying in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire) was bought by Londoners, largely because payments could be made by doubling on public faith bills, and Parliament's supporters and creditors could thereby secure land in place of the government's IOU's. Among other purchasers very few were tenants (many fewer than those who bought Crown lands in the 1650's), but rather more were local people of the minor gentry class. Resales were unusual before 1660, and in general Professor Gentles believes that the lands were well stewarded by the new owners. Dr Sheils's contribution is more novel in revealing, in fresh and immediate detail, the way restoration was relatively painlessly and satisfactorily concluded between 1660 and 1664. The architect of the settlement was the new Archbishop Frewen, whom Dr Sheils judges to have been an old man in a hurry. But he was also perhaps a wise old owl who recognized that compromises and concessions were essential in a difficult situation. He encouraged private agreements between old tenants and commonwealth purchasers, and was then content to accept from leaseholders smaller entry fines in consideration of their other expenditure. For new leases tenants rarely paid as much as six years' purchase for a three-life lease and often far less. Former purchasers sometimes established a claim to continue as leaseholders, but those who did not are presumed to have relinquished their claim to a stronger competitor, recognizing that they had already received a good return on their investment. In the final analysis (and appendices set out the details concerning purchasers and post-restoration tenants) Dr Sheils concludes that the confiscations produced changes in tenancies that were only marginally greater than those occurring in the normal course of events. He arrives at this verdict ingeniously by comparing the turnover of tenants that occurred between the 1630's and 1660's with those occurring between the 1660's and 1695. Thus it can be shown that Parliament's sales made considerably less impact than sales of monastic estates in the 1540's and '50's.

JOAN THIRSK

MICHAEL HUNTER, *Science and Society in Restoration England*. CUP, 1981. xii + 233 pp. £18.50.

Since the 1960's the main focus of research in the history of science has moved from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. Historians of science no longer concentrate on one supposed 'scientific revolution' which took place in the 1600's but consider the internal development and external consequences of science in many periods. The once flourishing industry of articles on the origins of the Royal Society has all but dried up as scholars have turned to examine other scientific institutions. Nevertheless there is room for a synthetic work to provide for the 1980's a conspectus of scholarship on science and learning in late seventeenth-century England. This book fulfils admirably this function — and more — since the author is able to provide a critical analysis which should be of value to a wide range of historians. Not the least useful part of the book is the concluding bibliographical essay.

Some economic historians and others have assumed that the only possible motive for studying the natural world is a utilitarian one. Certainly readers of this journal will have a legitimate interest in the agricultural projects of the Royal Society. Its so-called 'Georgical Committee', set up in 1664, attempted to compose a History of Agriculture in the Baconian tradition in order to improve agricultural practice. Especially notable was John Evelyn's *Sylva, or a Discourse of Forest-Trees and the Propagation of Timber in His Majesties Dominions*, a useful compendium which went through many editions. At a time when men with avowed interests in the natural world were seeking respectability, the practical consequences of Evelyn's book could have been cited as one of the more obvious national benefits of the work of the Royal Society. Yet Dr Hunter points out that, despite the interests of Restoration 'scientists' in military and naval technology, practical applications of science were quite a minor part of the Society's activity. He points to the wide diversity of its members' concerns and he is particularly interested in the religious, political and social implications of the ideas discussed by men who, he insists, were largely university educated. There were very few merchants among the early members of the Royal Society.

MAURICE CROSLAND

C P ELRINGTON (ed), *The Victoria History of Gloucestershire, Volume VII*. OUP for Institute of Historical Research, 1981. xix + 254 pp. illus. £48.

This addition to the Gloucestershire series of the VCH deals with two adjacent hundreds, those of Brightwells Barrow and Rapsgate, lying to the south-east of the

county. The twelve parishes of Brightwells Barrow form a compact body extending from the Cotswolds downland in the north to the flat alluvial meadows of the county boundary along the north bank of the Thames. Rapsgate hundred with ten parishes, comprises an area of the Cotswolds running from the escarpment above Gloucester on the west to the valley of the river Coln on the east. The Foss Way provides part of the hundred's eastern boundary, while Ermin Street, running from Cirencester to Gloucester, crosses the high ground of the western part.

Both hundreds saw extensive sheep farming in the middle ages, with much of the land belonging to the bishop of Worcester, the Knights Hospitallers, and the abbeys of Cirencester, Gloucester, Pershore, and Llanthony, among others. Private owners in Rapsgate hundred included the earls of Warwick and the Giffards, together with families of lesser note; a marked feature of the middle nineteenth century was the purchase of estates in the district by successful cotton manufacturers and financiers.

The predominance of agriculture in both hundreds met with little challenge from industry. The two small market towns of Fairford and Lechlade relied mainly on local trade and the stagecoach traffic, though Lechlade benefited from its position at the head of navigation on the Thames and was a centre for the shipment of cheese down river to London. A cloth-making industry based on Fairford and mills in the Coln valley never became of great significance, and in Rapsford the only local industry to employ many hands, apart from stoneworking, was the potteries established at Cranham in the late eighteenth century and after.

In Brightwells Barrow hundred the open fields were mainly enclosed in the course of the eighteenth century, and the change very generally resulted in a ploughing up of pasture land and a corresponding increase in tillage. Although arable predominated, production was largely based on a sheep and corn style of husbandry, and some large farms, running to several hundred acres each, emerged. Even in Kempsford, which had valuable meadow land alongside the Thames (recorded as being 'drowned' as water meadows every winter from 1707), saw arable predominant after enclosure, though dairying for cheese was an important element in the parish economy.

Much the same type of development occurred also in the parishes of Rapsgate hundred. Much piecemeal private enclosure, mainly in the eighteenth century, was completed by private Act, and after enclosure there was the same tendency towards an expansion of arable, large farms (some as big as 1000 acres), and the supremacy of sheep and corn farming. The depression of the later nineteenth century saw a retreat of arable and an increase in dairying. Most of the villages were small estate-dominated settlements, but Chedworth, with more divided ownership, was a much larger

village with a population of a thousand in 1831 and formed a centre for independent craftsmen and non-conformity.

The volume is produced to the usual high standards of the VCH; as usual, too, it is unfortunate that the hundred and parish framework makes its material difficult for the agricultural historian to utilize.

G E MINGAY

AD VAN DER WOUDE and ANTON SCHUURMEN (eds), *PROBATE INVENTORIES. A new source for the historical study of wealth, material culture and agricultural development*. Papers presented at the Leeuwenborch Conference (Wageningen: 5-7 May 1980), Afdeling Agrarische Geschiedenis. Bijdragen 23. Landbouwhogeschool, Wageningen, 1980.

The title of this publication, for the contents of which there can be nothing but awe and admiration, makes the claim that these references to probate inventories are the birth of a new source of information, but in my humble way, assisted by V G B Atwater, I pointed out the value of this source in a brief essay in *History*, NS 20 (79) (Dec 1935), 'Farmers goods and chattels: 1500-1800'. This is of course miniscule when confronted with the widespread investigations which a galaxy of European scholars of many countries presented at the Leeuwenborch Conference, and are here printed for the information of the world, if that world has the linguistic ability to appreciate them. I do not dare to suppose that one brief and long forgotten essay was the progenitor of this great variety of enterprise and scholarship exercised by research workers living in many countries, indeed most countries in western Europe.

Long gone are the Macaulay and Thomas Carlyle pictures of events: now we are less picturesque but more precise. Possibly the current of investigation as well as social circumstances are so changed that the result is that no-one can ever be original, if that is necessary in historical research. Ideally of course each of these collections of inventories would have been of the same date or dates, and the depositions of the same or almost the same social class, or almost identical, not as the untoward world has it, of many different periods in the several different countries represented, thus being not strictly comparable. From Finland to Italy is a far cry and the differences and divergencies in the documents is emphasized by varied social conditions as well as the spatial locations to which the documents relate.

It would be impossible in the limited space at my disposal to discuss the details of each paper, to my chagrin much as I should like the task; but a few selected at random can perhaps be mentioned. These

studies are an answer to the manifold questions that can be asked about the physical condition of the people who died in this wide geographical area during several centuries, and who left behind them records of their possessions and perhaps physical environment in which they lived. On p 105 are given with Teutonic precision, the assessment of the cattle numbers, the size of holdings and the implements and tools owned by the testators. These details are of the utmost interest, as indeed are those of the domestic furniture and kitchen equipment. This is, of course, a system of information that is restricted to the German contributions. There are many thousands of inventories dealing with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that have been meticulously examined by adepts in France, and naturally many in Holland, eg Delft in the eighteenth century by Thera Wigsen Beek, which is written in English, as is Jan Ruuse's essay about Swedish probate inventories and that of Carl John Gadd.

One thing is very certain. The character of the documents, as Micheline Baulant and her collaborators said, restricts the limits of possibility of what the researchers may do, something that must be understood and respected as a limitation by researchers: but the vast amount of documents to be examined is very greatly emphasized by David I Garrard in dealing more or less with Suffolk inventories made between 1570 and 1700, a collection he only found it possible to deal with by computer.

I could of course place some emphasis upon the value of the work done on English material. I could equally well emphasize that done by German, French or even Swedish scholars. These printed particulars are really quite amazingly valuable to the social historian, perhaps more especially to those engaged upon illuminating the rural scene, what was indeed almost the universal scene when these documents were written for immediate purposes and have now been rescued for the information of curious historians.

Perhaps their researches and the results here printed will provide, if no more, an idea of the physical circumstances in which our ancestors lived and had their being as well as the equipment they had to hand for working in the field, the farm, the farmhouse, and occasionally, in the establishments of the larger landowners and a few of the nobility who owned great possessions and ruled the lives of the lesser landowners.

G E FUSSELL

RICHARD GOUGH, *The History of Myddle*. Introduction by Peter Razzell. Caliban Books, Firle, Sussex. 1979. xxxii + 184 pp. £7.50.

Probably most readers of the *Review* will have heard of this celebrated book, written between 1700 and 1706, and will be familiar with Professor Hoskins' praise of

the first modern edition (Centaur Press, 1968): 'Gough's *History of Myddle* . . . sounds like the narrowest kind of parish-pump history one could possibly imagine, of interest only to devoted local historians in Shropshire. It is in fact a unique book. It gives us a picture of seventeenth-century England in all its wonderful and varied detail such as no other book that I know even remotely approaches . . . a whole countryside, an entire society, comes alive in our minds, in a way that no historian, however skilled, can possibly evoke . . . this remarkable book is . . . one of the most entertaining ever written in English, unique in our literature.' Most readers will probably also be familiar with David Hey's excellent study of Myddle (*An English Rural Community, Myddle, under the Tudors and Stuarts*, 1974), which provides an essential background to Gough's book.

Yet the original edition, for all its virtues, also had some faults. Gough's procedure was to describe the village families in regular order according to which pew they occupied in church, and in parts his style can be confusing and wearisomely genealogical. In the new edition Peter Razzell has cut out a good deal of the original, which he regards as of purely antiquarian interest, and has re-arranged the presentation and modernized the spelling. Undoubtedly the readability has been enhanced, but scholars may regret that a fair amount of Gough's historical background material has been omitted. If so they should consult the 1981 Penguin edition, where the complete text is edited by David Hey.

Richard Gough was a small freehold farmer who lived in the hamlet of Newton-on-the-Hill in the parish of Myddle near Shrewsbury, and was 66 years old when he began writing his book in 1700. He continued adding material until 1706. He could remember the outbreak of the civil war in 1642, and could relate events told to him by his parents and grandparents, which stretched back to the reign of Elizabeth. Gough lived at a time of rapid social and political change, and Dr Razzell in his introduction, written from the point of view of a social historian, highlights some of the social attributes of life in Myddle which might surprise us — the amount of lawless violence, the drunkenness and sexual promiscuity which we perhaps might not have expected to be so flagrant in an age when religion and hierarchical social order are supposed to have been so prominent.

But this was also an age of considerable change and development in farming and it is to this aspect which the agricultural historian naturally turns. It has to be confessed that in this area the book is not as revealing as it is in social matters. Perhaps because Gough had spent his life as a farmer the subject was over-familiar to him and his readers (and hence tended to be taken for granted)? Perhaps Shropshire was too remote from centres of agricultural change around London, in East

Anglia, and in southern England to have been much influenced by them? Perhaps Gough himself was unsympathetic to innovation? One contemptuous reference reveals that he had a low opinion of one of the agents of change — land surveyors. 'Thomas Spendlove of Clive, . . . was a crafty contriving old fellow, a great surveyor and measurer of lands (My old schoolmaster, Mr. William Sugar did usually call him *Longo limite mensor*).'

Yet Gough could also pay tribute to successful farming based on new methods. The Watkins family had improved Shotton farm over three generations. William Watkins, in the early seventeenth century 'was a person well educated, and fit for a greater employment than that of a husbandman. He was once under Shreive of this county: but his chief delight was in good husbandry, which is indeed, a delightful calling. He found this farm much overgrown with thorns, briars, and rubbish. He employed many day labourers (to whom he was a good benefactor), in clearing and ridding his land; and having the benefit of good marl, he much improved his land, built part of the dwelling house, and joined a brewhouse to it, which he built of fine stone. He built most part of the barns, and made beast houses of fine stone.' His son Francis was a captain in the Parliamentary army, who took over the farm after the civil wars. He inherited his father's 'art of good husbandry, in which his care, diligence, and skill, was not exceeded by any in this county. He marled several pieces and got abundance of corn. He purchased lands in Tylley Park, and certainly, if he had lived, he had been an exceeding rich man.' By 1701 his son William was occupying the farm, and had 'such skill, care and industry in good husbandry as his grandfather and father had, for he is not inferior to either of them therein'.

Myddle was in the heart of a livestock region, and other farmers thrived by making small enclosures in its still numerous commons, marshes, and woods, like John Wagge, a carpenter who built himself a house in Myddle Wood and made a small farm by enclosing some pieces round about it. Richard Challoner, a cooper, was another of several who did likewise. Evidence of widening agricultural horizons is also given. 'Ralph Guest . . . was a sober peaceable man; his employment was buying corn in one market town, and selling it in another, which is called badgeing.' In Tudor times there had been statutes against badgers, but by 1700 it had become socially respectable. John Foden and his wife Mary thrived by keeping 'a good stock of cows and a good team of horses with which he carried goods to London'. These few examples illustrate the flavour of Gough's style but it is only by perusal that one can savour the book's full richness. Dr Razzell has aided the reader by providing an especially detailed index.

MICHAEL HAVINDEN

ALEXANDER FENTON and BRUCE WALKER, *The Rural Architecture of Scotland*. Edinburgh, John Donald, 1981. ix + 242 pp. 160 illustrations. £15.

*The Rural Architecture of Scotland* takes the form of a survey of the development of buildings associated with farming, without apparent limit as to period. No buildings outside the strict realm of farming are considered. A great range of evidence is used — disused ruins, buildings still used or inhabited, and written sources. Indeed the weight of precisely described detail is almost overwhelming and the result is a compendium of the state of knowledge of the subject as defined by the authors; it has behind it personal and institutional resources of information gathering, summarized in chapters 2–4.

The method of interpretation in its severe limitation to factual detail is very personal to the authors. They look very carefully, and with clear and informed vision, at the material structures and interpret for the uninformed the significance of many details of material and constructional technique. They successfully show how building customs were adapted to available materials and to necessary purposes. There is, then, much of interest to the general, as well as to the specialist, reader, answers delivered with unchallengeable authority to the questions that may occur as we view the material relics and buildings around us. Interpretation of the inert remains is also much helped by Bruce Walker's pen and ink drawings, which are always, of course, meticulously accurate but also have aesthetic quality. There are, too, plans and photographs in abundance.

However, the historian whose interests run wider than this confined but clear view of the techniques of building, or who merely wants to ask why it so happened, may find himself in some confusion. The plan of the book is to deal topically in separate chapters with aspects of building — 'Roofing Materials', 'Walling Materials' and so on. Within each chapter there is a form of chronological arrangement but even this is sometimes erratic (as in chapter 5). It is a laborious matter, then, to establish anything like a general view for particular periods. It follows that the influence of social or even agricultural developments is scarcely noticed; nor can the influence of architecture on social life, on comfort, for example, or on farming technique, be adequately traced. There are some exceptions when the view is momentarily widened. Massive agricultural changes assigned somewhat vaguely to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are allowed a place and serve as a dividing line in the successive phases of farm building. But no other decisive waves of change are mentioned. For example, we hear nothing of the building boom of the third quarter of the nineteenth century which created at least a major part of our stock of farm buildings. There is a chapter on the influence of technology but this turns

out to be little more than a discussion of the housing of threshing machines and their motive power.

Another result of the book's layout is that regional traditions and differences appear only in glimpses, for the most part treated quite unsystematically. There is, it is true, a chapter devoted to the Grampian region but this merely signifies more intensive surveying, without any attempt to establish what were the regional traditions and how they arose.

The volume as a whole, then, gives an authoritative and clear view of how building was carried on, with much realistic detail and fine illustration; but it tells us little of why the traditions arose and of how they changed in response to social needs and opportunities. If some of these criticisms seem severe they arise from a sense of disappointment that so much learning and analytic skill has not been fitted to the general historical picture.

MALCOLM GRAY

DENNIS R. MILLS, *Lord and Peasant in Nineteenth Century Britain*. Croom Helm, 1980. 232 pp. 23 tables, 17 figures. £13.95.

This study in historical geography investigates what Dr Mills plausibly claims was the basic dichotomy which existed in the social distribution of landownership in the nineteenth century, namely, the distinction between the 'estate' and 'peasant' systems. The former commanded large amounts of capital and land while the latter was characterized by small units of production employing little capital. These two systems, he indicates, produced the two well-known types of English village, 'close' and 'open' ones respectively. While contemporaries were keenly aware of the latter alternative categories, particularly in the context of poor law administration, the author contends that their conception of a clear-cut dichotomy as too simplistic. He presents the findings of his own researches and those of others to demonstrate that it is more accurate to think in terms of four types of village, namely, estate villages, absentee landlord townships, divided townships, and peasant villages.

Having established the validity of the model of close and open villages, albeit pointing to the subdivision of the two main types, Dr Mills proceeds to examine 'the origins and basis of village differentiation' and 'how and where the model worked'. The discussion of the latter is particularly useful, drawing together as it does the scattered writings relating to the impact of the social distribution of landownership on many aspects of English village life — on the poor laws and population growth, occupations, housing, religion, social control, and protest and politics. As we would expect, the

author is careful to demonstrate the geographical distribution of close and open villages and a watchful eye is kept in this respect on the division of England into 'champion' and 'hamlet' areas. Dr Mills is also concerned in this section to demonstrate how his model of the estate and peasant systems runs counter to Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* dichotomy, which envisages a major social cleavage between face-to-face rural communities enjoying traditional, harmonious relationships and the impersonal, commercial relationships of urban inhabitants.

The study sets itself two further objectives. In the first place, it seeks to compare the English situation with rural Scotland and Wales. The author claims that, broadly speaking, Scotland possessed most of the features of the estate system while Wales, on the other hand, was a highly developed peasant society akin to the English peasant system in certain crucial respects as the neglect of their properties by the landlords (with the exception of the very large ones), the lack of social control of gentry and clergy, the emphasis upon the family as the unit of production and the prominence of kinship ties. An aspect of the Welsh scene which did not wholly 'fit' the English peasant system, however (one of which Dr Mills is aware but does not sufficiently draw out), was the fact that the peasant in Wales was rather a peasant-tenant than a small freeholder. Secondly, the study aims to explore the implications of the distinction between estate and peasant systems for Britain's industrial and urban development and life in the towns. Here the author demonstrates how the estate system played a role in urban growth because the large landlords controlled extensive areas of building land and so were able to influence the development of socio-spatial patterns. Again, it is shown how estate villages served as a model for the improvement and social control of those new industrial towns arising from the advent of rail communication and (all products of the industrial revolution) of industrial villages of the closed type, factory villages or 'colonies', mining villages, textile villages, and the garden cities. For its part, the peasant system is shown to have favoured the growth of old-established industrial villages, characterized as it was by family holdings whose possessors were frequently engaged in dual occupations.

*Lord and Peasant in Nineteenth Century Britain* furnishes students of nineteenth-century rural society with a valuable, much-needed overview of the open-close model of social structure. Conclusions are carefully stated after inspection of statistical and contemporary literary sources and a commendably wide range of secondary material. The more orthodox agricultural historian will benefit from Dr Mills' concern with the spatial aspect and from his familiarity with sociological approaches.

DAVID W. HOWELL

J M CURRIE, *The Economic Theory of Agricultural Land Tenure*. CUP, 1981. vii + 194 pp. £15.

We have here a work of theoretical economics rather than one of practical agricultural history. Dr Currie is an economist writing for economists, and readers will find that while every concession is made to those who know very little history, few concessions are made to those with less than a degree level grasp of theoretical economics. Most of the many formulae employed in this work, and many even of the graphs, will be unintelligible to the average reader of this review. Nevertheless, when the last piece of jargon has been spoken, and the last  $\sum_{i=1}^n$  has been scribed, the arguments

that they were designed to support emerge as very simple ones, which might well have been clearly stated in words of one syllable without losing any of their plausibility.

Essentially, Dr Currie seeks to present the view that a system of large estates worked by capitalist tenant farmers is a more desirable one, from the point of view of national economic growth, than a system of many small, peasant proprietors. This notion will, of course, hardly come as a new or surprising one to students of agricultural history, but here it receives the closely argued support of a professional economist. Inevitably, the period of the European Industrial Revolution is drawn on for illustrative material, so that in its historical dimension the book concentrates on the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. England is the country most frequently referred to, and a consideration of the effects of legal changes on the landlord-tenant relationship here is carried on into the second half of the twentieth century.

Readers of this review will probably find the most valuable part of the book to be chapter 2, in which Dr Currie discusses the views of several eighteenth- and nineteenth-century economic thinkers on the topics of land tenure and the nature of rent. In particular, Dr Currie dispels some old-established misconceptions about Ricardo's view of rent, and manages to do all this without a single  $\Sigma$  in the chapter.

As for the rest of the book, Dr Currie is continually forced to make very great assumptions on which to base his framework of theoretical analysis: indeed, the words 'assume' and 'assumption' must occur more frequently in this work than any others, apart from the definite and indefinite articles. Two minor examples may be cited:

'In this chapter we will assume not only that the farmer owns all the land he cultivates but that he cultivates all the land that he owns. Thus we will not consider the possibilities of his entering into land transactions either in the ownership market or in the rental market.' (pp 40-1)

'The conventional calculation assumes that there is a perfect financial capital market and that the individual

concerned has perfect foresight about the future or, at least, that he thinks he does.' (p 117)

But Dr Currie makes even greater assumptions. One of the most sweeping is the assumption of stable population levels to strengthen his case for the desirability of a tenant farming system. In reality of course, no part of Europe was experiencing stable population levels during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: on the contrary, rates of population increase had never been more rapid, and in absolute terms far more shiftless, landless, unemployed proletarians were drifting towards French towns in 1800 than towards English ones. Meanwhile, eighteenth-century Holland with its 'peasant' proprietors continued to enjoy a prosperous economy until it was ruined by warfare after 1780. In Ireland, a tenant farming system predominated, but there was no industrialization.

Fitting Dr Currie's theoretical framework over the facts of European economic history presents us with Procrustean difficulties. The case which he argues is an entirely plausible one, but must be adjudged as still not proven. There is much more to it than Dr Currie will allow, and his approach was far too narrow for someone seeking to argue on a macro-economic scale. At some points in his book, Dr Currie does indeed display a fitting humility about the difficulty of his task and the feasibility of dogmatic pronouncements on so complex a subject, admitting that he is greatly oversimplifying for the sake of model building. He has indeed tried to keep everything as simple as possible by his own lights, stating in footnote 4 to chapter 1, 'we will not refer to econometric work in this book'. The result of his speculations, however, must be described as a book which is more likely to be of interest to theoretical economists than of practical value to agricultural historians.

ROSS WORDIE

TADASHI FUKUTAKE, *Rural Society in Japan*. University of Tokyo Press, 1980. xii + 218 pp. ¥ 3000.

The obsessive pursuit of industrial policy objectives by successive post-war Japanese governments has attracted an increasing volume of criticism in recent years from many quarters and this book, the product of an eminent rural sociologist, adds new weight to a very controversial issue. Indeed, few people are better qualified to write about such complex matters as changing sociological relationships in the Japanese countryside since the Meiji period, or understand the many problems facing the farming community today, than Professor Fukutake, and we must all feel indebted

to the University of Tokyo Press for publishing such an excellent translation of this important work.

Professor Fukutake's study, which is set against a background of Japan's post-war economic 'miracle', is primarily concerned with the economic and social impact of widening sectoral imbalances upon agriculture and the rural community. The book is highly critical of government farm policies and is deeply pessimistic of the future of Japanese agriculture. Whilst acknowledging the many substantial gains made by Japanese farmers since the passing of the revolutionary 1946 Land Reform — notably their freedom from the grinding poverty of the Taisho period through the democratization of landownership, farm mechanization, guaranteed prices, subsidies, and protection, plus an unprecedented rise in material standards of living — the author's main emphasis lies with the rapidly diminishing status of the cultivator and agriculture's seemingly inexorable slide towards an 'irrecoverable quagmire'. Indeed, the 1946 Land Reform appears to have created as many problems as it solved, as witnessed by the wide productivity and income differentials between agriculture and industry and the fact that Japanese agriculture still labours, as it has done for a long time, under an excessively protected and fragmented structure of high-cost landholdings. The inflation of land values through the encroachment of industrialization, plus the reaching of a 'definite impasse' in rice cultivation, has operated to reduce Japan's ability to compete on international commodity markets and is therefore seen to constitute a major obstacle to future economic development. On the basis of 50 statistical tables Professor Fukutake is able to demonstrate that the dwindling size and rising age composition of the rural labour force (75 per cent are over 40 years of age), plus a marked trend towards part-time farming (60 per cent of farmers derive their chief income from non-farming activities) are not only tantamount to a social disaster, as seen by the decline of *nôhonshugi* and the *ie* system, but also pose a serious threat to the traditional self-sufficiency role of Japanese agriculture.

Although the chapters devoted to the social and political structure of the Japanese village provide a vital insight into the origins and character of Japan's agrarian problem, not all readers will share the author's lament of the waning of a cultural system which once constituted the very heart of the Japanese nation. In view of the atomistic structure of Japanese agriculture, and the growing shortage of certain categories of industrial labour, one might have expected the author to have considered the argument that Japan's agrarian problem is due not to the inter-sectoral movement of manpower resources out of agriculture *per se* but rather to the fact that the movement has not been fast enough. It is also a pity that other important issues, such as the role of new land reform policies and the

liberalization of trade in agricultural imports, currently mooted as possible solutions to Japan's agrarian problem, are largely ignored. The value of this otherwise excellent study is also reduced by two other major omissions: the total lack of any footnote references and the absence of a bibliography.

T L RICHARDSON

JOHN WELLER (ed), *Coleshill Model Farm, Oxfordshire, Past Present Future*, Report of Working Seminar, April 1980. Architects in Agriculture Group: Occasional Paper Number 1. 30 pp. Illus. £3.

The Architects in Agriculture Group, affiliated to RIBA, was founded in 1974 with the promotion of interest in historic rural structures as one of its objectives. For this purpose a working seminar, to which representatives from a number of other rural interest groups were invited, was organized to investigate the Model Farm on the Coleshill Estate. In addition to researching the history of the site itself, the subject under discussion was to suggest acceptable alternative uses for redundant farm buildings of this kind that are of significant historical interest. The report details possible approaches to the problem with recommendations on those which the Group considered to be of most practical value.

The choice of the Model Farm on what was the Earl of Radnor's estate at Coleshill, was ideal. Begun in 1852, the buildings are representative of the mid-nineteenth century quest for maximum efficiency of design and layout within the confines of typical estate architecture. In a purely architectural sense, these buildings are perhaps of less importance than some of their more flamboyant counterparts in the late eighteenth century and this presumably explains the surprising fact that they, and others like them, have not been listed.

With its split-level site, however, its arrangements for housing stock, the use of steam-powered machinery and of an inclined tramway for distributing feed, Coleshill is an outstanding example of the 'industrial' farm building that characterized many estates of the period. Although many, but by no means all, of the internal fittings have gone, externally at least the Model Farm is relatively intact. Both Coleshill and the neighbouring Buscot estate have been in the hands of the National Trust since 1956. A policy of amalgamation of holdings has made the buildings of this farm at Coleshill redundant for agricultural purposes.

Coleshill was examined by the Group as a case history indicative of a problem facing not only the National Trust in other estates around the country but also a great many owners of interesting agricultural buildings which are in need of an alternative use to

ensure their survival. A number of options were analysed. Among these, conversion to modern agricultural use was, with some exceptions, considered self-defeating because of the necessary alterations to existing buildings. Similarly, craft or light industrial usage while potentially sound in an economic sense, would destroy much of the remaining period flavour of the site. The creation of self-catering holiday homes within the complex would strain existing services in the village and provide an element of financial risk on a considerable initial capital outlay.

In a very brief conclusion, the report settles on another alternative of operating Coleshill as a part working Model Farm that would also include a museum, restaurant, crafts and garden centre open to the public. The full implications of this seem to be rather glossed over and the estimated development costs look very conservative. In the light of this it is perhaps significant that there appeared to be no representatives from museums in this country at the seminar.

I am not convinced that the heavy commercialism and conversion this proposal involves is the best answer for preservation of these buildings. Nor can it be a widely applied solution for there must be a ceiling on the number of economically viable museum and interpretative schemes of this nature that the country can absorb. The National Trust's present policy of carefully conserving the existing buildings and using them primarily for storage appears, if the Trust can continue to meet the costs, to be a highly suitable means of preserving the character of the site with the least disruption. The option then remains of allowing limited public access on perhaps two or three weekends each year with the aid of volunteer guides or minimal two-dimensional interpretation.

Recognition of the desirability of preserving intact some buildings for their own sake, when financially feasible, takes a long time to emerge but must surely be of importance in the future. Nevertheless, the Group's *Report*, the first in what hopefully will become a series of occasional papers, is a very stimulating contribution to the debate.

ROY BRIGDEN

THEA THOMPSON, *Edwardian Childhoods*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981. xiii + 232 pp. Illus. £9.75.

Thea Thompson has reproduced the childhood memories of 9 people, each prefaced by a brief survey outlining the family circumstances of the person concerned. The agricultural content of the book is small but three of the reminiscences will be of interest to students of rural life, namely those contributed by the son of an Essex farm worker and by the son and daughter, respectively, of two substantial landed families. All provide fascinating glimpses of a now vanished world, in which the economic and social distinctions between rich and poor were firmly drawn. The continuing preoccupation of many of the gentry with the running of their estates and the pursuit of field sports, even at this late date, is clearly underlined in the recollections of a landowner's son from Yorkshire.

Despite the book's general appeal, this reviewer has three reservations concerning it. Firstly, it includes no accounts of the lives of middle-class children — or even of those whose parents were skilled artisans. This makes for a lack of balance. Secondly, the value of the reminiscences would have been enhanced by a broader introductory analysis of the background of the subjects. Armed with this, it would have been easier to judge how typical each account was of life in the particular community under consideration. Finally, the decision to reproduce, verbatim, interviews with the 9 people leads to the needless repetition of such phrases as 'sort of', or 'you know'.

Overall, this work has a good deal to offer by way of insights into child life in the upper and lower ranks of society in the Edwardian era. For that reason, it will be welcomed by social historians and the general reader.

PAMELA HORN

## Shorter Notices

REX C RUSSELL, *The Enclosures of Alkborough 1765–1768, West Halton 1772–1773, Whitton 1773–1775, Scotter and Scotterthorpe, 1808–1820*. Scunthorpe Museum & Art Gallery, 1981. 25 pp. Maps, tables. £1.50 (£1.75 post-free from Scunthorpe Museum Secretary, Oswald Road, Scunthorpe, South Humberside DN15 7BD).

This valuable publication follows closely the pattern set by Rex C Russell's earlier accounts of Lincolnshire enclosures. There are the same admirably clear and informative maps and the same kind of information about the Acts, the commissioners, the new allotments, compensation for tithes, and other cognate matters. The villages concerned are located to the north of Scunthorpe on the south bank of the Humber. Appendices provide information about neighbouring enclosures from which, for example, it can be seen that in this district a little over 16 per cent of the acreage enclosed went to compensate the impropiator and church for tithes. There is, indeed, so much useful material that one wishes it was taken a little further to embrace, where the records are available, such relevant points as the types of soil, changes in the nature of the farming, the farmers themselves, the size of farms, rents, and all the topics which have intrigued students of enclosure over the years.

G E MINGAY

LYNNE DAVIES, *Welsh Ponies and Cobs*. J A Allen, 1980. xi + 506 pp. Illus. £12.95.

This book is a positive mine of information on the ponies of the Welsh stud book, and will undoubtedly be avidly sought by breeders and enthusiasts of the breed. The early history and development of the stud book's constituent sections are briefly described, along with some of the problems encountered when delving into the past of our most diverse indigenous breed; many of the old cob stallions were known not by one but several names, and to increase the confusion successful sires frequently had their offspring named after them. The book is devoted to the description of animals well known for their influence on the breed, each section being preceded by a pedigree of the relevant animal. Details of show successes and progeny are given, combined with the history associated with each individual and its ancestors. The wealth of material contained in this book is immense; however it is perhaps unfortunate that it has not been used to show more clearly the development of the four sections, and the inter-relationship between these.

The author has brought alive what could have been only a list of show successes and progeny by his wide

knowledge of the breed and his personal reminiscences of past breeders and animals. The text is well illustrated by photographs and stud cards from as far back as 1874, many of which have not hitherto been published. These are of great value particularly where the animal in question is long dead, when type, size and quality may be appreciated by present-day readers. *Welsh Ponies and Cobs* is a reference book and a history, which will be the envy of many other societies.

ANNE RUTHERFORD

GLENDA RILEY, *Frontierswomen: the Iowa Experience*. Ames, Iowa, Iowa State University Press, 1981. xv + 211 pp. Illus.

Professor Riley's book was written to counter 'the prevailing idea' among historians 'that dominant (meaning male) realms of activity are the only ones deserving examination'. She has drawn on original material in diaries, letters and memoirs, as well as secondary sources, to illustrate the part played by the women of Iowa in the settlement of this predominantly agrarian state. For certain types of frontierswomen, ethnic and black women, the sources are extremely thin; this applies especially to Indian women, who are therefore omitted from the scope of the discussion. Much of the material, and Professor Riley's discussion of it, relate to everyday life and farming activities, and detail of pioneer homes and schools, and is unsurprising; but the picture is rounded out by chapters on women in wartime and their involvement in education and the women's movement. The best-known figure here was the celebrated Amelia Bloomer, who spent the latter half of her life in Council Bluffs, Iowa. A fellow passenger in the stagecoach which brought the Bloomers to Iowa was Kit Carson, about whom Mrs Bloomer saw nothing remarkable except his clothing; as the author remarks, he might well have said the same of her.

The study is limited to the state of Iowa, which clearly restricts the range of frontierswomen's experiences and the availability of materials for documentation. At the same time it has the merit of providing a focus and giving geographical unity to the study. It would have been pleasant to have more quotations from the original sources, though perhaps the book contains all that are worth having — probably many of the records were disappointingly unrevealing. Professor Riley's championing of frontierswomen strikes a strident note and her style is a little portentous, while

certain words such as 'stereotype' and 'myth' are over-worked. Nevertheless, her book is a readable and well-informed account of what she likes to call the 'female frontier'.

G E MINGAY

VERA C M LONDON (ed), *The Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory*, Wiltshire Record Soc, vol 35, 1979. 244 pp. Yet another cartulary, with little to distinguish it from many others; and yet it is valuable to have these in print for the ease of users.

Bradenstoke Priory was founded in the middle of the twelfth century as a daughter house from Cirencester Abbey; it became independent after 50 years and survived until the last wave of dissolution in 1539. It was always a small house, under the patronage of the earls of Salisbury, and never very wealthy.

What are printed here are the contents of two overlapping cartularies; the 'few original deeds' which survive are not included. Most of the transactions recorded relate to Wiltshire but there are properties and rents in other countries as well. There is relatively little of agricultural interest in these enrolled deeds and nothing systematic. The introduction points to the few references to sheep grazing, and other matters concern estate boundaries and access ways to land. There is no subject index, so that tithes, mills, meadows, pasture, woodland, and so on, cannot be found easily. The volume adds little to our general knowledge and will be of most value to local historians and to genealogists.

ALAN ROGERS

J CORNWALL (ed), *The County Community Under Henry VIII*, Rutland Record Society, vol 1, Rutland County Museum, Oakham, 1980. 134 pp. *Rutland Record*, No 1, 1980, Journal of the Rutland Record Society. Copies from the Secretary, Colley Hill, Lyddington, Uppingham, by subscription.

The reconstruction of local government units in 1974, which led among other disasters to the down-grading of Rutland to a district within a new Leicestershire, has on occasion provoked new outbursts of local loyalty, either to the older or the newer units. These two volumes, in each case the first in what is hoped to be a

continuing series, are part of the first fruits of this trend, for Rutland had neither a record series nor a major journal in the days when it was a self-contained county.

Julian Cornwall's book prints three main items. The first is the 1522 muster book (or militia survey, more accurately). Not many large areas are covered by surviving muster returns, and to have a whole county (albeit a small one) in print, with a useful introduction, is most welcome. Each town and village is represented here with lists of names of the inhabitants and their status, assessment of wealth, and the arms which they possessed, and in some cases their occupation (many however, like the quarrymen at Clipham, are hidden under the title of 'laborer'). Landlords and tenancies are regularly given, and some persons are indicated as 'retainers' of various lords (they all seem to have possessed armour). A number of 'young' and 'old' persons are recorded, all of them 'pore'. The edition is a bit pedantic (surely a note could have been added to the illegible entry under Cottesmore (p 20) that the missing name there is *very likely* to be 'Edward [Digby]'), and some examples of the way the material could be used should perhaps have been given in the introduction. Nevertheless to have this record in print for this intensively farmed area of the East Midlands is valuable. The 1524 and 1525 lay subsidy assessments, in comparison, are seen to be less complete and of less significance, and the way in which they are printed here does not make it easy to use. It is regrettable that, in the first volume of a Record Series, the index is very partial.

The new journal, handsome in modern format rather than traditional, includes a number of useful articles. Charles Phythian-Adams summarizes and extends his earlier discussion of the origins of Rutland: it does not become simple in retelling but the hypothesis must be seen as likely. A paper on the medieval parks of the area lays a solid base for future work (it ranges over the forest as well, under the title of 'The Medieval Hunting Grounds of Rutland'); John Field writes a general study on Field Names, and articles on a fourteenth-century manor house and on illiteracy in the nineteenth century add to the total. Notes on archives, newspapers, museums, and recent publications are included. We wish it well for the future.

ALAN ROGERS