

Book Reviews

DAVID RINDOS, *The Origins of Agriculture — An Evolutionary Perspective*. Academic Press, 1984. 325 pp. £26.

The title of this book is misleading to the British reader. One expects it to show how the theory of evolution as understood by the biologist can be used to explain to the archaeologist and agricultural historian how the domestication of livestock came about. Yet it turns out that this book is entirely about plant domestication (for which we prefer the term 'cultivation') just as the term 'agriculture' is not strictly confined to plants.

The preface tends to confuse rather than clarify since the author nowhere defines his terms, but 'throws' us by stating that the origins of agriculture have been traditionally studied by social scientists. He points out that natural scientists, too, (he and I) have studied the problem, and states his aim as being 'to demonstrate that domestication [of plants] and the origin of agricultural systems [excluding livestock] [words in brackets added by me] are best understood by attempting to explicate the evolutionary forces that affected the development of domesticates and agricultural systems'.

Chapter 1 covers Agriculture, Evolution, and Paradigms. On page 1 Rindos reminds us that Darwin based his theory on studies of 'domesticated animals and cultivated plants' [Darwin's words], and the author stresses the unconscious nature of the domestication process, and of the first selective breeding. He gives lengthy quotations from such authors as Darwin, and discusses such topics as cultural evolution and cultural ecology.

Chapter 2, 'Darwinism and Culture', is an excellent scientific review of the literature since Darwin. He stresses that evolution takes place through natural selection of existing variation, and presents the case that cultural change is the result of a natural evolutionary process. Rindos shows that 'socio-biologists' have confused cultural variation with genetic change.

Chapter 3, 'The Naturalness of the Human-Plant Relationship', is central to the author's treatment, and the easiest to understand. The author demonstrates that it is 100 years since the idea was first put forward that population pressure forced man into agriculture, and that the history of cultivated plants could be understood only by combining the views of the botanist, archaeologist, historian, and linguist. He goes on to quote Vavilov's idea of primary domestication (the species brought into cultivation) and secondary domestication (of the weeds present in field crops). The fibre-producing plant hemp was regarded as a weed becoming cultivated by accident.

Rindos stresses that people could not *intentionally*

domesticate a crop, but that they must have *favoured* individual plants that were most useful, and so the author demonstrates the distinction between selection (the means) and evolution (the result). Here he begins to push back the origins of plant domestication into the realms of primate diet preferences.

'The Evolution of Domestication' (evolution since domestication) is discussed in Chapter 4 under the headings of 'incidental', 'specialised' and 'agricultural' evolution in an ecological setting, and Rindos shows that through changing selection pressures a new taxonomy has arisen.

In Chapter 5 on 'Feeding Behaviour and Changes in Diet' he claims that if we forget 'man the hunter' and think of him as a vegetarian primate we might see the beginnings of domestication 50,000 years ago. He uses complicated mathematical formulae to prepare graphic models of the changes taking place, and shows how the apparently sudden appearance of agriculture can be explained by the acceleration of a change that had been going on for a long time. But as a non-mathematical biologist I find it disconcerting that the author cannot also explain his ideas verbally — I am not aware that Darwin resorted to mathematics to explain his elegant yet simple theory.

The author resorts to more mathematics in Chapter 6 to discuss 'Instability, Cultural Fecundity, and Dispersals' by proposing a model for the spread of agricultural systems that directly relates the evolutionary tendencies of man-plant interaction to the dispersal of domestication and agriculture as modes of human subsistence.

The chapter includes a section on domestication and demography and ends with a section on implications, which acts as an epilogue. Readers of this journal will be well aware that one aim of history is to prevent us from repeating the mistakes of the past. Rindos points out that continued breeding of improved crops, and the development of more efficient systems to guard against food shortages, has made us very vulnerable to famine by encouraging the reliance on fewer and fewer plant species (he claims only 20) in which improved varieties are often more susceptible to pests and diseases. He praises the much belated attention now given to the conservation of genetic resources, and says that new methods will be required to counteract instabilities in agricultural production.

The book is altogether a *tour de force* dealing with the subject in its most specialized form, so that chapter summaries would have been helpful in following the arguments. It is a pity that animals were omitted since similar principles apply to them and most agricultural systems include livestock. There is a full bibliography, and a moderately good index.

M L RYDER

J M FRAYN, *Sheep-Rearing and the Wool Trade in Italy during the Roman Period*. ARCA Classical and Medieval Texts, Papers and Monographs 15, 1984. x + 208pp. 13 maps and line drawings. 8 plates. £20.

A modern history of the development of agriculture and farming in Roman Italy has not yet been written. At first sight this may cause surprise; for the evidence seems as rich and varied as for any major aspect of the classical world. The works of the agricultural writers from Cato in the second century BC to the Byzantine collection, the *Geoponika*, when combined with the treaties of the Roman land-surveyors, form perhaps the largest surviving body of technical literature from the classical period after the corpus of medical writers. Developments and disturbances in the countryside are noted intermittently by the ancient historians. Inscriptions and the law codes contain much material, as yet under exploited, on the organization of estates and the trade in agricultural produce. Mosaics, paintings and sculpture can add vivid details. At long last archaeology in Italy has turned its attention from the riches of the urban centres to investigations of the buildings of the countryside and to surveys of the agrarian economy of regions over a long historical period. So evidence galore; but appearance deceives. As Joan Frayn realized in her earlier book, *Subsistence Farming in Roman Italy* (Fontwell 1979), the various categories of evidence on close analysis prove to be extremely difficult to handle and major gaps become clear. For sheep the agricultural writers have quite an amount of information; but it is limited in scope, because it is concerned almost exclusively with the keeping of animals on a mixed farm. Apart from isolated passages in Varro and Columella, these authors betray very little knowledge of transhumance or of the techniques of open grazing. That point is well made by Frayn, although even she overestimates the amount of information in these writers which is derived from autopsy. No one can make a fair estimate of the value of the Roman agronomists without realizing that a very high percentage of their information is cribbed from earlier writers. Modern archaeology prides itself on its ability to extract information from bones and other faunal remains; but Frayn offers a justified caveat about the injudicious inferences of some excavators of farm sites. Where there was a trade in sheep for meat, the animals may have been moved to urban consumers on the hoof or as whole carcasses. In any case the Roman predilection was for lamb and many young animals would be roasted whole; few of their bones would reveal evidence of butchering. Archaeology is also of very limited use in revealing the pattern of life of the shepherd, because the cabins and other temporary shelters constructed for the shepherds on their summer pastures are by their very nature likely to be elusive.

It is Frayn's sensitivity to the nature of the evidence

which marks this book out as an excellent contribution to the subject. Cautious and wary of the unwarranted generalization, she is yet alert to the range of possible interpretations of inadequate sources. Her overall approach is to construct a possible model of the contribution of sheep-rearing to the agrarian economy of Roman Italy by using both the ancient evidence and comparative material. The specific sources are then assessed against this background.

Transhumance was a fundamental feature of sheep-farming in South Italy. Frayn confirms the conclusions of E Gabba and M Pasquinucci, *Strutture agrarie e allevamento transumante nell'Italia romana* (Pisa 1979) that this form of farming is a response in these regions to particular climatic conditions rather than to political events or social change. Further, the need for large areas of summer and winter pasturage, for drove roads and food *en route* created social tensions in the region between pastoralists and arable farmer. Such quarrels lie behind the proud statement of an unknown praetor: 'I was the first to make the shepherds give way to the arable farmers on the publicland' (*CIL* X, 6950). These antagonisms can be illustrated in another way. Shepherds were distinctive in dress, speech and custom and were viewed with suspicion by others. Out on the high hills the slave shepherd was free from supervision, could plot revolt with others or indulge in banditry. The descent from 'pastor' (shepherd) to 'venator' (hunter) then to 'latro' (robber) (*Livy Ep.* 52) was viewed by some as natural and inevitable. So in the Late Empire men of low status in the major pasturage areas were forbidden to keep horses in an attempt to stamp out robberies. The Saepinum inscription (*CIL* X, 2438), which has aroused renewed interest recently, illustrates how jittery officials were all too ready to believe that the shepherds moving large flocks through their district were runaway slaves and robbers. Shepherds, as Frayn points out, were a social anomaly.

From the same background of social tension come most of the references to 'latifundia' or ranches, which have so obsessed modern commentators. Doubtlessly there was raising of sheep and cattle on a large scale in some areas. But the assumption that such ranches were damaging to the agrarian economy rests largely on moralizing literature about excessive wealth and on the complaints of arable farmers who sought access to areas reserved for pasturage. Frayn is right not to take this evidence too seriously.

In some ways the most important chapters in this book are those on the wool trade. The marketing of agricultural and farm produce has been extraordinarily neglected. Yet it was the growth of urban markets which gave the main impetus to the extension of sheep-farming in Roman Italy. We need to understand the mechanisms by which woollen goods reached the consumer. In this the central problem is that inscriptions reveal a startlingly large list of apparently

independent specialists: fullers, carders, dyers, cloak-makers, even comb-menders. Who provided the capital and through how many hands did ownership of a fleece pass before it reached the retail market? I do not agree with all of Frayn's rather complex conclusions; but to tackle the problem at all is to break new ground in a vital area of the ancient economy.

Frayn describes her work as 'a full summary' of current information on sheep-farming. While there is discussion of breeding (the Romans were largely concerned with the quality of the wool), cheese-making and many other topics, the main omission is an investigation of the status of shepherds and those involved in the wool-trade. To this excellent synthesis Frayn has added many perceptive comments. However, it is her methodology and approach to explaining an important aspect of classical farming that deserves praise and approval and in some respects should become a model for future work.

JEREMY PATERSON

A FENTON and G STELL (Eds), *Loads and Roads in Scotland and Beyond*. John Donald, Edinburgh, 1984. vii + 144. 1 map; 64 Figs. £8.50.

The rather generalized title of this volume proves to be quite an appropriate description of the contents of the seven essays which it contains. The content, apart from a few escapees south of the border and to other parts, is predominantly concerned with Scotland, with roads — manmade, artificial routeways and not just tracks beaten out by frequency of use — and their specialised format of bridging across water; and with the provision, by both wheeled and wheel-less vehicles, for the movement of goods.

One or two general principles are adumbrated in the text — thus, Coles, 'the character and extent of a country's roads provide a mirror of its organisation' (p1); and Barrow, 'again and again in the charters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries we can pick up stretches of this major traffic route in contexts which make it most improbable that the clerks had in mind no more than a rude and fluctuating track' (p52). However, not a lot of more general interest is built upon these sorts of observations. The primary emphasis is on the physical geography — the archaeological, documentary and map evidence of the pre-history and pre-modern periods for the existence of tracks and roads, down to the detailed physiography of the old bridge at Bridge of Earn, finally dismantled in 1976. Although that is the most specialized piece of writing by far, much of the rest is in a similar, if less narrow mould. The book will be of interest, therefore, to a fairly specialized audience. The more general historian, interested in matters of agricultural or transport history will, nonetheless, note a number of

points on which to ponder. These include Coles' description of the prehistoric wooded trackways across the Somerset levels, and their possible implications. Barrow's chapter on the road network of medieval Scotland will also provoke wider thoughts, not least because, by reference to military and economic usage, it repeats for Scotland the argument made for other places that the sparseness and inadequacy of pre-eighteenth century road transport has been much exaggerated. Moreover, Barrow's general argument is reinforced by some of the data in Ruddock's study of roads and bridges which shows that from the early 1700s bridge renewals were increasingly constructed of a width to accommodate wheeled traffic, yet another sign of an expanding economy producing greater quantities of traffic.

GERARD TURNBULL

JOAN THIRSK, *The Rural Economy of England: Collected Essays*. The Hambledon Press, 1984. xiv + 420 pp. £22.

It is probably true to say that our view of the rural economy of early modern England owes more to the writings of Dr Joan Thirsk than it does to any other historian. The twenty-one papers collected in this volume comprise the bulk of her published papers, so apart from the occasional new footnote (referring only to work by Dr Thirsk) and a few 'postscripts', there is nothing new here save for a six-page preface reflecting on the 'wayward paths of historical research'. Serious students of the rural economy of early modern England will be familiar with most if not all these papers but it is nevertheless a treat to have them gathered from rather scattered sources and bound together. For they constitute a masterly contribution to historical scholarship which are still essential reading for new students and equally deserving of a re-reading by those who have encountered them already.

Unfortunately the book does not provide much bibliographic help to guide new students to more recent relevant material. The short postscripts are inconsistent. Sometimes they refer to key books and articles published since the reprinted article was first published, but in other cases the postscript is confined to tidying up matters of detail rather than of substance. Other papers have no postscript at all, leaving some statements, which, with the passage of time, are incorrect. Inventories of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury for example, are no longer 'not available for inspection' (p.7). While the book is generally well produced there are a number of misprints. One (p.202) has John Houghton publishing his *Collections* in 1649.

As Dr Thirsk points out in one of her early papers ('the content and sources of English agrarian history after 1500') English agrarian history flourished after

1945 in conjunction with local history. This close collaboration ensured that the national generalizations of a previous generation of historians were replaced by an awareness of the 'kaleidoscope of regional specialities and of processes of economic change'. Thus after two papers of a more conventional sort (on 'The sales of Royalist land during the interregnum' and 'The restoration land settlement') Dr Thirsk's attention turned to studies that were explicitly regional in their approach; 'The Isle of Axholme before Vermuyden' and 'Farming in Kesteven' published in the 1950s and 'Horn and thorn in Staffordshire: the economy of a pastoral county', published in 1969. Differences in the pattern of rural industrialization and the linkages between agriculture and industry are developed in 'Industries in the countryside', and the processes of economic and social change, often exemplified through the entrepreneurial initiatives of particular individuals, are explored in 'seventeenth century agriculture and social change' and more specifically in a trio of papers; 'The fantastical folly of fashion: the English stocking knitting industry, 1500-1700'; 'New crops and their diffusion: tobacco growing in seventeenth century England'; and 'Projects for gentlemen, jobs for the poor: mutual aid in the Vale of Tewkesbury, 1600-1630'.

The great danger of local history is that it degenerates into antiquarianism so that every scrap of information about the past is accorded equal meaning provided that it refers to a particular locality. The significance of Dr Thirsk's work is that description of local detail is not an end in itself but used to illuminate what is in effect a general model of the local and regional structure of the economy and society of early modern England. Farming practice, domestic industry, inheritance customs, religion, and politics are woven into a sophisticated framework within which local studies can be situated. Almost all the chapters in the book provide some generalizations which contribute something to this framework but unfortunately no single paper gives a comprehensive description of it.

As Dr Thirsk points out 'the work of one generation serves as an outline, awaiting improvement by the next', but it is testimony to the strength of her arguments that the general model has not been challenged. Although many of the original ideas within it have been incorporated into notions of 'protoindustrialization', her model awaits thorough critical evaluation and development.

The second major theme in Dr Thirsk's work is concerned with the origins of English field systems. 'The common fields' is one of the most important of a series of attempts stretching back to H L Gray to penetrate the enigmas of field systems, and is reprinted here along with 'The origins of the common fields' (which is the reply to Dr Titow's comments on the

original article) and an earlier discussion of 'Tudor enclosures'. This work once again illustrates Dr Thirsk's skill in combining the general and the particular, and in this case the general principles of the model are clearly delineated. Despite Titow's comments and the recent book edited by T Rowley, the general arguments of the 'Thirsk model' are still widely accepted.

The remaining seven papers in the volume cover a miscellany of topics but illustrate a concern for historical sources ('Sources of information on population 1500-1760'); for general surveys of research themes and the origination of new research directions ('Unexplored sources in local records', 'The family', 'The European debate on customs of inheritance 1500-1700', and 'Younger sons in the seventeenth century'); agricultural history ('Horses in early modern England'); and local history ('Stamford in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries'). It is remarkable that there is no real dud amongst the twenty-one papers: all have something of significance to say. The message common to them all is the variety and vitality of the rural economy of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.

MARK OVERTON

P D A HARVEY (ed), *The Peasant Land Market in Medieval England*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1984. xvi + 375 pp. £28.

This volume comprises, apart from the editor's lengthy introduction and conclusion, four abridged doctoral theses: Janet Williamson, 'Peasant Holdings in Medieval Norfolk' (Reading University, 1976); Rosamund Faith, 'The Peasant Land-Market in Berkshire in the Later Middle Ages' (Leicester University, 1962); Tim Lomas, 'Land and People in South-east Durham in the Later Middle Ages' (Council of National Academic Awards, 1976), and Andrew Jones, 'The Customary Land Market in Bedfordshire in the Fifteenth Century' (Southampton University, 1975). Some of the authors have published parts of their theses before but, in the context of this collection, this aids presentation rather than detracting from it, and, in the case of Dr Faith's study, previously only easily accessible through her 1966 article in this journal, publication in an extended form after some twenty-two years is particularly welcome. Indeed the whole concept of the book is an original one and the editor is to be congratulated for rescuing these works from fragmentary publication and for assisting in their transformation from rather indigestible theses into studies which range from the readable to the stylistically elegant. Overall, as an experiment in terms of presentation the book is a great success.

The same originality, moreover, extends to the editor's conceptualization of its subject matter — the

peasant land market — which he defines as involving '... the transfer of land from one *living* individual to another: the chronology and extent of these transfers both of free land and unfree land held by local manorial custom, the procedures followed in each case, the regulation of the traffic by manorial lords, and the effects on the land holding of the individual ...', but excluding the reverse situation — what happened to the peasant's land on his death. Questions of inheritance are, accordingly, cast to one side and the reader is invited to enter the world of the halmote to discover the motivation which drove the peasant to acquire or dispose of land during his lifetime. Unfortunately on entering this world, where justice was dispensed on the basis of both delegated and customary law, he will find doors closed to him for the authors have eschewed the principal directions indicated by the editor. Actions within the halmote may, for simplicity, be divided into two categories: there are those between tenants which, if only indirectly, can provide some information on peasant motivation and there are those between the tenants and their lord which, in the context of customary law, served to define their rights and obligations in relation to each other. In these studies it is the latter group of actions which assume the centre of the stage with the lord cast in the role of principal actor. Dr Williamson is primarily concerned with defining peasant obligations and elucidating the problems associated with the break up of the 'standard holding' in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries whilst the other authors, taking up the same theme, examine the emergence of new tenurial forms in the later Middle Ages. The over-riding leitmotif is the tenurial relationship between lord and peasant. Only peripherally are questions concerning land transfers amongst the tenantry touched upon and even then the investigations have a rather old-fashioned air about them. All the studies of the later Middle Ages reveal that increasing tendency towards 'non-familial' transfers, first noted by Dr Faith in the early 'sixties. Each author, moreover, adds his or her own particular contribution to the controversy over 'social polarization' and 'social promotion' in the village land market, first promulgated in the 'fifties. Yet nowhere is there more than a passing mention of the work of Professor Raftis and the 'Toronto School', which has dominated the subject for a quarter of a century, and there is a singular absence of that sense of excitement, felt by the reviewer more than twenty years ago, with regard to the potential inherent in the techniques pioneered by that School. Nor can this conservatism and resultant failure to subject any of the places investigated in this volume to the intensive study which would reconstruct the life-histories and behavioural patterns of the tenantry — the approach of the 'Toronto School' and latterly of Zvi Razi — be simply explained, as the editor would

have us believe, by the inadequacies of the documentation. The problem lies with the authors rather than their sources. As a series of intensely conservative studies, rooted in a long-standing historiography concerning land tenure, their work is interesting and on occasion illuminating. As an exploratory foray into the new subject of peasant land transactions it is not — in this context time has passed it by.

IAN BLANCHARD

R H HILTON and T H ASTON, (eds). *The English Rising of 1381*. CUP, 1984. vi + 220. £22.50.

The Past and Present Society was the obvious body to organize a conference for the sixth centenary of the Peasants' Revolt, and it was predictable that the resulting papers should be of distinguished quality. Though lacking a narrative account of the events of 1381, this short volume is a treasury of information concerning the social and political conflicts which they expressed. Christopher Dyer examines the everyday tensions within rural society at the epicentre of the revolt, drawing on manorial records not hitherto consulted for the purpose. Then two remarkable papers examine conservative features of peasant ideology in the later fourteenth century; Rosamund Faith investigates the prevalent mythology concerning Domesday Book as a bastion of ancient liberties (chapter 2) and Alan Harding looks at the parallel association between ideals of communal self-policing and the Statute of Winchester (chapter 7). The roots of these ideologies in mistrust of the existing legal system are clearly exposed. Dyer's paper discusses the social tensions implicit in the administration of manorial justice, and Harding's paper describes the frustration and contempt with which local communities viewed the operations of the king's justices.

The last paper in the book, by contrast, is a pioneering study by J A Tuck of attitudes and responses to the Revolt both at court and amongst the lords and commons. This paper integrates the Revolt into the political history of Richard II's reign and rejects the conventional view that the violent expression of social unrest in 1381 had no significant effect. The evidence suggests that 'the political consequences of the Peasants' Revolt were of rather greater importance, in the short run at least, than the impact of the revolt on manorial authority'.

The editors explain their reason for using the term 'English Rising' rather than the more traditional 'Peasants' Revolt'; they are concerned that the urban aspects of the uprising should not be forgotten. With two such original accounts at hand as those of A F Butcher for Canterbury (chapter 4) and R B Dobson for York, Beverley and Scarborough (chapter 5) readers will take the point readily enough. Both papers investigate the reasons for a breakdown of sympathy

between rulers and the ruled in urban society of this period, and some of these reasons were relevant only to town life; both in Canterbury and in the Yorkshire towns the growth of mercantile wealth had widened the social distance between the ruling groups and ordinary tradesmen. But both these accounts are emphatic that the urban revolts cannot be explained purely in urban terms. The question of the role of towns in social unrest of the later Middle Ages is carried further by two papers concerning well known revolts on the continent. Raymond Cazelles, in a paper on the Jacquerie, describes the part played by jealousies between townsmen and the nobility in fomenting social conflict (chapter 3). Samuel Cohn's paper concerning Florence in the years 1342-85 presents an archetype for purely urban revolt which contrasts well with the English case; he stresses the exclusively urban leadership of the Florentine risings and the capitalist nature of the social relationships underlying them.

For historians of agriculture and rural society the most useful paper here will probably be that of Christopher Dyer. His evidence of the social background of known rebels suggests that this was no light headed movement of the young and footloose. He explains in detail why a rural élite should have taken the initiative in resisting the authority of landlords. And he develops the important argument that it was precisely the leaders of village society who were best placed to generalize their local grievances into a comprehensive rejection of the legal *status quo*.

R H BRITNELL

C G A CLAY, *Economic Expansion and Social Change: England 1500-1700*. CUP, 1984. 2 vols, xiv + 268 pp; xii + 324 pp. £20 (cloth); £6.95 (paper) each volume.

This lengthy, up-to-date and thoroughly useful textbook is the first general treatment of the early modern period since Donald Coleman's excellent, but much briefer, *The Economy of England, 1450-1750* came out in 1977. In the interval the interpretation of the period has been altered in many ways by the publication of Wrigley and Schofield's massive study of population change since 1541, by Volume V of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1640-1750*, edited by Joan Thirsk, and by countless other articles and studies. Nearly all this material has been effectively and clearly incorporated and digested by Christopher Clay, and students of the period will be grateful to him for many years to come.

The problems of organizing the burgeoning material which now has to be incorporated into a textbook are always frustrating. Dr Clay opted for a sectoral plan with chronological sub-divisions within each chapter. This makes for clarity within each subject (agriculture, population, industry, etc.) but

makes the inter-relationships between the subjects more difficult to follow, especially when the book itself appears in two volumes. The sub-divisions within the volumes, however, are well chosen. Volume I, sub-titled *People, land and towns*, commences with a discussion of the new population figures and their implications for the period, especially the recently revealed decline between the 1650s and the 1680s and the gradual rise from then on through the eighteenth century. It continues with a short analysis of the long-run price changes and then expands into a lengthy section (111 pages) on agriculture and rural society (which will be noticed in more detail below, since it will no doubt be the part of greatest interest to readers of this *Review*). Volume I then moves to an analysis of the reasons why most provincial towns remained small and slow-growing in this period while London grew nearly ten-fold, from about 60,000 inhabitants in 1500 to some 575,000 in 1700 — and this entirely from migration since its death rate was much higher than its birthrate throughout the whole period! Volume I concludes with a short chapter on 'Society and the Poor' which charts the rise of poverty and the search for solutions.

In Volume II, sub-titled *Industry, trade and government*, the emphasis shifts away from the rural scene, but in a society which was still overwhelmingly dependent on agriculture (even in 1700 it seems to have involved about sixty per cent of the population directly and even more indirectly in transporting and marketing its products) the growth of the other sectors has to be repeatedly related back to the rural sectors. Volume II begins with a long chapter on industry in which its gradual development in the sixteenth century and steady progress in the seventeenth century are related to the slow growth of the market for manufactures both at home and abroad; to changes in the supply of fuel and raw materials; to improvements in capital supply, entrepreneurship, technical innovation; and to an increased supply of cheap labour, resulting from agriculture's inability to absorb a steadily rising population. The succeeding chapter on overseas trade is deftly handled (here at last some statistics which are more than educated 'guesstimates' can be utilized). The rise of agricultural exports from a share probably as small as three per cent of all exports in the 1660s to eleven per cent (worth an average of £488,000 a year) in the three years 1699, 1700 and 1701; combined with the steadily falling prices of food after 1650 (barring some abnormal harvest failure years in the 1690s) is the hardest evidence we have that agricultural productivity really was rising more rapidly than population growth in the seventeenth century, in the absence of any production statistics.

A chapter called 'The authorities and the economy' then discusses the making of economic and social policy and highlights the government's anxieties over

the 'balance of trade', strategic supplies and shipping, maintaining law and order within a traditional social framework still emerging from feudal hierarchies, and combating poverty and unemployment, as agriculture and industry became more commercialized and dependent on market fluctuations. Till almost the end of the period there was nagging anxiety about maintaining the food supply in a situation in which harvests could (and did) fail, and in which imports of food were difficult, and sometimes impossible, to come by. It was this underlying fear which explains so much of the agrarian legislation against engrossing, enclosing for pasture, and free food markets, which otherwise seems somewhat perverse; as well as the reluctance to see people leave what was regarded as the secure safety of traditional agriculture for the vagaries of industrial production for distant, unknown and unpredictable markets. The famous Act of Settlement, passed as late as 1662, which attempted to restrict freedom of migration was ostensibly about preventing migrants from falling on the poor rates of their new parishes, but one wonders whether it was not also partly inspired by that ancient anxiety.

The book ends with a chapter on the financing of the government which students will find very helpful in threading their way through the maze of Tudor and Stuart taxation and public finance. In this section Dr Clay is able to draw on his own expertise resulting from his study of Sir Stephen Fox, that wizard of late Stuart financial manipulation who managed to amass an immense fortune as Paymaster General in the 1660s and 1670s by lending other people's money to the government which was supposed to be employing him! A fair amount of the fog which surrounds royal finance in this period is blown away by Dr Clay's lucid treatment of this notoriously difficult subject.

To return now to farming, which remained the heart of the early modern economy. Here Dr Clay was confronted with a difficult problem, for despite the burgeoning and highly competent literature which has illuminated agricultural history since the 1950s, there is still controversy and doubt at the core of the subject. On the one hand a considerable amount of evidence, trenchantly summarized by Eric Kerridge in his book *The Agricultural Revolution*, suggests that from at least the mid-sixteenth century agriculture was making bold and important advances, so that by 1700 it was already effectively transformed; while on the other we have the nagging doubts, derived from the eighteenth-century improvers, and lucidly summarized by Gordon Mingay, that despite much creditable innovation in the late seventeenth century, really significant agricultural change did not commence till after 1700, and possibly not till after 1750.

In a world without reliable production statistics, it is indeed a conundrum. Dr Clay lets himself into the water gently, commencing with a section describing

farming at the end of the Middle Ages, and the nature of peasant society and the pressures on it. He then proceeds to discuss the growing commercialization of agriculture and the role of landlords and yeomen in the vanguard of change. This is followed by a discussion of the differential pressures on the peasants in mixed farming and pastoral districts, which usefully draws on Margaret Spufford's studies of contrasting Cambridgeshire villages, showing that small husbandmen could survive much more easily in pastoral and woodland districts, when common grazing was plentiful, than in arable districts.

The next chapter, called 'The achievement of English agriculture' is the heart of Volume I, where the constraints on productivity, which were powerful, have to be balanced against the undoubted gains which arose from the reclamation of new land (especially the fertile East Anglian fens in the 1650s), the introduction of new crops like turnips, clovers and sainfoin, either via enclosure, or by reorganization of open-field systems, the increased use of manures arising from expanded flocks and herds and the widespread use of lime, and the increasing efficiency which arose from more specialized and commercialized farming and market gardening. In the final analysis Dr Clay proceeds cautiously. He is sceptical as to how widespread many of the new innovations really were, and he notes that the continuous rise of food prices *above the general level of inflation before 1650* indicates that agriculture was still struggling to feed the growing population. His final judgement on the sixteenth century is that 'the English economy was characterized by windfall profits for commercial farming, restricted development in other branches of the economy, and impoverishment of the masses' (p. 140).

However about the seventeenth century he is much more optimistic, noting the relative abundance of the 1620s, and the steadily improving situation after the Civil Wars of the 1640s. Finally he grasps the nettle and attempts an assessment of the extent of agricultural achievement over the whole period. First he makes a courageous estimate that reclamation of fens, moors and forests cannot have increased the cultivated area by more than about twenty-five per cent. He then notes that the population rose from under two and a half millions to just over five millions (or about 120 per cent) over the period; so that only a small proportion of the needed extra food could have come from the newly reclaimed land. Improved production on the old lands must have provided the bulk; and finally, taking a modest increase in yields into account, and assuming something like a doubling of livestock numbers, he estimates that total agricultural production must have risen by about two and a half times between 1500 and 1700 — not a spectacular leap, but a very creditable performance nevertheless.

Unfortunately restrictions of space forbid further

discussion of many other interesting topics in this book, particularly the formidable rise in the number of gentry — something like a fourfold increase between 1500 and 1640, and the social and economic implications which followed.

Finally, the tables, figures and maps are all clearly and attractively designed, but the absence of a concluding chapter should be remedied in any new edition. Yet, even though the two volumes together are not cheap, they are thoroughly good value for money.

MICHAEL HAVINDEN

JOHN SHAW, *Water Power in Scotland 1550–1870*. John Donald, Edinburgh, 1984. 606 pp. £25.

This book contains the fruits of a solid, detailed, piece of research that had its origins in a doctoral thesis. No other part of Britain has been studied in such detail to produce a chronological account of the many uses of water power. The author comments that the employment of water power in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution is well known. It has, of course, so far, defied quantification and thus any study which uncovers new data from which a more accurate assessment of the diffusion of new industrial techniques can be made is to be welcomed. Dr Shaw advances the rationale for his study by reference to 'a view of the Industrial Revolution as a relatively late, primarily urban phenomenon' in which the importance of steam power has been over-emphasized while that of water power minimized or even written off (p xi). It is difficult to conceive where such a dated view of the Industrial Revolution and the role of motive power within it can still be current.

The aim of the book, we are told, is to establish the spatial and chronological development of the water mill in Scotland and to relate this to technological innovations, the impact on the landscape, the rise of steam power and the overall evolution of the Scottish economy. *Water Power in Scotland* . . . is profusely illustrated by clear maps showing the distribution of mills according to usage but apart from showing, for instance, that fulling mills in the period 1550–1730 were mainly to be found along rivers flowing to the east coast, in the Central Lowlands and the Southern Uplands (with not one river marked); or that there were few paper mills in the same period, a small cluster being found near Edinburgh (Edinburgh is not located) and a mere six others widely dispersed, the maps are of limited value. In short no features whatever are marked on the general distribution maps beside the type of mill in question. Moreover the maps are rarely referred to in the text and little comparison is made of the distribution of one kind of mill as compared with another.

It is difficult too, on occasion to obtain an overview

of a meaningful chronology when the narrative, inevitably, is constructed from a wide and exhaustive range of sources. A time frame appropriate to the study of one industry may be inappropriate to the study of another.

Dr Shaw is at his best when discussing the relative take-up of steam power (chapter 29). He demonstrates the continued development of water power technology and the emergence of energy saving in the form of the turbine. He discusses reasons for the retention of water power by sectors in certain regions and its displacement by steam power in others, explained in part by the nature of urban markets and the availability of coal. He contends that while in relative terms the use of water power declined, in absolute terms 'the amount of power derived from water continued to grow until at least the middle of the nineteenth century' (p 544). The end of the age of water power came about, we are told 'not so much on account of any inherent weakness', though surely there were limitations, as 'through changes in the scale of industrial units, in work patterns, population distributions and economic goals' (p 544).

There is an admirable glossary to conduct the reader through milling terminology and the confusing pathways of the Scottish legal system. There is a very full bibliography and a model index. This will be a useful work of reference but it lacks interpretation.

JENNIFER TANN

T M DEVINE (ed), *Farm Servants and Labour in Lowland Scotland, 1770–1914*. John Donald, Edinburgh, 1984. ix + 262 pp. illus. £16.

The theme common to most of the thirteen articles in this plump volume is the survival through the nineteenth century of antique forms of labour conjoined with technical modernization. The picture drawn, if sometimes inadvertently, is the spatial continuity of labour institutions in Great Britain, with annual or semi-annual labour contracts strengthened, if anything, by rapid industrialization. Those more familiar with farm service in England will be struck by the range of Scottish variants, where six- to twelve-month contracts could involve either unmarried men and women (and then either living in the farmhouse or general out-buildings or in purpose-built bothies, or barracks), or married men living in tied cottages (with or without the requirement to supply bondagers, women workers, to the employing farmer). Again though, the continuity of the latter form across the border into Northumberland is striking.

This variety of forms, however, was not a repertoire of institutions available to any lowland farmer. Location mattered. Four of the articles tackle regionalization directly, with diverse results. The best, by Malcolm Gray on the north-east, is a craftsmanlike

survey both of change over time and of the nineteenth-century rural economy as static concept. Alastair Orr, faced with the more daunting task of dealing with the most institutionally diverse region (the Forth Valley and south-east lowlands contained the counties least and most dominated by farm servants, by his own account, and the median county), undermined his own purpose, if that purpose was regional perspective, by framing the article as an attack on Hobsbawm and Rudé's argument for southern England, especially since the region's agricultural star was East Lothian, with the smallest number of farm servants relative to other forms of hired labour.

Eight essays follow, on specific aspects of the rural lowlands. Three stand out. The first is the editor's contribution on female employment, intrinsically interesting given the very high participation of women in Scottish agriculture. Second, Ian Levitt and Christopher Smout took on the apparently most limited topic, the 1843 Poor Law survey, but produced from its wide cross-sectional view the volume's most perceptive analysis and regional commentary. Third, Ian Carter supplied an entertaining polemic on the folly of framing questions about unmarried farm servants (in this case, the unsuccessful unionization of farm servants in Aberdeenshire) in terms more appropriate to proletarianization. I am however surprised that the work of J P D Dunbabin was not discussed; his focus may have rested south of the border, but the problem addressed was otherwise identical.

Among the rest are articles on grain harvesting by William Howatson (good for its technical detail, and commendable for its interest in the local linkages of agriculture); country tradesmen (mostly traded things) by Gavin Sprott; the housing of agricultural workers, with many cottage designs and one set of plans for bothies by Alexander Fenton; and, the third good paper of the editor, agricultural labour in the agricultural depression, another instance of the politically unfortunate rule that not all classes, or all regions, are equally hard hit by depressions.

Finally, the production as a whole is generally good, except for a few inappropriate titles to maps and figures (eg p 31, where a map of Scotland, complete with Shetland and Orkney insets, is labelled 'the Scottish lowlands') and undefined terms ('location coefficients' appear, without explanation, in the midst of an otherwise simple recital of demographic material in R H Campbell's interesting but overlong essay on the south-west). Typographic errors are happily uncommon; 'folksy' appears, unhappily only once, for 'folksay' in David Buchan's article on expressive culture. Intrusive categorization is here substituted for the historical analysis of a wonderful topic, and readers closer to Watford than Falkirk should be warned that they are gi'en nae help wi' the folksay itself.

It will be useful both for students of Scottish economic and social history and of agricultural labour to have available in one volume such a concentration of essays, many of them good, on the important topic. The penalties of having so many writing self-consciously on the same time, same place, and common topic is a certain repetitiveness, a loss of a sense of dynamic within the 144 years of the title, despite the best intentions of the editor in his own contributions.

ANN KUSSMAUL

ELEANOR and REX C RUSSELL, *Making New Landscapes in Lincolnshire: The Enclosures of Thirty Four Parishes in Mid Lindsey*. Lincolnshire History Series No. 5, Lincolnshire Recreational Services, County Library Department, Lincoln, 1983. 127 pp. Maps. £5. This volume is clearly a sequel to the same authors' 1982 book about thirty-seven parish enclosures in South Humberside, that is, in North Lindsey. In content and typographical presentation the two volumes are practically identical. The important difference is that this latest volume is the study of thirty-four different parishes in the mid part of Lindsey. Many of the remarks I made in my review of their first book are equally appropriate to this one (in the *Review* for 1983, pp 73-4).

Mid-Lindsey, by the Russells' definition, is 351 square miles in extent. Of the 109 parishes it contains, fifty-one were enclosed privately and eleven by a combination of private and parliamentary means. Forty-six were enclosed by parliamentary acts and thirty-four of these are closely studied in this volume. The earliest was the enclosure of open arable fields at Binbrook on the chalk wolds in 1737-47, and the last the enclosure of the open arable and common pasture at Corringham and Springthorpe in the Trent valley from 1848-52. The 1770s are the best represented decade in the volume with nine enclosures, which is a perfect reflection of the local (Lincolnshire) chronological history of parliamentary enclosure.

After opening summary chapters about the region in question, on enclosure procedures, and on the detailed enclosure of Fulstow parish, there follows the analysis of the thirty-four enclosures in some depth, accompanied by detailed reconstructions of the pre- and post-enclosure landscape and landownership patterns. These reconstructions have been the hallmark of Rex Russell's work over the years, and the same high quality and detail is present in this volume. The region was dominated by a two-field open-field system, with at least half of the parishes under this arrangement on the eve of enclosure. The so-called 'classic three-field system' of far too many textbooks is hardly evident at all. The enclosures were also concerned with large areas of common pasture, meadows, commons and

other commonable places. For one example, the open fields of Corringham in 1840, the Russells not only reconstruct the furlongs within the open fields but also the individual strips within the furlongs of three of the landholders. The fifty-five acres occupied by one were scattered in 111 different strips or lands, and the 105 acres of another were scattered in 162 lands. How did such open field arrangements manage to survive to the late 1840s? This book raises such intriguing questions.

Like its predecessor on South Humberside, this volume was published through the offices of the local authority Recreational/Leisure Service, and this indicates the intended readership — adult education students, local and amateur historians, and school projects. These readers will not be disappointed, but professional scholars will also find much in this volume, and at £5 it must be one of the bargains of the age.

MICHAEL TURNER

SOMERSET AND SOUTH AVON VERNACULAR BUILDING RESEARCH GROUP, *Somerset Villages, the Vernacular Buildings of West and Middle Chinnock*. Published by the Group at the Somerset Rural Life Museum, Abbey Farm, Chilkwell Street, Glastonbury, Somerset, 1984. 64 pp. 9 maps. 6 tables. 6 diagrams, many plans and sketches. £3.75 + £0.70 p & p.

This is a study of the buildings of West Chinnock and Middle Chinnock, located between Yeovil and Crewkerne, Somerset, formerly two parishes but since the late nineteenth century amalgamated as West Chinnock parish. Middle Chinnock is a small village of a few large farms and some cottages while the larger West Chinnock has many farms of various sizes.

The survey begins with a brief study of the development of the two villages as recorded in Domesday Book; estate surveys of 1459, 1589, 1651; detailed leases of about 1730; and in the Tithe Apportionment of 1839. It appears that in the early nineteenth century approximately equal amounts of farm land were under the plough and in grass, the arable land being on the slopes and the grass land in meadows and pasture in the valley bottoms. The importance of sheep on the light soil and the benefit of flax in the rotation of crops are brought out. The preliminary material concludes with an analysis of the 1841 census records and a diagram showing a peak of population between 1851 and 1861, there being rather fewer inhabitants in 1901 than in 1801.

The survey of houses includes 22 examples built before about 1850, ranging in size from manor house to cottage and representing rather less than half of those existing at that time for 26 of the houses marked on the Tithe Map have since been demolished. All 22 houses have at least a sketch plan and brief description and there are full drawings of ten houses. The largest single

group consists of houses with cross-passages, six having an internal cross-passage and four a chimney backing onto a cross-passage, though there are two houses with lobby-entrance. Most of the surviving houses in the parish appear to have been built in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries whereas those in the nearby Long Load parish, previously surveyed, are a century later. All the houses have stone walls and most include some form of jointed cruck construction though using elm as much as oak.

As well as houses, the farm buildings and minor industrial buildings related to the conversion of flax into material for sailcloth have been included in the survey. There are threshing barns of five bays or more on three farmsteads in Middle Chinnock and one in West Chinnock but other farm buildings appear to be of fairly recent date.

The study is brief but packed full of useful information, well set out, well illustrated and well-analysed. The team has been fortunate in that it included John Penoyre whose orthographic drawings are both clear and full of the character of each building. There are no photographs but the perspective sketches again show the skill of Mr Penoyre in conveying to the reader so much more about the vitality of each building than a photograph can possibly do. There are many maps, diagrams and tables, and here again the skill of the illustrator makes it so much easier to follow the argument than is possible in the hard typography and over-precise graphics usually to be seen in such work. It is to be hoped that the Group will produce many more surveys of this quality.

R W BRUNSKILL

NESTA EVANS, *The East Anglian Linen Industry: Rural Industry and Local Economy 1500-1850*. Gower, 1985. viii + 178 pp. 5 maps. £18.50.

Nesta Evans' work provides a welcome addition to the stock of knowledge on the structure of the pre-industrial East Anglian economy. The explicit aim of the book is to enhance our understanding of the economic history of Suffolk and Norfolk through an examination of the important but neglected role of its linen industry. The long history of the industry in this region has occasionally been hinted at, but typically overlooked by historians. Paucity of data combined with the overwhelming dominance of the East Anglian woollen and worsted industries provide the explanation for this omission. The balance has now been restored by Nesta Evans, who, through a meticulous and critical study of probate records and other local sources, has ably recorded the development of the linen trade from 1500, through its expansionary period between 1600 and 1730 to its final demise in the mid nineteenth century. A chapter on the cultivation and preparation of hemp precedes the main body of the

work which comprises a convincing reconstruction of the industry and its dynamic relationship with the local economy.

While the book is structurally sound and well written, it is confined to a descriptive and chronological account of the industry's fortunes. This is a pity, as the value of the work, though substantial, could have been raised by a modicum of analytical content. The empirical substance of Nesta Evans' work could usefully have been placed within the context of any of a number of current debates and will no doubt be used by others for that purpose. For instance, while the author illustrates the widespread existence of the linen industry before the nineteenth century, and outlines its role in the local economy, little is said directly about the nature of agricultural change and its relationship to the development of rural industry. Neither the structure of the family economy nor the question of regional competition and industrial location receive much attention though the author's findings could well contribute to our perception of these aspects of economic history. That the author touches on these topics while subjecting them to little scrutiny will be a major source of frustration to the reader with wider interests.

The author's reluctance to be drawn into the protoindustrial debate despite the very clear relevance of her work to it and similar questions is not necessarily a serious shortcoming, but she should at least have indicated an awareness of the trend of current thinking. While the direction of recent discussions on the nature of the transition to modern industry may not interest the author (and she would be in respectable company if they did not), I see it as a major flaw that she does not show an appreciation of the wider context within which her work deserves to be placed. This book will no doubt receive warranted attention from historians of all kinds, and be subjected to the interpretive skills of those of greater analytical persuasion.

This illuminating book, therefore, fulfils the author's desire to place the East Anglian linen industry on the map. It could, however, have done much more.

KATRINA HONEYMAN

PAUL SERVAIS, *La Rente Constituée dans le Ban de Herve au XVIIIe Siècle*. Crédit Communale de Belgique, Collection Histoire, no 62, 1982. xxx + 390 pp. 750 FB.

The Ban de Herve lies on a rolling plateau of clay soil east of Liège and provides another example of the coincidence of pastoral agriculture and domestic textile production in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Grass occupied up to ninety per cent of the land on some farms, a degree of specialization permitted by ready markets for the region's butter and cheese in Liège, Verviers, and other nearby towns.

Dairying was conducted on a small scale, with few holdings above twenty acres and many below five. The smaller holdings could only be sustained by income from the spinning and weaving of wool which came to occupy over half the region's population by 1800.

What distinguished the Ban de Herve from many other concentrations of rural industry and from neighbouring areas in eastern Belgium was its land market. Most of the land was owned locally, individually, and in small denominations. Moreover, the land market appears to have been quite active during the eighteenth century: over fifty sales per year in an area of only 10,000 acres and with 1500–2500 proprietors.

Paul Servais has investigated this world of petty proprietors through the rich archives of the region's notaries. He has examined some 50,000 transactions involving not only sales of land but, more generally, the creation, transfer, and redemption of *rentes*, which were annual charges on property. Land was often heavily encumbered by such charges, which constituted an important element in the local market for credit.

Meticulous analysis of the documents allows Servais to discern the principal contexts in which *rentes* were created. Sales and partitions of property accounted for roughly two-fifths of the value of all creations (and for many transfers of existing *rentes*). In these contexts *rentes* often served either to provide pensions for the old or widowed, or to help maintain the integrity of already very small holdings. Another fifteen per cent of creations refinanced older obligations as interest rates fell from the 1730s. Various other uses of *rentes* were identifiable, but minor. The documents were less forthcoming about a large residual, over forty per cent of creations, though Servais is able to rule out any direct connection between these and land purchases.

Servais makes extensive use of graphical and correlation analysis to investigate the relationships over the century among types of transactions and between them and several economic indicators. The results, with one major exception, are negative. The different sorts of transactions do not seem to have been systematically related to each other. Nor did they move closely in step with local prices of butter, cattle, or land (all of these series are new and useful contributions to price history).

The economic indicator that was closely related to all types of transactions was an annual series for the production of woollen cloth at Verviers. This series (drawn from the work of Le Brun) is neither discussed in detail nor reproduced, which is somewhat surprising in a book with 128 tables and 102 graphs! Indeed, the treatment of domestic industry is rather sparse. The statistical results are not followed up by a closer look at the data in order to draw out the ways in

which variations in textile demand produced transactions in the credit market.

Another aspect of the local economy which receives surprisingly little attention is demographic change. One wonders how changes in mortality and fertility would have affected the need for *rentes*. The data suggest that relative to a growing population, transactions involving *rentes* may have been becoming less common in the late eighteenth century. Were the circumstances that called for recourse to a *rente* changing, or were other instruments replacing it?

Readers interested in this case of rural industry may find Servais' article in *Annales ESC* (XXXVII, 1982, pp 303-19) a more concise and forceful statement of his views. Here the analysis of the book is extended to some neighbouring areas and carried forward into the early nineteenth century, when the decline of domestic industry in the Ban de Herve reversed some of the trends of the previous century.

PETER M SOLAR

ALUN HOWKINS, *Poor Labouring Men: Rural Radicalism in Norfolk 1870-1923*. History Workshop, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985. xiv + 225 pp. 20 plates. £7.95 (paper).

'What we are left with, in terms of the (existing) history of the rural poor', writes Alun Howkins, by way of introduction, 'are a number of beacons, standing above the surrounding darkness, lighting a small area with no obvious route from one to the other'. Modern historians have certainly not done justice to the recent history of agrarian labour. 'What is lacking', continues Howkins, 'is both a general "labour" history of the nineteenth-century countryside and specific studies of the different groups within the rural poor'. He selects that bastion of English agrarian capitalism, Norfolk, which hosted fierce struggles between labour and capital. Through the extensive utilization of oral evidence, Howkins's route traces 'rural radicalism' between the trade unionist campaigns of the 1870s and the Norfolk strike of 1922-3 to provide 'a detailed study of one group within rural society over a period of change'. Only one of Howkins's 'radical' phases is not concerned with trade union developments, namely the importance of nonconformity as a vehicle for some plebeian independence in the later nineteenth century.

According to one oral witness, '“When you worked on a farm like, there was always one or two people what was unemployed looking over the gate where you worked”'. And, here lay the rub. Rural depopulation, and other economic factors, simply failed to terminate competition for jobs. Certainly, there were scores of parochial struggles — notably at harvest time — in which farmworkers succeeded in prising ephemeral wage rises from even the most obdurate, autocratic village despots. But the unions

could never preside effectively over scores of tiny disputes, or, as was shown in the 1923 strike, exploit such experiences to cement plebeian solidarity. Too many farm labourers continued to look nervously over the gate, and well they might; even if their own neighbours did not scab, blacklegs were repeatedly brought in by farmers' federations from outside. Lethal victimization of militant locals invariably followed. Even when organized labour seemed to be getting the upper hand, the forces of the state mobilized behind capital. There are many superb photographs reproduced here; none is more evocative than the one on the cover; a team driven in the field, flanked by two uniformed police officers.

Unfortunately, this is an amateurish and confused book. The narrative chapters are crippled by an apparent inability to present a straightforward, logically-arranged history. Analytical clarity is equally elusive. Exactly who comprised Howkins's 'respectable working class' and who were 'marginalized to a rough group' is not revealed; did that 'solidarity (which) led part of the village at least to see the representatives of the law as the enemy' draw on both roughs and respectables? Who made the best union rank and file, and were scabs exclusive to either group? Non-union politics are not explored systematically. Certainly, the Liberal grandes tried to harvest farmworkers' votes through supporting the Eastern Counties Labourers' and Small Holders' Union. Socialist and Labour Party activists tried to exploit rural conflict, and through it and the agricultural workers' unions, take their ideologies to the villages. But, after half a century of struggle, and major political change (including the franchise and party structures), Howkins eschews any consideration of the level, or the nature, of rural class consciousness. His 'own demand' for a history of 'one group' of rural plebeians does not materialize, because readers cannot learn which group that really is.

ROGER WELLS

PAUL BAIROCH and BOUDA ETEMAD, *Structure par produits des exportations du Tiers-Monde, 1830-1937*. Université de Genève, Geneva, 1985. 201 pp. Unpriced. In this study, Bouda Etemad under the general direction of Paul Bairoch, has assembled statistics for the exports of the so-called 'Third World', using three-year averages of the figures for 1829-31, 1859-61, 1899-1901, 1911-13, 1927-9, and 1936-8. Using these six estimates as bench-marks, he then proceeds to calculate the pace of expansion, and other features of Third World exports over these years. Certainly this work is an advance on J R Hanson's lamentable study, *Trade in Transition* (New York, 1980), which only covers the period 1840-1900, and so misses the rapid expansion of exports which took place

between 1900 and the First World War. By including 1927-9 and 1936-8, the authors obtain a further dimension relating to the expansion of the 1920s, and the subsequent contraction of the 1930s. Thus they are able to conclude 'During the century from 1830-1929, the value of Third World exports increased by a factor of 30 — versus 24 for Europe. This was a very rapid expansion and all the more so, since it occurred in societies that remained in most respects traditional.' Yet this optimistic finding is modified by recurrent references to colonization, which is implicitly held responsible for this export expansion, as if it were in some way bad. Colonization is said to have reduced regional specialization, because crops grown in one part of the Third World, like rubber or cocoa, came to be grown in other parts. It is said to have 'extraverted' the economies of Latin America, turning them into export economies despite their small populations, and it is also supposed to have led to de-industrialization in Asia, as British cottons ousted cottons from India, making her less an exporter of manufactures, and more an exporter of raw materials. The increase in exports from Black Africa from the 1880s is also stated to have been due to colonization. The problem with all this anti-colonialism is that it is quite irrelevant to the analysis of the trade figures. Much of the expansion would have taken place with or without colonization. A classic example is independent Thailand, whose exports of rice increased rapidly in these years, paralleling the growth of rice exports from British Burma, and French Indo-China. In all three cases it was the capitalistic enterprise of the peasants in response to an expanding world market, which secured the rise in exports, not the intervention of a colonial authority. Because this study deals in huge aggregates, and vast generalizations, it does not help us understand the process of trade expansion at all, or the people who made it happen. If you believe that the Developed World colonized the Third World and extracted from it goods to consume at an ever-increasing rate, whilst destroying its industries, you will accept this book, as it will confirm your beliefs, and save you having to make the effort of understanding how trade expanded so rapidly. But there may be some who think that this book merely reeks of self-reinforcing intellectual prejudice, and that it extends our comprehension hardly at all. They will have to look elsewhere for explanation!

A J H LATHAM

J K BOWERS and PAUL CHESHIRE, *Agriculture, the Countryside and Land Use: An Economic Critique*. Methuen, 1983. xii + 170 pp. £4.95 (paperback only).

This book is an avowedly polemical work; written by professional economists, although addressed some-

what more to the general reader than to the specialist, it takes issue with current policies towards farming, and makes a strong plea that they should be changed. The authors' case is easily summarized; from the interwar period, and especially after 1945, policy has developed in directions which are irrational, far too expensive, and environmentally damaging. The themes are thus those found in more compressed form in Bowers' recent article in this journal (1985, part I).

The authors have assembled a good deal of material in support of this aim. The central chapters are those on the improved economic position of the farming sector since the 1930s, the environmental effects of agricultural expansion (which includes a micro-study of an area of West Berkshire as well as national evidence), and the level of support which farming receives under the present system. As the authors rightly point out, the development of protection for British agriculture has been a long-run affair (it may be said to have started with the sugar-beet subsidy of 1925), and was already at a substantial level before entry into the EEC in 1973. In this context, the adoption of the Common Agricultural Policy involved no change in principle, although it did involve a rise in the overall level of support.

Within their own terms of reference, which are to demonstrate the expense, the environmentally damaging effects, and the irrationality of policy, the authors present a strong case. The expense is demonstrated in a useful review of the sources of support, from which it appears that the total cost of support in 1979 was between £2.9 billion and £3.7 billion, or roughly about £10,000 per farmer. It is a pity that no calculations are made for later dates, since by now the costs have presumably grown even higher.

The damage to the environment is not so easy to demonstrate on an overall basis, although there is much evidence of a scattered nature which the authors deploy to good effect, in particular, the increase of tillage and the substantial decline in hedgerows — a process by no means confined to East Anglia, as even a casual journey through central or southern England will reveal. Since this is highly visible evidence, public reaction to such processes has already begun to make itself felt, as the passing of the Wildlife and Countryside Acts demonstrates.

The attempt to prove the irrationality of policy is less successful, or rather, the attempt succeeds within its own limited terms very well, but this does nothing to advance the authors' cause. In economic terms, which are the ones used here, such policies are clearly irrational. What could be more irrational than to subsidize farmers in one country to produce commodities which could have been supplied more cheaply from abroad? The absurdity is compounded when the commodities cannot find a market, and butter mountains and milk lakes ensue. But to

complain along these lines is to fail to appreciate that, in economic terms, all subsidies (and other forms of protection) are essentially irrational, and derive their existence from essentially political decisions, in which a variety of considerations may be taken into account. It is indeed this failure to appreciate the political elements in agricultural policy that is the weakest point in the book; the authors sometimes write as if they believe policy was dictated by a cabal consisting of the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Farmers' Union, and the agricultural supply industries.

To say this is not to deny that the authors have a strong case, and their policy recommendations flow clearly from it. The main suggestion is that support levels should be generally reduced (although they do not say by how much). Apart from this, relative cereal prices should be reduced, and capital grants (eg, for drainage schemes) reduced or abolished. Finally, environmental damage should be reduced by an extension of the system of management agreements already in existence under the Wildlife and Countryside Acts. In view of the present trend of public opinion, it seems likely that at least some of their recommendations will be put into effect; the imposition of milk quotas in 1984 may be the start of a much larger process of reform.

PETER DEWEY

MICHAEL YOUNG, *The Elmhirsts of Dartington: the creation of an utopian community*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982. x + 381 pp. 38 plates. £15. Of recent years, Dartington has been in the news, what with Michael Straight who in *After a long silence* revealed belatedly something of the Cambridge spy ring of the 1930s, the protracted affair of the last school headmaster and his wife featured in the popular press and the unexplained death of a girl pupil at the school while bathing nude in the Dart. Much of this publicity has focused on the school, expensive and private. But Dartington is not just a school, it is a whole range of enterprises and activities whose origins and fortunes are traced in this book written by a former pupil at the school, now Lord Young of Dartington. Essentially it tells the story of a Yorkshireman, Leonard Elmhirst, who after an unhappy education at Repton and Cambridge, some time in India and Mesopotamia and a brief period in 1918 in the army as a sergeant in the army education service in Dublin, went to Cornell to study agriculture, saved from a more conventional English career as a civil servant by what Michael Young describes as 'his lack of talent' (p 31). While in America he met Rabindranath Tagore, a meeting which was to have a permanent influence on him and led to Elmhirst deciding to go to India to work with Tagore. There he became director of the Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Sriniketan. In an attempt to raise money for

Cornell, he met Dorothy Straight in New York in 1920; she was 33 and he was 27. Five years later the American press announced the marriage of 'ONE OF THE WORLD'S WEALTHIEST WOMEN' to the 'SON OF AN ENGLISH CLERGYMAN'. At the same time Dorothy agreed to come to England to use her wealth, estimated at about \$40 million, to carry out an 'English experiment' which essentially consisted of trying to put into practice the following five rather naïve beliefs:

Mankind can be liberated through education;

A new flowering of the arts can transform a society impoverished by industrialization and secularization;

A society which combines the best of town and country combines the best of both worlds;

A pervasive concern for the individual human being and his right to self-determination can be combined with the efficient operation of agriculture and industry;

The scientific spirit can be a continuous spur to progress.

Following the same road as other utopian communities, the nucleus was to be a school allied to a farm, a workshop and other activities. But Elmhirst expected to do 'better than the old utopias by putting his faith in the methods of science' (p 100). The first problem was to choose a site. Elmhirst told the estate agents that the place 'must be beautiful, we're starting a school. We expect to make farming pay, it must have a reasonably productive soil and climate, and as much variety as possible, woods, forest, orchards, etc and if you can give me all those, then historical associations thrown in'. Where else could such an estate be found but in Devon. The second property Elmhirst saw was the 'ancient and historic demesne' of the Champernownes, Dartington Hall. Ruined though it was, Elmhirst saw the possibilities it presented and so a new large element was added to the English experiment — the restoration of ancient buildings. Since Dorothy, when she arrived from the USA, approved — 'too heavenly' was her comment — a start was made on the English experiment. The house and other buildings were restored, the estate was put into good shape, the school got underway and other enterprises were set in train.

But all did not go smoothly. In a perceptive passage, Michael Young lists four failings of this project. First, there was a poor choice of executives. Then, Elmhirst found it difficult to devolve authority; there were continual problems when the Elmhirsts returned from their frequent absences and wished to reverse decisions made while they were away and behind Leonard stood Dorothy — whose name should be Elmhirst, said one critic — who held the purse strings. Thirdly, Elmhirst had a poor notion of the appropriate rural industries to

develop. Fortunately for economic historians brought up to believe in the economies of scale, Elmhirst's view that 'small was beautiful' did not work in practice and he found that efficiency and experiment were incompatible objectives. So Eve spinning was replaced by modern high-speed machinery in the textile mill, Staverton Builders became one of the largest building firms in south-west England, the pottery failed, cider-making grew beyond the local market and was sold, and the woodlands, much too small to be economically viable, were hived off to a specialist business. Leonard's fourth failing was lack of application; he had little staying power and in particular his enthusiasm for the arts soon evaporated. With a facade of consultation and democracy, decisions were often made abruptly and autocratically. Choosing to go their own way, the Elmhirsts quickly ranged the local gentry, the clergy and the local farmers against them. Elmhirst immediately upset things when he decided to pay his farm workers the minimum wage of 32s 6d a week when local wages were much below. Just before Elmhirst arrived at Dartington, the wages on the Dartington farm were 15s a week. The Dartington stables were one of the first to have windows for the horses to look out of since he believed the view improved their tempers!

In other respects Elmhirst's vision conflicted with his practice. While he decried 'the pop-it-in-there' practice common in the 1920s and 1930s, the buildings at Dartington were popped in all over the place and in all sorts of styles as if picked haphazardly from an architectural supermarket. And the workers' houses, built as examples of how cheap rural housing could be, were regarded as mean. Washbasins were omitted from the bathrooms, for example, to save costs and the approach roads were not surfaced. 'In the 1920s the Elmhirsts aroused hostility *outside* the estate; in the 1930s they did so *inside* it', Michael Young notes (p 239).

To provide for the future, the Dartington Hall Trust was established and so a continuance of the English experiment was assured. With the war, animosities lessened and after the war the involvement of the Elmhirsts slackened. In the conclusion of this long and unbalanced book which at times verges on hagiography, Michael Young attempts to draw up a balance sheet — what Leonard Elmhirst would have called an assessment of the positive and negative results — of the English experiment. The successes were the restoration of the estate, the creation of the garden, called by Edward Hyams, 'The most modern of the great gardens', the provision of jobs and the establishment of a positive centre of activity in the depressed countryside of the 1930s, at a time when others were selling up and going elsewhere. Though not markedly successful himself, Leonard Elmhirst's agricultural interests — he was president of the International

Conference of Agricultural Economists from 1930 to 1958 — were of wider significance. Together with George Hayter Haynes, Elmhirst established a cattle breeding centre at Dartington and pioneered artificial insemination in the 1930s. Then the work of Wilfrid Hiley, who was in charge of the woodlands, influenced the outlook of the Royal Forestry Society for England and Wales and so made an impact on the government statement on *Post-war Forestry: a report on forest policy* of 1944. The activities in the arts set an example to other towns and villages. More recently, a new area of influence has been established in north Devon with a cultural centre at Beaford and a glass works at Great Torrington. The Dartington Institute endeavours to encourage new activities in the south-west and the Bank — though this is also probably too small — provides aid for small firms. The school, the College of Art and Music and the Centre for Further Education make their contribution both locally and more widely. But it is here that doubts creep in. The hopes for education have not been realized. While some educational changes, like coeducation, have become accepted, Dartington has ceased to pioneer and, in Michael Young's words, has moved nearer to the standard secondary school. Dartington's impact on the arts is now less remarkable. Artists have passed through rather than settled and the quartet has been disbanded. Then, to the resolution of urban-rural problems, Dartington has offered no solution. Moreover, in the school, as elsewhere, the reality of power and wealth at Dartington have always been in conflict with the right to self-determination. Dartington was an experiment which showed what considerable wealth could do but in spite of its aspirations was essentially authoritarian and élitist. 'Leonard never entirely stopped being the squire, Dorothy never entirely gave up being the grand lady'.

And now the founders are dead — Dorothy in 1968 and Leonard in 1974 — some of the spirit has gone out of the place. But the old shortcomings are still apparent. Dartington is still not signed on the road out from Totnes, the restaurant at the new shopping centre is run by Cranks, the last headmaster at the school was appointed because although he lacked relevant experience he was an energizer — and so it proved — and when the Torrington glass works moved into profit and wanted to expand, Maurice Ash, a recent chairman of the Trustees, fought hard to keep the number of employees down to 175, arguing that if the concern grew larger, the man packing the glass would no longer know the man who made it. Ash himself plans when he retires in 1986 to found a smaller Dartington of spirituality with a vineyard running down to the Dart and experiments in cheese-making.

In terms of the title of this book, Dartington was never a community nor was it utopian. Yet over time it has provided employment both directly and indirectly

for many hundreds of people and has not, though the reasons for this are obscure, forfeited the loyalty of many who still cherish some ideals about the way in

which a modern society should operate.

WALTER MINCHINTON

Shorter Notices

E MCCrackEN and D MCCrackEN, *A Register of Trees for County Londonderry, 1768-1911*. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast. 1984. x + 80 pp. 2 maps; 18 plates. £5.50.

Deforestation of natural woodland caused a shortage of timber in Ireland which was severe enough by the late seventeenth century for Government action to be taken. Acts of Parliament to encourage planting and conservation of trees started in 1698, and by 1710 tenants were required to plant nursery stock, not saplings rooted out of hedges and woods. Initially these Acts were ineffective because tenants, who managed most of the land, benefited little from the planting, but in 1765 a new Act was passed enabling a tenant to benefit from his planting, provided he had registered his plantation with the Clerk of the Peace for the county. This initiated a wave of planting which peaked in the 1820s and fell away rapidly after 1840. Between 1791 and 1841 the area of plantations in Co Londonderry increased threefold. Conifers formed a majority of planting from 1810 onwards. Larch, Scots Pine and Norway Spruce were the nineteenth-century favourites, but now, when 96 per cent of all state plantings are coniferous, Sitka Spruce and *Pinus contorta* form 70 per cent of all plantings.

These changes are ably summarized in a fifteen page introduction, but the bulk of the book is a transcription of the planting register for Co Londonderry. For each registration we see who did the planting, the locality, the list of tree species planted with the number of each, and the source reference. Appendices give a location index of plantings; notes on some of the species planted; and a summary of modern state forestry in Northern Ireland. The text is illustrated by black-and-white photographs.

Coming in an era of concern for the appearance of the countryside and for the national stock of trees and woodlands, this is a useful and attractive presentation about an earlier period of concern and action.

G F PETERKEN

DAVID MABEY, *Good Cider*. Whittet Books Ltd, 1984, 143 pp. £7.95.

As sales of cider have grown, rising from 46 million gallons in 1978 to an estimated 70 million gallons in 1983, so the production of books about cider has grown. In both cases, the predominant appeal is to the popular market. This short book adds nothing to our

knowledge of the history, the craft or the customs associated with cidermaking. But it does contain a useful list of cidermakers, a list of some of the places where cider can be drunk and a number of recipes involving cider. This is a brief popular book; a serious study of the history of cider is still awaited.

Slighter is Philippa Legg, *Cidermaking in Somerset* (Glastonbury: Somerset Rural Life Museum, 1984, 32pp. 85p.) which tells very briefly the history of cidermaking in the past with some Somerset examples and illustrations. But there is no discussion of the recent history of the industry, dominated by Taunton Cider and Coates — nor a bibliography. A poor yield from the research project which led to this publication. At both the local level and the national the cider industry awaits its historian.

WALTER MINCHINTON

D NEAVE, (ed), *Winteringham, 1650-1760: Life and Work in a North Lincolnshire Village Illustrated by Probate Inventories* (copies from D Burton, Westlands, Meggitt Lane, Winteringham, Scunthorpe, S Humberside). 1984. vi + 157 pp. illus. £5.

S NEEDHAM, *A Glossary for East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire Probate Inventories*. University of Hull, Department of Adult Education, 1984. 22 pp. £1.50.

The Winteringham study is a good example of the excellent work being produced by Adult Education classes up and down the country. It is based upon a study of the surviving probate inventories of a tightly-knit group of farmers and tradesmen, but it also includes an analysis of parish registers and manorial records, including a detailed survey and plan of 1719. Winteringham was a decayed market centre on the banks of the Humber, with a population of 280-350 in the late seventeenth century. The farmers concentrated upon rearing fat cattle and had adapted their open fields to this purpose long before the enclosure act of 1761. A number of late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth-century houses survive, six with datestones, to provide solid evidence to go with the analysis of rooms in the inventories. The first 62 pages of the text contains a careful and well-illustrated account of the information to be derived from documentary and visual sources, followed by transcripts of the 109 inventories and a glossary.

Sue Needham's glossary explains the meaning of

words derived from several hundred East Riding and north Lincolnshire inventories appraised between 1536 and 1748 and is a useful addition to the growing number of regional glossaries. In it the reader will find explanations of belly pooce, dornyx, dyntill, isson glasse and many other archaic words.

DAVID HEY

P LYTH (ed), *Farms and Fields of Southwell: a Study of Enclosures*. University of Nottingham, Centre for Local History, 1984. 108 pp. 11 maps. 3 plates. £1.50.

This series of essays by the Southwell WEA Local History Group follows in the footsteps of several similar works in other areas which have been instrumental in gradually building up our knowledge of the enclosure process at local level. It covers each of the five formal enclosures which occurred within Southwell between 1774 and 1844, together with an account of the agricultural organisation of the area before enclosure. Each contributor has obviously been allowed to develop the account as he or she thought fit, so the contents of the chapters, and their interest to the non-local reader, are very variable. Some, such as the chapter on Normanton, consist largely of a summarizing and listing of the award, whereas others range more widely, exploiting additional material. The account of George Hodgkinson's new farm gives an interesting insight into the costs and methods of developing the land after enclosure, and there are many other titbits of information, such as the calculations on the layout of an individual's new plots.

As Rex Russell points out in his foreword, the work is not without its controversial and dubious statements. It would be interesting to know, for example, why it is assumed that allottees sold up because they were unable to pay fencing costs, when the list provided appears to indicate that almost two-thirds of those involved were gentry, clergymen or businessmen, who were surely not short of the necessary £11 or so. There are also technical problems, for the use of stencils as a means of reproducing the work has taken

its toll of the legibility of the maps. Nevertheless, uneven and open to criticism though it may be, this study provides one more piece for the jigsaw of our knowledge of enclosure.

J CHAPMAN

B ENGLISH, *Yorkshire Enclosure Awards*. University of Hull, Department of Adult Education, Studies in Regional and Local History, 5 (1985). xiv + 184pp. 1 map. £3.50.

The compilation of lists of basic data about enclosure is a slow and tedious business and students of the movement are indebted to Barbara English for her efforts in producing this survey of Yorkshire awards. It represents an extension of her now out-of-print West Riding list to the other two Ridings, and expands upon the bare bones of the Tate lists for these counties. It includes many formally enrolled agreements as well as Parliamentary awards, but omits some acts where no award appears to have been made. The lists include information on the type and amount of land enclosed, and also the names of the commissioners and surveyors. This last is a welcome feature, though it may occasionally be a trap for the unwary, for commissioners of the same name are not always clearly distinguished. Thus though Thomas Scott and Thomas Scott junior both appear in the Index of Commissioners, it is not made clear that this is an index of the name recorded, rather than an index of individuals. The two Scotts acted five and six times respectively, not nine and one as might be assumed.

Perhaps the most valuable piece of information is the up-to-date detail of the whereabouts of all known copies of the award and map. For many researchers, the ability to locate immediately the nearest copy will be of considerable help.

The work is not without its errors and omissions. For example, Thomas Scott senior is not recorded under Kirkdale, though he replaced Edward Cleaver on the latter's death. In general, however, this is a useful addition to the slowly-growing store of enclosure data.

J CHAPMAN