

Book Reviews

The British Isles

DAVID DYMOND AND EDWARD MARTIN (eds), *An historical atlas of Suffolk* (Suffolk County Council / Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, Third edition, 1999). 224 pp. £15 (hbk); £10 (pbk).

The first edition of this *Historical atlas of Suffolk* (1988) has deservedly proved a trend-setter in both concept and format. Durham, Norfolk, the East Riding of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Berkshire and Sussex also now have atlases based on the administrative unit of the county. There are more county atlases to come, but to date, only south-west England has a regional atlas. The county is at once both a sensible and a somewhat perverse basis for mapping. It is sensible because in so many arenas of political and administrative history the county has a real meaning. Many of the datasets quarried for the compilation of such an atlas, for example sites and monuments registers, are constructed on a county basis. Many of the manuscript sources used were collected in the past, and are curated now, on a county basis. However, no variety of historian is as aware of the limitations of the county as a basis of analysis as the agricultural historian. Probably no-one has argued for the illegitimacy of county-based economic description as fervently or pointedly as did William Marshall in his critique of the Board of Agriculture's late eighteenth-century *General Views* of the agriculture of each county.

Suffolk's formula for communicating history by maps has stood the test of time well and has been widely adopted. A map, or a series of small maps, face text enlivened with occasional illustrations. The texts are written in a clear, jargon-free and straightforward manner and extend the map-promoted message. There are also notes on sources and ideas for further reading gathered chapter-by-chapter at the end of the book.

Eighty-six topics are mapped by the 39 contributors. A majority of the contributions are structured into three main sections on a chronological basis and these are supplemented by six smaller thematic sections: communications, industry (in which is included agriculture), leisure, urban growth, architecture, and post-medieval foundations. The mapped topics vary hugely in scope. There are those which are the fundamental underpinnings of any

local or regional history, such as maps of population reconstructed from the lay subsidies of 1327 and 1524. At the other extreme are maps of camping closes (places where an early hybrid between football and handball was played) – fascinating and of particular East-Anglian relevance. There are also in a Suffolk sense some unashamedly quirky maps, as, for example, a map of theatres and cinemas (unsurprisingly rather empty for this county). Agriculture does not have a section to itself, as might have been expected in such a rural county, but there is much throughout the atlas that is of interest to agricultural historians. There are maps of rabbit warrens and deer parks in the middle ages, of markets and fairs, parks, enclosure and land reclamation and rural settlement in addition to studies of agrarian change proper (in High Suffolk) and a cross-section compiled from the 1854 crop return.

There is a great deal in the 224 pages of this atlas for historians of all persuasions – data to be quarried and ideas which can be tested elsewhere. The authors and editors have also provided a wealth of contexts within which local historians, historical geographers and school pupils can set their own locally-based projects. This *Historical atlas of Suffolk* is also extraordinarily good value. There are a great many new authors, sections and maps in this third edition. Those who own earlier versions really should go out and buy this new one. In so doing they will support the editors, Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, which together had the foresight and strength of commitment to support this atlas project twenty years or so ago. It was a shot in the dark at that time but one that has paid off handsomely.

ROGER KAIN

G. C. BAUGH (ed.), *The Victoria history of the counties of England. A history of Shropshire*, X, *Wenlock, Upper Corvedale and the Stretton hills* (OUP for the Institute of Historical Research, 1998). xxiii + 518 pp. £70.

This unusually lengthy volume of the Victoria County History describes a remarkably varied area of south Shropshire. The first 186 pages deal with eleven parishes in Munslow Hundred, while the remainder are devoted to 16 parishes in the liberties and borough of Wenlock.

The borough was in essence the estate of the monastic house at Much Wenlock, which even before the Norman conquest was administered under privilege. It survived until 1964 as a largely rural municipality of some 92 sq. km. This volume is a valiant and largely successful attempt to make sense of an area with an unusually disordered administrative inheritance. It is bounded to the north by the hundred of Conover, described in vol. VIII of the History. To the north-east, the parishes of Little Wenlock and Madeley, historically part of the borough of Wenlock, are described in vol. XI, which covers parishes wholly or partially incorporated in the new town of Telford. The new volume includes such varied parishes as Badger and Beckbury, in the sheep-and-corn country on the Staffordshire border, Stoke St. Milburgh whose extremities rise to the summits of Clee Burf and Titterstone Clee, and Broseley on the banks of the Severn, one of the most industrialized parishes in England. It would be easy to suggest other ways of arranging the history of these parishes but this is, in most respects, an effective compromise.

Many readers of this journal will be aware that vol. IV of the Shropshire Victoria History describes the agricultural history of the whole county from earliest times. This topographical volume can devote only limited space to economic history, but it reveals much valuable detail that may be lost in the broad sweep of the general volume. Effective and consistent use has been made of probate inventories for examining the detail of seventeenth and eighteenth century farming, of tithe maps for assessing the balance of pastoral and arable activities in the 1840s, and of land use returns for showing the changing face of agriculture over the past 130 years. Some large and interesting farms are identified, such as Bockleton Court in Stoke St. Milburgh, where there was a dairy herd of 45 beasts and a flock of over 400 sheep in 1708. A complex pattern of gradual enclosure of open fields is depicted, together with some instances of large-scale parliamentary enclosure, chiefly in the nineteenth century. The account of farming on the great commons of the Long Mynd in Church Stretton parish is particularly revealing. The commons extended over more than 5000 acres in 1840 when they provided sustenance for nearly 8000 sheep, a total which steadily increased to reach about 18,000 in the early 1990s, leading in 1994 to an agreement to reduce numbers.

The accounts of the two small market towns in the region, Much Wenlock and Church Stretton, are commendably thorough. The development of the latter as a place of resort in the late nineteenth century is described in detail, effective use having been made of the files of the local newspaper. There is an excellent account of the revitalization (or perhaps the vitalization) of Much

Wenlock in the mid-nineteenth century under the leadership of Dr William Penny Brookes. The Wenlock Agricultural Reading Society was established in 1841, and from it emerged a library, a museum, a philharmonic class and the Wenlock Olympian Society, whose annual events between 1850 and 1930 influenced the development of the modern Olympic movement. The society's reading room building of 1852 subsequently became the town's corn exchange.

Anyone studying aspects of the history of this region of Shropshire will have cause to be grateful to the editors of this volume for providing keys to the understanding of some particularly vexing questions of administrative history. The clarity of the maps which illustrate some of these questions is especially commendable. The volume does rather more than this however. It succeeds in raising questions and sometimes in providing data for answering them, about a part of England whose landscape is not only beautiful but rich in evidence of many periods of man's activity. It is an area where fieldwork is especially rewarding, and the volume is a compelling invitation to the historian to get mud on his or her boots.

BARRIE TRINDER

D. A. CROWLEY (ed.), *The Victoria history of the counties of England. A history of Wiltshire*, XVI, *Kinwardstone hundred* (OUP for the Institute of Historical Research, 1999). xxi + 263 pp. 45 illus; 18 maps. £70.

The editors of the Wiltshire volumes of the Victoria County History maintain a remarkable and commendable rate of publication. This latest volume is concerned with the fifteen parishes in the Kinwardstone hundred which covers the chalk downland of east Wiltshire from the Pewsey vale to the Hampshire border and includes the former royal forests of Savernake and Chute. This is an area without towns or notable industries and where agriculture and forestry have remained the major activities. Like much of Wiltshire, it has also been traditionally dominated by great estates and major landowners. The natural beauty of the downland landscape and the excellence of its agriculture were recognised by William Cobbett in 1820 and it was of this district that he wrote his classic, brief description of downland farming. Surveying the early morning view from the downs above Milton Lilbourne, he exclaimed 'I delight in this sort of country. I sat upon my horse and looked over Milton, Easton and Pewsey for half an hour, though I had not breakfasted'. Cobbett's enthusiasm is not mentioned in the sober pages of this VCH volume, although reference is made to his remarks on the cultivation of swede turnips. Instead we are provided with a wealth of information and detailed references to the sources for each parish, and a masterly account of manorial, religious and

economic history. For the agricultural historian there is much of interest. Parishes such as Pewsey, Milton Lilbourne and Great Bedwyn provide classic examples of the complex arrangement of common fields, meadows and downland grazing, and of the gradual process of enclosure and amalgamation of farms. All the parishes provide evidence of the typical downland farming pattern of 'sheep and corn' husbandry, eventually giving way to the enclosure of common fields, the extension of arable and the steep decline in sheep numbers, followed by the amalgamation of farms and a widespread change to dairy farming and the sale of liquid milk during the later nineteenth century. From 1885, for example, the Stratton-Farmer partnership at Little Bedwyn was milking 2000 cows on what had previously been sheep and corn downland farms. It was at Wexcombe in Great Bedwyn parish that A. J. Hosier and his brother, Joshua, developed their large-scale dairy farming and poultry keeping. They also manufactured prefabricated and easily-transportable bails or milking parlours for sale to farmers across the chalk downlands.

The complex details of the descent of each manor, the dominance of the great estates and the fortunes of the landowners are described in detail. Notable was the rapid rise of the Seymours of Wolf Hall after Jane Seymour became Henry VIII's third wife in 1536. The wealth and influence of the local estate owners is evident from their surviving mansions and parks, as well as from their memorials in the parish churches. They were also responsible for numerous charities. The most dramatic example is the large almshouse founded in 1692 at Froxfield by Sarah, Duchess of Somerset. This provided accommodation for thirty widows, later increased to fifty, and it remains as a remarkable example of a major almshouse building. Some account might also have been included concerning the charitable work of Mary Caroline, Marchioness of Ailesbury, who was responsible for the building or rebuilding of many churches in the district during the mid-nineteenth century. This included the building of the large, ornate church of St Katherine deep in Savernake forest in 1861, a fine example of an estate church. The church was badly damaged during the Second World War when a nearby ammunition dump hidden in the forest accidentally exploded, but this episode is not mentioned in the volume.

One development which could have been treated in greater detail was the rapid decline of the Brudenell-Bruce estate during the later nineteenth century. Charles Brudenell-Bruce was created Marquess of Ailesbury in 1821 and from his greatly enlarged mansion, Tottenham House, he dominated the political and economic life of the district, holding the second largest estate in Wiltshire. Agricultural depression, lavish building work, jointures

to several dowagers, protracted litigation and the extraordinarily profligate life-style of the fourth marquess, William Brudenell-Bruce (d. 1894), combined to bring about the ruin of the estate. The terse VCH style hardly does justice to the dramatic nature of this spectacular collapse.

Nonetheless, this volume maintains the high standard and meticulous research of its predecessors. It provides a treasury of information on this area of chalk downland and royal forest. The maps which accompany each parish history in this volume are a useful addition, and the numerous illustrations of churches, houses, and landscape views are excellent.

J. H. BETTEY

N. J. G. POUNDS, *A history of the English parish: the culture of religion from Augustine to Victoria* (CUP, 2000). xxv + 593 pp. 151 illus. £60.

This ambitious book deserves to stand alongside Richard Morris, *Churches in the landscape* (1989) as a basic text for all those who care to explore our rich heritage of ancient ecclesiastical buildings and who seek to understand the role of the parish in the history of settlements and in the social history of the communities that they served. It provides a framework of understanding from the origins of the parochial system, when the old minster territories disintegrated in the late Anglo-Saxon era, through to Victorian times, when large numbers of new parishes were created in the burgeoning industrial towns.

This is essentially a work of synthesis. Professor Pounds appears to have read everything that has been published on the subject in the transactions of county record societies, learned journals and printed calendars. He has apparently also visited all the numerous parishes that he writes about. The book is clearly a product of a lifetimes interest in and fascination with historic churches and their parishes. He writes crisply and his arguments are well-illustrated with maps and photographs. The book can be read throughout with pleasure and profit and can also be used for reference on particular points and topics.

Professor Pounds starts with a succinct account of early Christianity and the minster churches that were often associated with royal estates, tracing broad patterns and providing telling illustrations. He emphasizes the inconsistency of the minster system in terms of size, organization, wealth and personnel. The patronal churches of lay landowners from the eighth century onwards were the forerunners of the parish churches that were found throughout the country by the twelfth century as royal estates were broken up and manors were formed. The process was a gradual one that was inconsistent and never complete. Anomalies in parochial structures abounded until the late nineteenth century.

A theme of the book is the secular overtones of the ecclesiastical parish from its beginning as a lay estate. Parishes were 'the religious expression of the manor'. When manors became fragmented or fell into disuse, the parish took on more and more secular functions. The role of the rural parish in keeping order, relieving distress, settling disputes, etc. was at its most important from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. In contrast, the role of the urban parish declined as towns or boroughs received charters of incorporation. In a work of this scope points of disagreement are to be expected. Northern historians will emphasize the township rather than the parish as 'the basic territorial unit in the organisation of this country'. They will argue that the sections on urban parishes fail to mention that the great industrial towns of Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire were not divided into small parishes like the ancient cities but arose as townships within huge parishes covering thousands of acres. The parishes of the Pennines were very different from those in much of lowland England.

Professor Pounds shows how the parish 'became a little community, bound together by mutual obligations and common trust and mistrust'. The great strength of his book is the way that he develops this theme. His comments on parish life in the late middle ages and the early-modern period follow naturally from his use of archaeological, architectural, topographical and documentary evidence to establish the origins and growth of the parochial system. It is rare to find a historian with the encyclopaedic knowledge that is necessary to combine all these approaches with those of the social historian who is interested in popular culture, calendar customs and church art. The book is an admirable survey of church history viewed from the local level. Doctrinal differences, liturgy and church hierarchies are given due weight, but the emphasis is on the role of the parish church in the local community, in all its manifestations and inconsistencies.

DAVID HEY

JANICE BROOKER AND SUSAN FLOOD (eds, with an introduction by MARK BAILEY), 'Hertfordshire lay subsidy rolls, 1307 and 1334' (Hertfordshire Record Society, *Hertfordshire Record Publications* 14, 1998). xxix + 204 pp. 1 illus; 1 map. £20.30 incl. p&p, from 14 Westbury Close, Hitchin, Herts., SG5 2NE.

Two basic kinds of lay subsidy roll were compiled for counties in the decades before the Black Death, and this volume is unusual in that it includes the texts of one of each. The 1307 Hertfordshire roll is effectively a list of c. 4850 names of taxpayers and their assessments grouped under each vill: this is the first time that such a roll has been published for this county, and its appearance in

print is much to be welcomed. The 1334 roll is one of those in which only the names of vills were recorded, and its much shorter text has been reproduced from R. E. Glasscock's well-known work, presumably for purposes of comparison.

The book is a fine example of team-work. Janice Brooker and Susan Flood have turned the 1307 clerks' mixture of languages into a good English text, using a sound editorial method. They have modernized the names of vills but retained the original forms in brackets, and also given the Latin forms of surnames. They have provided separate indexes of personal names and of places and subjects. Mark Bailey's introduction takes us through the technicalities of late medieval taxation, Hertfordshire boundaries, and the raising of these two taxes, but its highlight is his description of early-fourteenth century Hertfordshire at the highpoint of its medieval development.

My only real reservation is that Bailey has not made more of the problems which these sources present for economic and social historians. The use made of the 1334 rolls is too well known to need any comment here. The earlier rolls' lists of thousands of named taxpayers and their assessments would seem to offer invaluable detailed insights into rural conditions in almost every English county at a period when peasant agriculture had to support a population of a size which may not have been seen again until the late eighteenth century. It would be particularly interesting to know how the peasants of a county so close to the London market were coping.

The problem is that lay subsidy rolls are by no means the straightforward records their simple form might suggest, for behind them lies a process of assessment which is still understood only imperfectly. It is not just the old difficulty that an unknown (but substantial) proportion of local heads of households did not pay these taxes and so were not listed. It is by no means easy to relate the sums assessed to the real wealth of taxpayers, even to the point of being able to tell whether a rural taxpayer was a rich, a middle or a poor peasant. In the light of this, Bailey's statement that, 'Essentially, the returns detail the wealth stratification among the middling and upper ranks of the peasantry, and the urban merchants and wealthier artisans' (p. xix), makes rather a bold claim. But fortunately this does not prevent their use for many other purposes.

In many ways this is a model record publication. The well-produced text is complemented by a reduced, but clear, illustration of part of the 1307 roll, real footnotes at the foot of the page and admirably clear maps of the county's administrative divisions in the end-papers. All those involved are to be congratulated, and future editors of lay subsidy rolls – and of other kinds of listing – would

do well to look carefully at this book before deciding how to produce their own.

PETER FRANKLIN

CLAIRE BREAY (ed.), *The cartulary of Chatteris Abbey* (Boydell Press, 1999). xiii + 479 pp. 8 illus. £50.

In the past the exclusion of religious women from the history of the monastic orders has sometimes been justified by the paucity of records surviving from medieval nunneries. While recent studies have demonstrated that this assumption has to be modified, it remains true to say that few women's houses have left cartularies, and Claire Breay's edition of the fifteenth-century cartulary of Chatteris is therefore very welcome. Chatteris, founded between 1007 and 1016, was the last nunnery to be established in Anglo-Saxon England. Unlike earlier tenth- and eleventh-century foundations for women, it owed its origins to a bishop (Eadnoth, bishop of Dorchester) rather than a king; another difference was that Chatteris, located in the Fens, was geographically remote from other similar institutions. Given the small number of cartularies which have survived from nunneries, it is surprising that the Chatteris cartulary has remained neglected for so long. This Claire Breay attributes less to the illegible state of part of the manuscript, which sustained some damage in the Cottonian fire of 1731, and more to the concentration by historians either on the earlier and richer West Saxon nunneries – besides which Chatteris was a poor, low-status sister – or on the new foundations which multiplied rapidly from the early twelfth century: Chatteris has been squeezed between the two.

Claire Breay's edition of the fifteenth-century cartulary is preceded by a long and detailed excursion into the history of the abbey which makes full use of the documents presented in this edition and of a range of other sources, especially episcopal and manorial. Breay provides a detailed discussion of the endowment of the abbey, both in temporalities and spiritualities, and demonstrates that before 1086 most of the abbey property lay in Cambridgeshire and that even after that, when the abbey had passed into the patronage of the bishops of Ely, the pattern changed very little. This was, in part, a product of the intensely local and low level patronage which the nuns received: only three benefactors appear to have been drawn from the class of tenants in chief, the rest from the class of gentry and below. This has made the editor's task of identifying benefactors and dating charters a very difficult one. Dr Breay manages to tease out of the charters, backed by other sources such as manorial court rolls, a pattern of what can be known of the management of the estate: the abbey's activities in the land market, the methods of exploitation, and the

officials. Attention is given to the question of the social and geographical origins of the nuns (and appendix 1 is an annotated list of all known abbesses, prioresses and nuns of Chatteris), and the evidence for chaplains and other members of the community. Finally Dr Breay illustrates her enviable expertise in manuscript studies with a meticulous description of the physical state of the cartulary and its compilation and arrangement.

The cartulary itself (pp. 138–388) contains 280 documents. The Latin texts are presented in full, preceded by a brief English summary, with variant readings from other copies, and notes on dating and other relevant matters. The editing is of a high scholarly standard, and the whole volume is handsomely presented. Dr Breay is to be congratulated on the production of this study. It is a valuable addition to the corpus of printed sources available to historians of the religious orders, and especially those interested in the history of religious women, illuminating as it does the workings of a modestly endowed religious house from the eleventh through to the sixteenth century. Those whose interests lie in agrarian or economic history will welcome a case study of a small landowning institution and its impact on its region.

JANET BURTON

JOHN MCCANN, *The dovecotes of Suffolk* (Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, 1998). 128 pp. 12 plates; 43 figs. £8.50 incl. p&p from Oak Tree Farm, Finborough Road, Hitcham, Ipswich, IP7 7LS.

Although dedicated to Suffolk, this fascinating book sets out to retell the story of dovecotes. It is John McCann's contention that our understanding of these charming structures has been distorted by the suspect methodology employed by Arthur O. Cooke in his popular work *A book of dovecotes* (1920). To supplement his knowledge, he advertized for information in local newspapers and magazines and relied heavily on these random replies. Moreover, he wrote about buildings he had never visited but for which McCann has evidence. Unfortunately Cooke's book proved very influential; it 'permeates the whole dovecote literature'. McCann takes a different approach, studying the dovecotes on the ground and relating them to descriptions of contemporary working practice. Using this technique he is able to challenge long held assumptions.

A traditional theory is that pigeons (never referred to as doves) provided a source of fresh meat in winter. Not the case. Household accounts show that the young squabs – taken from the nest boxes before fledging – were eaten from early April to November when other supplies of fresh meat were readily available. Winter squabs were a rare delicacy and cost four times as much in February as in October. On the medieval menu, tender

squabs were always a treat and never simply a substitute for roast beef! This casts a different light on the social significance of dovescotes and undermines the idea that the decline of pigeon keeping was merely a response to the increased availability of overwintered animals in the eighteenth century. In fact the most ornate dovescotes date from that period and eight out of the 28 surveyed were built between 1800 and 1846.

Apart from its serious historical message, the book is well laid out with beautiful photographs and helpful diagrams. Introductory chapters provide a handy manual on how dovescotes were used and designed. Pigeons had to be wooed back to the nesting boxes each night and theories abounded on the most favoured size, shape, materials and colour; ingenious methods were devised to exclude predators. The survey, providing the most intricate detail, explains how each structure fulfilled these requirements. The work on Suffolk dovescotes is still in progress; the intention is to map their distribution throughout the county. Like the dovescotes it describes, this book is a gem, functional in its design and purpose and pleasing to look upon.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITHS

ANDY WOOD, *The politics of social conflict: the Peak country, 1520–1770* (CUP, 1999). xvi + 354 pp. 12 tables; 3 figs; 14 maps. £45.

Based on a prodigious amount of research, wide-ranging in its engagements and enthusiasms, this ambitious study of the inhabitants of the lead mining district of north-west Derbyshire successfully combines the economic, social, and political, and the local and national, all notoriously separated in early modern historiography. It also – together with Tim Stretton's volume in the same stable – considerably strengthens the range of *Cambridge studies in early modern British history*, the prestigious series in which it appears. Quite simply, *The politics of social conflict* is an example of the real potential of local history.

Some readers may find the author's Thompsonianism a trifle out of step with current intellectual fashion, and will be struck by a sense of irony that the importance of class in the early modern period is being claimed almost at the very moment it has been banished from the modern! Some may be unsettled by the unevenness of pitch as Wood attempts to combine broad (not always relevant) historiographical excursus with detailed economic analysis and (sometimes too thick) local political narrative. The author also seems a little unclear about the essential contribution of his work. Can it really be said to demonstrate that 'early modern plebeian cultures bequeathed important habits and traditions to the working-class culture of the early nineteenth century'

(p. 9)? Does it bear substantially on all of the following: 'historical understandings of economics and social structure, industrialization and early capitalism, gender and class identities, literacy and popular culture, magic and official belief, state formation, law and custom, subordination, contestation and rebellion' (p. 27)? In this respect, *The politics of social conflict* lacks the focus of comparable work by Clive Holmes, Keith Lindley, and Buchanan Sharp.

The book is divided into three sections. The first, 'Structures of inequality', deals with the social and economic structures of the Peak lead-mining-based communities: social/occupational divisions (smelters, merchants, ore-buyers, free miners, and the ordinary labourers or 'cavers'); distributions of wealth and land; population dynamics; the rise and fall in lead prices. Wood's insistence upon the uniformly plebeian nature of Peak society and the inapplicability of middling-sort divisions sits oddly with his demonstration of the (albeit muted) hierarchies of the mining workers – the free miners were, after all, a local elite – but it would be difficult to challenge his nuanced picture of the local workforce and social economy. He certainly provides an alternative to the south-eastern view of early modern rural England. Section two, 'Conditions of community', describes, as indeed Wood has in other influential published work, the vital importance of continually contested, negotiated, and re-invented custom in local and local-national political interactions and dynamics. Part three, 'Politics of social conflict', provides a first-rate analysis of popular protest in the Peak, demonstrating the longevity of social conflict in the mining districts, the incursion of Caroline politics and powerful individuals into local conflict and custom, and the complicated formation of allegiances during England's civil wars.

Throughout, Wood weaves a fascinating story of popular employment of the law as a means of resistance. His book is as much a new legal history as it is a new political or local history, providing convincing and sophisticated elaboration of the centrality of the law and legal awareness to early modern popular political protest and consciousness. It is an enviable first work.

BARRY REAY

LYNN HOLLEN LEES, *The solidarities of strangers: the English poor laws and the people, 1700–1948* (CUP, 1998). xii + 373 pp. 7 tables; 21 figs. £45.

Although the study of English poor laws has constantly fascinated historians, much of the research has focused on particular aspects of the institution in particular regions during particular periods. Lees's book is, in this regard, a welcome contribution to the field, not least because it attempts to incorporate social, economic and

cultural aspects of the practices of welfare provision in different regions of England during a considerably long time span. Given the enormous spatial and temporal variations of welfare practices, her book is indeed an ambitious attempt, and she certainly deserves credit for the courage to write it.

From a residualist perspective, the book periodizes the poor law history into three phases: the era of the old poor law is characterized as 'residualism taken for granted', where receiving poor relief is widely accepted and generally legitimated; the period from 1834 to 1860 as 'residualism refined and restricted', where class and culture separate the poor within certain categories (especially the able-bodied male) from those outside; and the years between 1860 and 1948 as 'residualism re-evaluated and rejected', where broadening civic rights eventually lead to universal welfare policies. In the form of a short epilogue, she adds further discussions on the post-1948 period under the heading of 'residualism redux'. As the book title hints, the author rejects Alan Macfarlane's notion of English Individualism and argues instead for the importance of collective ties in defining community boundaries. She thus traces changes in the public attitudes towards poverty and pauperism, stressing among others gender and age differentials. In so doing, she clearly displays her intention to interpret the history of English welfare provision not as a unilinear evolutionary process with the birth of the welfare state as its apogee, but as a somewhat contingent process as exemplified by the recent revival of residualism. That she deals with the period of the Thatcherite policy shift only within the limited space of the epilogue is rather disappointing.

Another intention of the author is to see welfare provision not as a policy made primarily by the ruling class but as a transaction between the rulers and the ruled. To understand welfare practices as a negotiated process, and therefore to stress the often neglected role of the recipients, is a very worthwhile perspective and such an approach is likely to go on thriving as it does already to some extent. What is puzzling here is the author's neglect of the popular protest to the introduction of the New Poor Law. This is undoubtedly a most prominent example of working class participation in the process of shaping local policies. For some unknown reason, however, she pays little attention to this important subject. A sense of unbalance is also found in the treatment of the social, economic and cultural aspects of the history of public assistance. For example, discussions of statistics rarely appear in the earlier part of the book. The fact that she only consults the visual materials deposited in the US inevitably set some limitation for an English history book. Had she had opportunities to explore English materials, her book would have been much richer.

Despite these limitations, the book provides the reader with a comprehensive overview of the history of English welfare system with considerable skill. It encompasses a great body of recent literature, including research in the social sciences in its introduction. The combination of visual and statistical materials is unique and would appear quite useful, if not entirely convincing, to researchers who are not familiar with both. The book will therefore make a good guide for the specialist researchers who want to learn about periods and approaches other than their own, as well as more general readers who want to have a long historical perspective.

BYUNG KHUN SONG

JOHN ATKINS, BOB HAMMOND AND PETER ROPER, *A village transformed: Keyworth 1750-1850* (Keyworth and District Local History Society, c/o Keyworth Library, Church Drive, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5FF, 1999). 190 pp. 2 plates; 25 figs. £7.50.

Local histories tend to fall into two camps, those which concentrate exclusively on the minutiae of their particular locality and those which make a serious attempt to fit their study into a more general context. This book falls clearly into the latter category. It is divided into three parts, examining, respectively, the 'old village' (prior to enclosure), the parliamentary enclosure itself, and the 'village transformed' (as it was after enclosure). Within the first and third sections, there is an extensive review of the background to the economic and social history of the country as a whole during the relevant period; the second contains a thorough coverage of the parliamentary enclosure movement nationally. The work also places the study firmly in the more local context of the north Midlands and, specifically, in that of Nottinghamshire. This general background is well-written and authoritative, and will provide the general reader, or even the undergraduate, with a good grounding in the topic.

Embedded in each of these sections are the details of Keyworth itself. The workings of the village prior to enclosure are carefully detailed, as is the actual process by which the enclosure was carried out. There is extensive coverage of the principal figures involved, and an attempt to assess the impact on the less prominent individuals, many of whom escape unnamed in the formal proceedings. The activities of the commissioners, the surveyor, and the principal landowners are, again, placed in context. The parts they played in other enclosures are covered, though, as is inevitable in any local study, these are not always complete. Joseph Boulton, for example, had already begun his career as a commissioner in Buckinghamshire, prior to his move north to Bunny.

In many ways the most disappointing part of the work is that dealing with the Keyworth enclosure itself. As with

so many enclosures, the surviving documentation is limited and, in attempting to provide a comprehensive picture of the process, the authors have had to proceed by analogy with near-by parishes for which the documentation is more extensive. While this undoubtedly helps to complete and explain matters for the more general reader, it somewhat diminishes its value for those with a special interest in enclosure in all its variety. There is a need to read the text with some care in order to be sure whether one is learning real detail of events in Keyworth, or suppositions based on projections from elsewhere. The calculations of the costs borne by each proprietor, for example, are based entirely upon what happened at East Leake, and may or may not bear much resemblance to what the inhabitants of Keyworth really faced.

This is not to imply that this is in any way a bad book, far from it. The authors could argue, with justification, that if we restricted our studies to those places which had a complete documentation we would have a very thin selection, and almost certainly one which was far from representative. Having made the decision to study one of the less-favoured localities, they had little option but to fill in the gaps with evidence from elsewhere, in order to make the story comprehensible to non-specialist readers, at whom it is primarily aimed. By doing so, they have produced a book which, as John Beckett says in his Foreword, is both scholarly and readable. This is a verdict with which I would concur. It might serve as a very useful model to others contemplating a similar study of their own village elsewhere in England.

J. CHAPMAN

SUSANNA WADE MARTINS AND TOM WILLIAMSON, 'Roots of change. Farming and the landscape in East Anglia, c. 1700-1870' (*Agricultural History Review Supplement Series*, 2, 1999). x + 214 pp. 8 tables; 19 figs. £17.50.

Historians of British agriculture were surprised when volume 6 of the *Cambridge Agrarian History* (1750-1850), published in 1989, lacked the regional sections which had featured prominently in volumes 4 and 5 (covering 1500-1750). This seemed particularly unfortunate in the case of East Anglia, the cradle of the agricultural revolution. Lord Ernle, Naomi Riches and R. A. C. Parker had previously studied the region, but much more remained to be done. During the 1990s articles by Bruce Campbell and Mark Overton helped to develop our understanding of the long-term process of change in East Anglia. Wade Martins and Williamson have now produced an excellent account of East Anglian agriculture, which draws heavily on their expertise relating to landscape and to farm buildings.

What was the nature of the agricultural revolution in

East Anglia? Wade Martins and Williamson show that perhaps two-thirds of the land area was already technically enclosed in the late seventeenth century, and in stark contrast to today much of the region was under grass, although subsequently the general trend was towards the expansion of tillage at the expense of pasture. Profitable arable production was made possible by marling the lighter, acid soils, by under-draining the claylands, by rationalizing the fields, by improving the grassland, by increasing the size of farms (something like one-third of East Anglia was farmed in units of 300 acres or more by 1850), and by improving and rationalizing farm buildings. The famous 'Norfolk four-course', already well known in the early eighteenth century, was adopted through the region in the years around 1800.

Although by the 1830s East Anglia was predominantly a grain producing area, the widespread use of oil cake, much of it shipped in through Great Yarmouth, enabled farmers to raise their output of meat. Many of their animals went by rail to the London market. Artificial fertilizers were introduced from the 1830s, and machines, particularly threshing machines, were in widespread use by the 1840s. All this cost both landlord and tenant a great deal of money, and investment in drainage, reclamation and buildings, peaked in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. 'There was hardly a farm within East Anglia which was not affected in some way by rebuilding in this period' (p. 147).

Who was responsible for East Anglia's success? Was it the Townshends and Cokes, those great heroes of an earlier generation lionized by Ernle, Naomi Riches and even, to a lesser extent, Chambers and Mingay? Ours is not an age of heroes. Twenty-five years ago Parker toppled Coke from his self-created pedestal, and Wade Martins and Williamson take us in the same direction. Raynham and Holkham did not 'pioneer long leases with detailed husbandry clauses' (p. 186), and in any case leases were not necessarily of great importance in moulding the practices of East Anglian farmers. They were abandoned here in the early nineteenth century just as they were abandoned everywhere else. Nor was land reclamation the panacea usually assumed. Landlords, tenants and labourers all played their part in transforming the region.

What did the transformation amount to? As all agricultural historians are only too well aware, in the absence of annual agricultural returns before the 1860s, there are considerable problems in translating observable changes in practice into yields per acre on the ground. Labour productivity may be, as Wade Martins and Williamson point out, a significant way of measuring change, but the data for testing the assumption is remarkably elusive. Nor do they have much luck with wheat yields. Contemporary

guesses, including those of Arthur Young, are likely to be too generous, but beyond his research there turned out to be 'relatively little evidence which can be used to chart the development of yields' (p. 157). They are forced to rely on 'a scatter of evidence' derived from letters, memoranda books, diaries, and tithe accounts, from which the most they can achieve is not 'the absolute yields', but the relative differences between the different regions of East Anglia. Even then the figures 'pose considerable problems of interpretation' (p. 160), and are 'too few to be treated in a statistically rigorous way' (p. 170). Fair enough, but such disclaimers must raise questions about their claims that post-1840 'the main increases in production were achieved by raising yields per acre' (p. 180). This is, after all, a conclusion about quantification which is supported chiefly by qualitative evidence relating to drainage, external inputs and artificial fertilizers.

East Anglia will forever be associated with the agricultural revolution, but it may never be clear as to entirely why. Wade Martins and Williamson have revisited the evidence and produced a great deal of new material, perhaps most importantly on farm buildings, but they have shifted the goal posts only marginally, arguing that the agricultural revolution was not about a culture of innovation percolating from landowners to farmers and then the rest of the farming community, but the widespread adoption of new techniques by farmers of all kinds. In this respect that have filled a gap, and they have happily questioned old myths (especially those of Ernle) and queried modern assumptions (including those of Overton). They have emphasized the regional variety within East Anglia, and they have tried to locate East Anglia within a shifting agrarian geography. But because it is so difficult to measure the changes which they have documented we still do not really know the precise timing and mechanism for the agricultural revolution in East Anglia – and since this meticulous study has shown us how difficult it is to measure, we may perhaps never know.

J. V. BECKETT

MICHAEL LEEDER, *Fire over East Anglia: Rural Luddism and the lives, times and deaths of George Fortis and Noah Peake of Bressingham* (Mousepress, Peony Cottage, 7 Hunstead Lanes, Brooke, Norwich, NR15 1JP, 1999). viii + 105 pp. 14 figs. £7.50.

A letter written in the condemned cell of Norwich Castle in April 1822 by George Fortis to his wife has been handed down from one generation to the next. Its present custodian, Norfolk-born geologist, Michael Leeder, was so intrigued that he set about trying to reconstruct his family history, particularly that of Fortis, and his neighbour Noah Peake. Both men were executed for their part in an incendiary attack during the troubles of 1822.

This letter is one of five items which make up the 'Fortis file'. The other surviving documents are a letter to his parents, a copy of a hymn sung over his body at his cottage, an account of his final meeting with relatives and a brief biographical sketch of his 'Life and Last Moments'. The language of the letters is both powerful and moving and unusually eloquent. Less surprisingly, they are imbued with deep religious faith which the prospect of execution undoubtedly intensified. The literate and complex tone of the letters may suggest to some that they are not genuine, but given that Fortis came from a family who could read and write and that he reportedly gave a powerful final speech on the scaffold, he was probably not some 'simple' farm labourer. Both he and Peake, as Leeder shows, had lived life to full, fighting in the Peninsular Wars and then later at Waterloo. Their final campaign was the anti-machine riots of south Norfolk. The story of these two men should warn historians against the dangers of generalizing about farm labourers and placing them under the umbrella-term – unskilled labour – and presuming that they rarely set foot outside their parish boundaries. Each worker has a story, and in this case Fortis and Peake have a tragic tale in which Leeder describes how the actual firesetter, a man called Baker, turned king's evidence and thus saved his own neck at the expense of the two others. At no point does Leeder suggest they were entirely innocent; both had been involved in anti-machinery demonstrations and possibly the sending of threatening letters. Peake, moreover, is remembered for his phrase 'by a flash and a scare' when he threatened local farmers. But the author argues that his relative, Fortis, was not in the stackyard when it was fired. This allows him to conclude that his ancestor was 'judicially murdered.'

Fire over East Anglia is an attractively and privately produced book which, it should be emphasized, has been written for the general reader rather than the academic historian and consequently it should not be judged on academic standards. The chapters take the reader through the lifestories of the two main protagonists, the 1822 riots, the actual firing and the subsequent trial, and most intriguingly the detail of the overseer's accounts both before and after the executions. In some ways this short book does attempt to answer Cobb's now famous cry, 'and now to Lower Hardres', when he called for micro-histories to fill in the detail of Hobsbawm and Rudé's *Captain Swing*. However Leeder could have made many improvements in both editing the book and tightening up its structure, punctuation and content. Despite these criticisms his family papers contain a tragic tale worth recounting.

JOHN ARCHER

LÍAM KENNEDY, PAUL S. ELL, E. M. CRAWFORD AND L. A. CLARKSON, *Mapping the Great Irish Famine: a survey of the famine decades* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999). 220 pp. 18 tables; 7 illus; 46 figs; 106 maps. £40 (hbk); £19.95 (pbk).

The richness of nineteenth-century sources covering Irish economic and social history has long been well known and plundered by the profession. Yet it took a group of scholars with a particular kind of vision to mount a research project to bring all of the disparate data together. In today's professional academic world, and in the light of the technological changes that have taken place in computing that vision would not be so daunting. But even as recently as 1990, when the ESRC began funding the project out of which the present volume has emerged, the state-of-the-art technology was much less adaptable. If my own experience on nineteenth-century Ireland is anything to go by, the technological revolution of the 1990s certainly unlocked the treasures of the past with greater speed and ease, but it was always a race against the pressures of redundancy in the available software and hardware. Data entry alone has gone through a revolution, from the initial keyboard entry, to the latest in optical character recognition (scanning in shorthand). The team that produced this volume, seemingly, has coped marvellously well with the adjustments.

The fruits of the original project have been deposited for wider use in the ESRC Data Archive at the University of Essex. What is presented in this book is an *hors d'oeuvre* to a banquet of data. Given the centrality of the Famine in Irish history it is fitting that this book should be the first output of the project to become more generally available. To call it an atlas would be to mislead, but to call it a research monograph would equally mislead. It contains elements of both – the visual presentation glued together with insight and historical interpretation. The mapping takes place at three spatial levels – the county level, of which there were 32, the barony level, of which there were over 330, and at the level of the poor law unions of which there were about 160. Therefore at times what is produced is a greatly detailed spatial analysis of the changing dimensions of Irish economic and social life across the decade of the Famine (for example across the 1841 and 1851 population censuses at the barony level), and for two decades beyond the Famine at the appropriate level of detail. The subjects covered include demographic indicators, migration statistics, health and nutrition statistics, statistics on the condition of life (the state of housing for example), religion, literacy, the resort to poor relief, income and employment in town and country, the distribution of agricultural holdings, and the main crop and livestock

statistics. For agriculture, famously, the Irish data are richer sources than those available for the rest of the UK. The annual June returns which began in 1866 for Great Britain were, in a sense, foreshadowed in Ireland, firstly by the details on agricultural matters contained in the 1841 population census, and secondly by the annual agricultural returns that began in 1847. These data are mapped for the three years 1852 (a year when holdings size categories changed compared with 1847–51), 1861 and 1871. A number of the maps will be familiar to readers of my own work, but let us be honest. Although my maps were constructed by computer, they are now shown up by the greatly enhanced technological improvements developed in the 1990s. In addition, my maps were at the county level only, while many of the ones in this book take the detail down to the poor law union level.

There is a brief genuflection in the short concluding chapter to the great question of whether the Famine was a watershed in Irish history. It is more by way of paying lip service than suggesting that the mapping of the events and the post Famine history provides answers. In truth there is nothing particularly new or startling by way of interpretation in this volume. And neither should we expect there to be because Irish history, based on the same Irish data sources, has been worked over more often than the average cottier's potato plot. Yet the value of this book should not be underestimated. For this reader it lies in the greater clarity and exposition of those data than it does in any new interpretations.

MICHAEL TURNER

DAVID LLEWELYN DAVIES, *Watermill: life story of a Welsh cornmill* (Llangollen: Ceiriog Press, 1997). 192 pp. Illus; maps. £10 incl. p&p.

An uninspired title and a plain dust-jacket may discourage the purchase of a book whose contents give the lie to their austere exterior. There have been various short studies of individual Welsh country mills, published in *Melin*, the journal of the Welsh Mills Society, but this book, twenty times their usual length, sets one such mill in its local contexts – social, economic and agricultural – during its working life, c. 1790–1936. All single-mill studies are testimony to their author's affection for their subject, but seldom does that commitment extend to a detailed examination of the characters and countryside, the daily routine and the minutiae of making a livelihood, that distinguished one particular mill. We are not fobbed off here with general statements; rather the author draws from his research an anecdote, a comment or a set of figures that illuminates a point at issue.

Felin Lyn, three miles south of Llangollen in North Wales, was built shortly before 1800, with an overshot waterwheel driving three pairs of stones that ground

flour and feed for the c. 550 inhabitants of the Ceiriog valley and their beasts. For part of its life the wheel also powered a sawmill. The author spent his childhood nearby in the 1930s, when the mill was reaching the end of its working life. His family owned the mill from 1905 to 1962, and when it was demolished in 1981 he resolved to perpetuate its memory in print. By then he was living in Canada, so the research had to be conducted over a distance of several thousand miles, much of it through a network of friends and assistants. Weaving all this information into a coherent whole occupied seventeen years, an undertaking that led the jaded author to declare to his readers that this is his 'first and last book'.

The text is divided into five chapters: The Basics, Doing Business, People (and Animals), Inside the Mill and Sipsys and Maslin or Miscellany. The first chapter covers familiar territory: site, buildings, history, rents and rates, responsibilities of landlord and tenant. However, David Davies breaks new ground with his detailed examination of the water supply to Felin Lyn – its reliability and volume, the weir and the headrace, the delivery to the wheel – a subject that requires specific research and cautious interpretation. The pattern is set here for the rest of the book: the documentation is both integral to the text and expanded in informative notes at the end of each chapter. These scholarly citations are reassuring when the author poses questions whose answers depend upon both straightforward interpretation of the research and what might be charitably termed 'imaginative leaps', with one or more factors unknown. This approach is apparent in the second chapter, where the author contrasts imaginary scenes at the mill in 1809 and 1909 (p. 48) and refers to a hypothetical account of income and expenditure for 1912. Frustratingly, the author believes that a nineteenth-century ledger from Felin Lyn that would replace guesswork by fact probably still exists, but his best attempts failed to locate it. Hard, recorded fact about the production of individual mills has so often vanished soon after their closure. One justification for this hypothetical method is the desire to stimulate others to investigate unregarded themes, such as the transport of corn and flour, which were features of the rapid decline of British wind and watermills in the years between the wars.

Over 150 years, just two families worked this mill. They are described in the third chapter, as are their customers. The detailed consideration of one mill's potential custom is an unusual and valuable addition to the evidence of its role in the locality. Estimates of local cereal production and numbers of animals requiring feed assist in quantifying the work undertaken there. This matter is continued in the fourth chapter, where the machinery and the milling processes are used as a means of assessing the likely output. Ailments afflicting millers

and the routine in the mill are treated, in part on the basis of oral testimony. One of the great strengths of *Watermill* are the revelations by older members of the community, like Mrs Gladys Jones, daughter of the last miller.

The fifth chapter concentrates on cereal farming and markets in this valley. The pages devoted to the evolution of the Ceiriog watermills would have benefited from diagrams. An informative section deals with 'country beer', malt processing by country mills being a hitherto neglected aspect of their activities.

The appendices that round off the book are welcome for their wealth of information on unfamiliar subjects like corn measures, grain types, water-driven machinery in the Ceiriog since 1700, and medieval references to the cultivation and grinding of corn in the area. All the dwellings in the mill's 'territory' in 1851/2, the mill's customers c. 1919 and grain prices 1770–1940 are also listed. We also have tax valuations of Felin Lyn in 1838, 1867 and 1916, and running costs c. 1870. Such matters are seldom treated in one volume. Instead of the usual glossary of mechanical parts, we are presented with one of cereal terms. David Davies itemizes his sources and includes a bibliography to assist others researching upland mills. The excellent index offers much more than the usual bald alphabetical list of proper names.

This leisurely and wide-ranging treatment of one vanished Welsh country mill is attractively presented, with good maps and other illustrative material. The price is very reasonable. The impressive array of documentation resulting from interviews with local people should add to its appeal to students of oral history. The author's readiness to 'fly kites' in pursuit of a better understanding of issues conveniently dodged in most mill literature makes his book a stimulating one for molinologists. Social historians of Welsh country life will study it with profit. David Davies set out to write about 'what lay behind the loaf on the table' by examining in depth an ordinary and therefore representative mill. His committed research and the individuality of his approach make *Watermill* a refreshing and valuable addition to the literature that links local studies with the wider concerns of economic history.

MICHAEL HARVERSON

ANNA GAMBLE, *Protection and politics: Conservative economic discourse, 1815–1852* (Royal Historical Society / Boydell Press, 1999). xi + 291 pp. £40.

Early nineteenth-century British protectionism has long been misunderstood. Associated with aggrieved farmers and lumbering country gentry, protectionism has been depicted as an ill-informed and aberrant rural movement, imbued with hopelessly retrograde economic and

social ideas. Protectionists were also, it was thought, unlucky in leadership. The obscure Lord George Bentinck was better known for his racehorses than for his parliamentary accomplishments. When Bentinck died, worn out by his effort in mastering trade statistics, naive protectionists fell into the hands of an opportunistic Disraeli who later betrayed them, abandoning their programme in his attempt to gain office.

Anna Gambles quickly dispels these popular myths. By taking protectionism seriously, she demonstrates its appeal to a substantial school of economic thinkers who, if less well known than Smith and Ricardo, were nevertheless influential in their own time. Solidly based upon parliamentary debates, pamphlet literature, and journals of that day as well as current works on economic history, her book is thoroughly persuasive in revealing a considered protectionist discourse. As Gambles clearly demonstrates, protectionism was not merely a quirky rear-guard response to the pressures of a modernizing industrial society: it was a worthy opponent to the dominant free trade orthodoxy.

Like the Conservatives (with whom they were often allied), protectionists were motivated not merely by a narrow economic self-interest. They believed in a grounded human experience; emphasized national sovereignty and self-sufficiency; and were eager to use the state to regulate trade. From protectionist beliefs emerged consistent policies: corn laws which would assure sufficient food for Britain's population and preferential tariffs for colonial agricultural products. Domestic consumer and imperial producers would both benefit. Protectionists warned that throwing open markets to a free trade in corn would have a number of deleterious effects. It would destabilize economic conditions for the working class; deprive Britain of the opportunity to negotiate favourable bilateral trade treaties; and diminish the empire by substituting foreign for imperial corn.

The appeal of protection was not limited to abstruse economic and social theorists. In its most popular form, protectionism was at heart a patriotic principle. By encouraging domestic production in agriculture and manufacturing, protectionism would maintain and extend Britain's economic dominance in Europe and the world at large. More importantly, protectionism would allow Britain to fulfil its imperial destiny. As one protectionist pamphleteer put it, the bonds of empire could be strengthened by uniting different classes and interests 'in mutual consumption' (p. 179).

Gambles' contribution to our understanding of the importance of protectionist sentiment is especially significant in its political dimension. Indeed, without recognizing the importance of protectionism, it is difficult to understand the fortunes of the Conservative party at

crucial junctures in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When Sir Robert Peel snubbed protectionism and abolished the corn laws in 1846, he divided and disrupted the Conservatives for two decades. The ensuing Liberal political domination led historians to proclaim the death of protectionism. But it not only survived; it broadened its appeal. At the turn of the century, Joseph Chamberlain joined 'fair trade' provincial businessmen and traditional agricultural protectionists to inaugurate his campaign for tariff reform. Unlike Peel, Chamberlain courted protectionists: but like Peel, he failed, splitting the Conservative and Unionist Party and contributing to its massive defeat in the Liberal landslide of 1906. Perhaps, after all, protectionist leadership has been ill-fated.

In providing an intellectual history of protectionism, Gambles succeeds admirably. She is less clear, however, about the appeal of protectionism to the man in the street or the farmer in the field. Gambles suggests that apart from an inherent appeal to patriotism, popular protectionist sentiment may best be understood within a constitutional framework. That is, a vigorous protectionist agenda would not only alleviate economic depression: it would also dampen social disruption and political turmoil. In short, for the electorate at large, protection could engender stability and an ordered state by providing a mechanism for reconciling economic interests and social classes (as Gambles puts it in an earlier article in *English Historical Rev.* 113 (1998), p. 949). Whether or not the public thought in such subtle terms is difficult to know.

Even if Gambles does not dig deeply into the minds and motivation of the protectionist rank and file, she cannot be readily faulted. After all, her main interest lies in giving protectionism a fair hearing. In this, her arguments are carefully framed and clearly expressed. Adding to her task of making accessible an unduly neglected topic are a thorough index and an informative biographical appendix – many entries of which are now long-forgotten protectionist writers and members of parliament.

TRAVIS L. CROSBY

DOROTHY CALCUTT, *The salt of the earth: the diary of a poor family in Woodstock, 1900* (Charlbury: The Wychwood Press, 1999). x + 109 pp. Illus. £7.50; ERIC R. MOSS, 'Walk humble, my son'. *Growing up in Ascott-under-Wychwood, 1918–1939, including My personal memories by Doris May Warner* (The Wychwood Press, 1999). ii + 137 pp. Illus. £8.

The growth in number of small presses over the last fifteen years has been considerable, facilitating the publication of biographical and autobiographical local histories that otherwise would be unlikely, due to their

limited market, to find a publisher. The above two titles both stem from the Wychwood Press, which specializes in works of relevance to the area of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds.

Walk humble, my son is a rich and varied account of life between the wars in the Cotswold village of Ascott-under-Wychwood. There is a wealth of detail packed into the text, ranging from the comparative heights of pre- and post-war radio masts and the organization of shifts in the signal box of the local railway, to the introduction of herbicides and the NHS, suggesting considerable research into both local and wider history in addition to the author's personal remembrances. The resultant, skilful inter-weaving of personal, intimate experiences with wider accounts of village life and the world outside makes this far more than just straight autobiography.

The book is organized not chronologically, but into short, themed sections, their titles largely self-explanatory: 'Power for a pound', 'The village pub', 'Changes at school', etc. The narrative habitually contrasts past with present, and is an often self-conscious examination of change: the disappearance, for better or worse, of the enforced, enclosed intimacy of village-bound social interaction. The author's fondness for the times is evident, evinced for example by discussion of the introduction of oxyacetylene welding to the local blacksmith; but this is explicitly not a romanticised trip down memory lane. Rather, *Walk humble* is a self-reflective, informed and frequently highly critical exploration of dominant themes of the time and place. These themes include the paternalistic power structure of the village, and the minor but heavily symbolic small rebellions against it; the political consciousness of the author's family and fellow villagers; bribery and intimidation at election time; and the tensions between agricultural workers and railwaymen that occasionally erupted into violence. It is all too uncommon to find an account exploring such material in this multi-layered way. As simultaneously biography, history and contemporary sociology, *Walk humble* deserves to find more than the small audience it is likely to receive.

In contrast, *The salt of the earth*, is a far more personal account of life, throughout the year 1900, for a poor family located close to the Blenheim estate, Woodstock. Its strengths lie in the detail it brings out and, associatively, its unsentimental but emotive description, of immediate family life. It starkly portrays an ongoing struggle for simple survival: quiet, life-sapping fights against illness and poverty, including the death of six out of eleven children. With this steady attrition comes occasional glimpses of small but celebrated triumphs: first prize at the flower show; a reward for a successful whelping in the stables of Blenheim palace. Overall however,

the story is one where, as the author unsparingly notes, 'Not everyone "lived happily ever after"' (p. 106).

It is pertinent to note, without giving too much away, that a not inconsiderable shock awaits the reader in the author's endnote, in the form of a revelation which forces a wholesale reconsideration of the authenticity of many recounted events. There has been considerable recent discussion regarding what can be considered legitimate strategy on the part of the biographer. Whether or not the device employed here detracts from the worth of what is subtitled the *diary* 'of a poor family in Woodstock' is a judgement that ultimately must remain the prerogative of each reader.

GRAHAM GARDNER

DAVID W. HOWELL AND KENNETH O. MORGAN (eds), *Crime, protest and police in modern British society: essays in memory of David J. V. Jones* (University of Wales Press, 1999). x + 245 pp. 1 illus; 1 map. £35.

David Jones, who died tragically young in 1994, was a historian of Wales, of rural Britain, of crime, and sometimes, as in his work on poaching, Rebecca or rick burning, all three. He brought to his subject the enthusiasm and commitment of the social history inspired by E. P. Thompson, but represented first for him, as for many Welsh historians of his generation, by Gwyn A. Williams and Glanmor Williams. The essays in this collection, produced by friends, students and colleagues of David Jones represent his diversity of research interests, moving from eighteenth-century riot, through crime and justice in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to the marches against the means test of the 1930s, and twentieth-century policing.

Every essay in this volume could be read with profit by any historian, and many outside the trade, yet three seem of particular concern to the rural historian: David W. Howell's essay on public disorder in eighteenth century Wales; John Archer's on game-preserving and poaching in nineteenth century Lancashire and, very interestingly Kenneth O. Morgan's on conflict and consensus in modern Welsh history.

Morgan's essay is the product of a lifetime's work on the history of Wales, and although it has little direct reference to the 'rural' it is endlessly enlightening on the debates which have shaped modern Welsh (and indeed British) historiography. Morgan looks at the dichotomy between a Welsh history dominated by conflict, Gwyn A. Williams's 'brutal ruptures', and a more consensual view which sees the history of Wales as 'calm', especially compared with that of Ireland and even perhaps Scotland. In the former view we have the stories of Owain Glyndwr, Iolo Morganwg, Dic Penderyn and the daughters of Rebecca; in the latter that of gradualism, whose

'representative folk symbol is not the nation in arms but the committee man in the council chamber, armed not with an Armalite but with his Bangor or Aberystwyth BA' (pp. 30-1). Morgan places both these histories in the context of Welsh culture and social change, especially in the period of rapid growth in Welsh historical studies since the 1960s, to produce an essay which should serve as an introduction both to recent Welsh scholarship and as an historical background to current Welsh politics, which are never far beneath the essay's surface.

If Morgan's essay addresses the generality of Wales, David Howell's moves to the specific. Working within the paradigm of a generation of historians who have looked at the history of the poor through their conflicts with the law and their betters, he presents a detailed account of the 'problem' of order in eighteenth-century Wales. Through careful use of an impressive range of sources both Welsh and English, Howell charts a Wales which was a 'violent, unsqueamish, brutal society easily given to lawlessness and physical affray' (p. 42). This is an account firmly within Morgan's 'conflict' school of Welsh historiography. We see a society riven with conflict over corn prices, manorial rights, the raising of the militia, wrecking, smuggling and elections. Interestingly Howell also points to the racial undertones of some conflict as when, in 1754, a serious affray took place in Henllan near Denbigh between English and Welsh workers. As was often the case the occasion was a day's drinking at a local wake, but the resentment at its core was the employment of 'strangers' in Denbigh's proto-industrial 'factories'.

As with other writers in this tradition, Howell points to the traditional nature of these disturbances, placing them within a system of 'popular rights sanctioned by custom' (p. 67). The same could not be said, according to John Archer, of the poachers of early nineteenth-century Lancashire. The poacher has been widely seen as the archetypal rural 'social criminal'. Driven by want, a belief in customary rights and even, on occasions, by what Richard Jefferies called 'advanced views upon the rights of labour', he has been fitted into the minor levels of the panoply of social bandits. This indeed was implicit in David Jones's own work on the poacher published in 1979. Against this Archer presents a powerful argument that in the rural areas of Lancashire, surrounding the cities of the industrial revolution, the poacher was less a social criminal than an anti-social one. His account of the activities of poaching gangs, based largely in the urban areas, carrying out well ordered raids for profit, and often with considerable violence, is a stark contrast to earlier views of the poacher. Archer suggests, comparing Lancashire with his earlier work on East Anglia, that these gangs maybe regionally distinctive, a product of

urbanization and game preserving. However, it is possible to see similar gangs in the south midlands where, in the period from the 1820s until the 1850s, groups from Coventry and Birmingham carried out raids on estates in Warwickshire and Oxfordshire. Yet I do have a problem with this. In the south midlands although there certainly were 'affrays' and criminal gangs, these were hugely swamped in terms of convictions by cases which look much more like the 'social' criminals of earlier work. Perhaps by concentrating on the 'reckless spirit of enterprise' of his essay's title, Archer maybe underplaying the similarities between Lancashire and other counties.

Other essays in the book touch less centrally on the interests of rural and agricultural historians but all are well worth reading. Two essays on 'representing' the policemen and policing by Clive Emsley, comparing the English and continental police and by Peter Stead on dramatizing the police, especially on television, present challenging and eye-opening ideas on an area in which David Jones made important contributions. Owen R. Ashton's essay on the old Cheltenham Chartist and Republican, W. E. Adams, adds to our knowledge of the continuities of British radicalism after 1848; while that by Hugh Dunthorne on the influence of the eighteenth century legal theorist Beccaria opens a new page on the intellectual history of English law. We return to Wales in Neil Evans's careful study of the marches in South Wales against the Means Test in 1934-6.

In her essay in the collection, 'David Jones: an appreciation', Dorothy Thompson, writes, 'the greater understanding of the Welsh quality in popular history has helped to throw light on the nature of other ethnic and regional aspects of British history in the period. David Jones's work has been in the fore both in the delineation of Welsh history and in relating it to that of the rest of the British Isles' (p. 15). This collection reinforces that view and is a fitting memorial to a fine historian.

ALUN HOWKINS

MONA SKEHEL, *Tales from the showyard: two hundred years of agricultural shows in Lincolnshire* (Lincolnshire Agricultural Society, 1999). 152 pp. Illus. £20 (hbk); £12.99 (pbk).

A number of different societies have held agricultural shows in Lincolnshire, beginning with the Lincolnshire Division of the Lindsey Agricultural Society in 1799, and continuing to the present with the (third) Lincolnshire Agricultural Society, whose first show was held at Lincoln in 1869. The show was then itinerant until 1959, since when it has been held at Lincoln. Mona Skehel, whose husband was secretary and chief executive of the LAS for many years, has trawled its archives, and many other

local and national sources, to reconstruct the history of these shows.

The shows have always been concerned with exhibiting farm animals, although the early meetings also offered prizes to farm servants for skill and long service. The initial emphasis on showing animals was followed by a growing interest in farm implements and machinery. In 1821 a premium was offered 'for the best new-invented implement for the purpose of agriculture, taking into consideration the simplicity of construction and smallness of price'. In 1855 the Boston show had a 'vast array of first class agricultural implements amounting to 400 entries that might vie with any local exhibition in the kingdom'. At the Louth show in 1878 there were 111 exhibitors of implements and machines, and 17 drivers of steam engines competed for prizes. The shows were always events which involved the whole town, and shops were frequently decorated elaborately to mark the occasion.

Along the way, there were all sorts of disasters waiting to befall the organizers. The first post-1918 show, at Grimsby, turned in a large loss when, following the payment to the band of the Coldstream Guards, Customs and Excise ruled that the event was an entertainment, not an educational event, and mulcted the Society of the huge sum of £1,374 in Entertainment Tax. At Belton in 1948 the show jumpers threatened to strike, pointing out that the rates of prize money had not been raised since 1914. Flooding was a constant hazard, until the acquisition of a permanent showground at Lincoln in 1962 allowed the Society to provide a properly drained site. Since then the Society has invested much in improving the quality of the site and providing it with necessary permanent buildings. The shows have gone from strength to strength, and now attract upwards of 70,000 visitors. Recent social and recreational changes have meant the offering of a host of entertainments, such as military bands, motor cycle displays, hot air balloons, fly fishing, and food and flower shows, but the main agricultural attractions remain the animals and the machines and implements.

Mona Skehel has written an excellent account of the history, activities and personalities of the Society. In addition, she has trawled the local sources to provide a listing and brief description of the dozens of other societies concerned with agricultural life and work in Lincolnshire over the last two centuries. The many illustrations are excellent, and the book is a contribution to the wider history of English agriculture as well as providing much information on the activities of the LAS and other county societies.

PETER DEWEY

BARRY STAPLETON AND JAMES H. THOMAS, *Gales. A study in brewing, business and family history* (Ashgate, 2000). xvi + 192 pp. 34 tables; 25 figs. £49.95.

Gales of Horndean, situated ten miles north of Portsmouth on the main road to London, is the archetypal small country brewery in every respect save one. It has survived. There are therefore two points of great interest in this account of its first 150 years. The first, more intriguing to the agricultural historian, is the firm's foundation in 1847 and its mounting prosperity in the first half-century of its existence. The second, of greater curiosity to the business historian, is its surprising survival over the past four decades.

No brewery better underlines the multifarious connections between brewing, farming and rural enterprise in the Victorian period than that of Gales. Richard Gale (1802–1886) achieved an early, modest prosperity as a Horndean shopkeeper and baker, corn and coal merchant. By the late 1840s he was on the look-out for further opportunities in the neighbourhood to sustain this prosperity for his four sons. He leased a farm for the eldest and, in 1847, bought the Ship and Bell inn in the village. The youngest son ran it and by the mid-1850s had established a small brewery there. At first its scale must have been no different from that of thousands of other brewing victuallers. From then on its trajectory was classic. Nine public houses had been acquired by 1869; a small steam engine was installed; the 1871 census revealed George Gale employing 20 men and two boys. The 1860s and '70s were immensely favourable ones for brewers, large and small-scale alike. When Gales was incorporated in 1886 it was valued at £100,000. Brewing, so closely allied to farming, was a far more profitable and prestigious occupation. George Gale had latterly made profits averaging £8000 a year. He was a Hampshire magistrate and chairman of the local Board of Poor Law Guardians, enjoying the ministrations of five servants. In 1896, at the outset of the great speculative boom in the brewing industry, he sold the firm for a sum close to its valuation of a decade earlier.

The next sixty years of the firm's history in large degree mirrored those of the brewing industry generally. The new owners, connections by marriage of a Barclay Perkins director and borrowing heavily for their purchase of the brewery, saw dividends slump between 1900 and 1914; the bottling of beer prospered; the firm won notable prizes for their beers at the Brewer's Society Exhibitions; profits rose sharply in the inter-war years; more public houses were acquired (the firm owned 67 and six off-licences in the early 1930s) and a few modernized. But generally the firm rode something of a roller-coaster in these years in spite of largely relying upon its tied trade. Several times there were negotiations

about its sale. They never materialized, but by the late 1950s, when production slumped to an all-time low of an average annual barrelage of 7700, the writing seemed to be on the wall for Gales. How did it survive? We are never convincingly told, at least in a way which reveals the determination of the firm's directors to continue. Stapleton and Thomas suggest its small size was unattractive to predators. But pocket size was no guarantee of survival in the late 1950s and 1960s as brewery companies large and small were acquired by the half-dozen leading firms forcing the pace of overdue modernization in the industry. Certainly, the management picked itself up after a poor showing in the 1950s; the firm diversified and did well, with CAMRA's blessing, in the cask beer trade; more public houses were acquired (the firm owned 116 in 1998); Gales' trading area in the early 1980s did not suffer from the effects of collapse of manufacturing experienced in the midlands and North.

The book is a product of almost twenty years research. The authors' account of the firm, reflecting the survival of its records, deals more fully with the last hundred years of its existence than the first half-century. The latter is painstakingly reconstructed from censuses, newspapers and local records. Their imprint is evident as, when dealing with family bereavements, their account takes on the sepulchral tones of the Victorian provincial press. Moreover, the first two chapters provide a circuitous introduction. The first, a brief outline of the British brewing industry over two centuries, is inevitably little more than a listing of figures and firms. Much of the material is repeated later when the fortunes of the firm are fully discussed in their national context. The second, on Horndean and the Gale family before 1847, might easily have been condensed. In the later chapters they come too close to the firm's record. The figures and facts are revealed and a commendable effort is made to take the history up to the late 1990s. Too often, however, the account is uncritical. Perhaps this is inevitable for the authors have clearly enjoyed the complete confidence of the firm. A few more interviews (only one is mentioned) would have helped to obtain a more rounded view. Nevertheless, this is a serious and sustained academic study in a field where good histories of firms are rare. That it records in detail the history of a small county brewery – of which there were hundreds in the late-nineteenth century – and one which remarkably still exists is especially valuable.

R. G. WILSON

BRIAN SHORT, CHARLES WATKINS, WILLIAM FOOT AND PHIL KINSMAN, *The National Farm Survey, 1941–1943: state surveillance and the countryside in England and Wales in the Second World War* (CABI Publishing, 1999). viii + 262 pp. 25 tables; 30 figs. £37.50.

Academics and civil servants have an insatiable appetite for information. In the 1920s and 1930s they had added a variety of soil, land utilization and farm management surveys to the data produced each year since 1866 by the annual agricultural census, and still they wanted more. The food production campaign at the beginning of the Second World War provided the circumstances they needed. On 6 June 1940 the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries issued a circular initiating a Farm Survey which contained questions on, for example, drainage methods, labour and fertilizer requirements, and accommodation available for members of the Women's Land Army. This was the information they needed to direct the plough-up campaign and allocate feedstuffs and other inputs. A fortnight later the editorial of the *Farmers Weekly* referred in terms of glowing approval to this 'new Domesday of Britain', the data for which was to be collected by the County War Agricultural Executive Committees (in this book shortened to CWAECs, but perhaps more often known as the 'War Ags'). In the event, the survey was carried out to different standards in different counties. Some appear to have submitted no returns at all.

Then in April 1941 the National Farm Survey was instituted. All farms were visited by CWAEC district committee members who completed a Primary Farm Return form, containing details of the tenurial status of the farm, its condition (soil type, convenience of layout, condition of buildings, roads, fences, ditches, drainage, cottages, weed and pest infestation, and so on), availability of water and electricity, and, most controversially, an assessment of the managerial ability of the farmer. The annual agricultural census (the 'June Returns') form for 1941 was accompanied by two supplementary forms, one requiring additional details on horticultural production, and the other further information on labour, tractors and other engines, rent, and length of occupation of the holding. Finally, large-scale maps containing details of the farm boundaries were produced.

All this information was aggregated to produce several reports, both during the war and shortly afterwards. The detailed original material (some of it, and in particular the assessments of managerial ability, of great sensitivity) lay in the Public Record Office, subject to a fifty year closure period until 1992. Its great value, clearly, lies in the survival of forms relating to individual farms, together with the maps produced at the same time. The purpose of this book is two-fold: to set out the provenance of the

material to researchers who may now wish to use it, and to evaluate the survey, both as a source for historians, and in terms of its usefulness to those who initiated it. The agricultural, social, and political context in which it was carried out, the way in which it was organized, and the use made of it by its contemporaries, are described. The authors have assessed the internal consistency of the data, based on a national sample together with more local samples in Sussex and the midlands, from which they conclude that, despite 'substantial' limitations, it provides 'an extraordinary wealth of data which can be used to answer a wide range of research questions' (p. 142). They devote a chapter to examining some of those questions: landownership change, farm size and structure, mechanization, women in farming, the military use of wartime land, and the plough-up campaign. They also discuss other possible uses, such as environmental, local, and family history.

Whether the book effectively establishes the National Farm Survey's place in 'modernist surveillance culture' (p. 232) is debatable: the fascinating opening section on statistics and state control is long enough to whet but too short to satisfy the appetite. The main emphasis is on explaining the provenance and potential uses of the Survey and in assessing its reliability, and in this the book is much more successful. Indeed, it is indispensable for anyone working on the documents. Only the passage of time will reveal whether historians make as much use of them as they have of the tithe surveys, probate inventories, and other sources with local coverage on a national scale. If they do, many will have cause to be grateful to Professor Short and his colleagues in making straight the way for them.

PAUL BRASSLEY

CHARLES PHYTHIAN-ADAMS, MARGERY TRANTER, KEN HAWKER, JOHN ROWLEY AND MIKE THOMPSON, *English local history: the Leicester approach. A departmental bibliography and history, 1948-1998* (Friends of the Department of English Local History, University of Leicester, 1999). xi + 235 pp. £11.50 incl. p&p.

This publication marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Department of English Local History at Leicester University. It lists some three thousand items published by those still or once attached to the Department. The wide scope of the Department's work is clear at every point. The nine sections of the bibliography cover the discipline: scope, methodologies and publishing; landscape and buildings; society and economy; population, family and kinship; culture; local history and museums; beyond England and Wales; miscellaneous; and reviews. Entries

in these sections are indexed by author's name, county and place.

The bibliography reflects a formidable achievement, but it is from Charles Phythian-Adams' introduction that the wider influence of the 'Leicester School' emerges fully. His account of the 'golden period' of 1948-1965 conveys the vigour of the founding figures. 'Leicester caught a wave' with 'a zest for the visual exploration of England's history', and an appreciation of 'the continuous evolution of the countryside'. Hoskins, Simmons, Finberg, Thirsk and Everitt defined the Leicester approach, and did so in a way where the best of scholarship was communicated in a popular way to a general public. The outcomes were many, including the 'modern analytical development of the VCH', Finberg's founding of the journal in which this review appears, and the *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, volume IV, which Phythian-Adams judges 'the single most seminal contribution to English Local History this century'.

The subsequent history of the Leicester department has been governed by a different context. Bureaucratic and funding pressures, familiar to those in English higher education, have sometimes made it difficult to maintain momentum. The remorseless trend to increasing academic specialization and the growth of institutionalized local history elsewhere have meant less room for Hoskins' 'general practitioner' approach to the subject, where a holistic local history was the aim. There has been an enforced withdrawal from many of Leicester's more popular activities.

Despite some vicissitudes there is an immense amount to celebrate on Leicester's anniversary. The growth of local history in museums, the many innovative areas of study, including buildings, surnames, ritual calendars, church dedications, patterns of religious allegiance, and the 'identification of spatial arenas in which social, economic and cultural interaction should be most meaningfully understood' are all areas of local historical enquiry in which Leicester has played a leading role. Charles Phythian-Adams concludes that 'English Local History may at last be seen to have gradually developed over the last half century into a fully-fledged academic subject in its own right and within its own terms of reference', a claim which it is hoped time will prove justified. If so, then the Department for English Local History at Leicester will have played a central role in the achievement, as the pages of this bibliography demonstrate.

KATE TILLER

Elsewhere and General

PAUL FREEDMAN, *Images of the medieval peasant* (Stanford UP, 1999). xix + 459 pp. 14 illus. £37.50 (hbk); £13.95 (pbk).

Books on the medieval peasantry are nowadays two-a-penny. Yet comparative analysis of peasantries, and their image in their own and others' eyes, is still rare. It is a measure of the quality of Paul Freedman's study that it not only surveys a vast body of material – drawn principally from Iberia, France, England, Germany, and Hungary – between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries, but that it also identifies how discourse on peasantries reveals both similarities and differences across what otherwise might be taken as emergent national or territorial frontiers. One example: the spread of literature depicting (or caricaturing) peasants as sots, dolts, or louts ('grobianism') flourished from the sixteenth century onwards in Germany and the Netherlands, as well as Spain, but not, it seems, in France. Freedman's point, however, is not merely that there are few 'national' stereotypes, but that chronological shifts in the perception of peasants (especially after the Black Death) are much less significant than the persistence of negative and positive images side-by-side and in apparent contradiction to each other: the peasant as a beast of burden, relegated on account of his lack of reason, alongside the peasant sanctified by his toil, without which society could not be sustained. Or (to continue the contrast): the peasant whose bravery can achieve liberty (the heroic Swiss), opposed to the rustic who will be rewarded in heaven for quiescent suffering on earth. Freedman's essential – and convincing – argument is that these simultaneous juxtapositions are only superficially contradictions, for ambivalence towards peasants and peasant labour was immanent in their function within a society of orders or estates. Indeed, he offers an effective critique of Duby's view of the Three Orders, which had argued that clerical criticism of peasants must always be self-serving and insincere. In a word, Freedman believes that medieval peasants, to borrow a phrase of Martin Luther's, were 'simul justus et peccator'.

This view presupposes, however, a definition of peasants as primarily cultivators, tillers of the soil. Freedman is well aware of the story of Cain and Abel, the evil grower of crops who slays the virtuous shepherd, and indeed the presence of shepherds and fishermen among Christ's apostles makes the search for a single category of peasant baseness that much harder. Can it be accidental that those peasants who most successfully struggled for freedom in the Middle Ages, namely the Swiss, were primarily pastoralists, not husbandmen? Here the omission of any discussion of Scandinavian peasantries

uncomfortably obtrudes. Freedman is most secure on the Mediterranean sources, which he knows best, though he gives a first-class account of the genuinely eccentric rising of the Hungarian peasantry in 1514 under György Dózsa, clad in the mantle of a crusade and fired by Franciscan preaching. His touch is less assured when it comes to Germany. West German peasants had traditionally indeed been entitled to bear arms; the example of Wilhelm Tell was not invoked by the pilgrims to Niklashausen in 1476, or by the adherents of the later Bundschuh conspiracies on the Upper Rhine (though the slogan of Swiss liberty was heard in the latter); and Thomas Müntzer's theatre of action was Thuringia, not Franconia. Moreover, despite healthy scepticism towards some of Steven Justice's wilder assertions on the English Peasants' Revolt, Freedman seems willing to accept his interpretation that the peasants of the abbey of St Albans broke and distributed mill-stones from the abbot's mill in a conscious imitation of breaking bread in the Eucharist, even though this flight of fancy has been snortingly dismissed by Rosamond Faith.

These cavils should not be allowed to detract from Freedman's masterly achievement, which offers far more than a synthesis. There is much insight and originality within its pages, couched in tones of elegant restraint. Not only medievalists would profit greatly from reflecting on its findings.

TOM SCOTT

KARL GUNNAR PERSSON, *Grain markets in Europe, 1500–1900: integration and deregulation* (CUP, 1999). xx + 173 pp. 18 tables; 31 figs. £35.

The title of Professor Persson's original and useful book is misleading. Unlike most works on the subject, it does not study the politics and institutions of the European grain trade, but deploys modern econometrics to ferret out information from long runs of monthly price observations about the pace of European market integration. The main thesis is that regionally-integrated grain markets could substitute for traditional state-imposed price controls, because pooling independent (positive and negative) harvest shocks from districts connected by a single market dampened the price volatility that price controls were intended to limit. Deregulation therefore became politically more palatable as markets became more integrated, or to put it in the economist's way of speaking, as markets became more efficient, it became socially efficient to deregulate them.

The argument is laid out in six short chapters. The first reviews the eighteenth-century debate on deregulation, with special emphasis on the physiocratic argument that the reduction in price volatility from market integration raised returns to agricultural investment and thus

led to an increased supply in the long run. Chapter two analyzes the welfare effects of price instability, arguing that the poor suffered most from it, and that the short-term deprivation experienced during periods of high prices had long-run effects. It follows that the reduction in the volatility of grain prices resulting from free trade should have made a significant contribution to the standard of living. Chapter three argues from the positive serial correlation in monthly prices that short-term price fluctuations were not eliminated by storing grain from one month to the next. If storage strategies had been truly efficient, only random effects would influence the short-term evolution of prices. Chapter four pursues this line of argument by showing that holding grain for more than one year was also ineffective in stabilizing prices because in general speculative storage was not profitable. This may be considered a 'market failure' to which government regulation and the constitution of public granaries were the response. Chapter five demonstrates econometrically the decline in price variability and the growth in market integration from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. Chapter six argues that the increased price stability resulting from market integration was the proximate cause of the free trade movement in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

This is a work in econometric history, and as such is carried out at a high level of abstraction. It employs comparatively recent innovations in econometric technique to exploit somewhat less recent compilations of monthly (and sometimes intra-monthly) price observations. High-frequency time series econometrics is a specialized sub-discipline of economics whose high level of technical difficulty makes it tough sledding for untrained readers. Professor Persson explains the techniques clearly enough for a resolute layman to follow both the argument and its empirical demonstration. One is nevertheless left with the impression that steam hammers are being used to drive thumbtacks. It is hardly news that price volatility declined in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and that the international grain market was becoming more integrated. This was established long ago by crude, but nevertheless adequate correlations and moving averages. By contrast, the central hypothesis that policies leading to freer trade in grain were encouraged by growing market integration is plausible, but can only be demonstrated by a detailed historical analysis of the politics.

Perhaps the greatest lack in a study that purports to be about the evolution of the European grain trade is the absence of any discussion of the evolution of its industrial organization. Markets became more integrated between the sixteenth and the nineteenth century, but we are not told precisely how this happened. To say that it was due

to falling transport costs and improved flows of information is not to say very much unless these processes can be described and analyzed in the concrete rather than in the abstract. A study of the behaviour of prices treats market outcomes but not the economic processes giving rise to them. It would be useful, for example, to know whether it made any difference to the intra-annual distribution of prices that most harvested grain in northern Europe was stored in the sheaf in farmers' barns, where it could be readied for the market only as fast as it could be threshed with the labour force on hand. One would also like to know what were the economies of scale in storage and transport that limited or encouraged market integration, and whether the growth of large cities and urbanized regions had any effect on the evolution of the grain market. These questions are not easily resolved using the techniques of time-series econometrics, which have been designed chiefly to address the question whether short-term price movements can be predicted, an issue of greater importance to financial and macro-economists than to historians.

The main contribution of Professor Persson's exercises is to validate the belief that price volatility in the market for subsistence foodstuffs declined dramatically between the sixteenth and the nineteenth century, and to show by argument, if not by empirical demonstration, that this decline probably had large positive effects on the standard of living. Further study may reveal that the reduction in the variance of grain prices was one of the factors responsible for the decline in death rates prior to the industrial revolution. The major obstacle to pursuing this line of enquiry is the scarcity of high-frequency price data. This is an imaginative and provocative book whose many hypotheses warrant reflection and further research. Whether it represents a new route to wisdom or a blind alley will only be known when this reflection and research are carried out.

GEORGE GRANTHAM

FRANCIS BRUMONT, *Madiran et Saint-Mont: histoire et devenir des vignobles* (Biarritz: Atlantica, 1999). 359 pp. 48 tables; 65 figs; 31 maps. FF150.

History is all too often 'grand history'. The rhythms of the everyday, and the lives of the majority are thus frequently sacrificed in historical accounts which focus on the rich and the famous. In this sensitively written and fascinating account, Francis Brumont reminds us of the crucial importance that 'little history' should play in helping us to gain a balanced understanding of past places. He does this, not by focusing on the great names of wine history, such as Bordeaux or Burgundy, but instead on the little known vineyards of Madiran and Saint-Mont in the south-west of France. Interestingly too he

stresses that most histories of viticulture have focused very largely on wines and vines, ignoring the human world of the vigneron (which I like to translate as 'wine growers' to reflect their intimate combination of both grape growing and wine making). Although focusing on economic history, Brumont is thus careful wherever possible to provide us with insights into the social life of the rural world in which these wine growers lived.

The book is divided into two parts, like the history of France itself, of which it is indeed a microcosm, the first focusing on traditional wine growing before the Revolution, and the second addressing changes that have occurred over the last two centuries. In Chapter One Brumont sets the scene through a brief account of the geography and history of the region, before he focuses in more depth on the land and the evolution of property rights in Chapter Two. The next two chapters provide a wide ranging examination of the vineyards of the region between the sixteenth and late eighteenth centuries, detailing, for example, the various cultivation systems used, the types of vine grown, and labour in the vineyard, and then paying specific attention to the geographical variation in vineyard size and type within Madiran and Saint-Mont. The remaining chapters of Part One concentrate on the commercialization of the region's wines, noting that while some wines were exported, the vast majority were sold to the Pyrenees. For Brumont, this culminated in a crisis during the eighteenth century, resulting from the existence of two worlds of grape growing and wine making, the one focusing on quality wine for export, and the other on mass wines for the local market. The second half of the book examines in turn the expansion of grape growing up to the arrival of *oidium* and *phylloxera* in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the marketing of wine during the nineteenth century, the life of the inhabitants of Madiran during the twentieth century, and the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the VDQS appellation 'Côtes de Saint Mont' in 1981.

What Brumont has given us is a fascinating account of the economic history of a region of France in which, during the nineteenth century, wine making took on a primordial role in peasant life, providing most of their income through exports to the Pyrenees. In so doing, he seeks to dispel many myths, both local and also more widespread concerning the history and geography of wine, supporting his arguments with detailed empirical evidence drawn from his extensive archival research. Throughout, the book is infused with his clear love for the region and its wines, and it thus makes an excellent read for anyone interested in French rural society.

TIM UNWIN

DAVID LUDDEN, *An agrarian history of South Asia* (New Cambridge History of India, IV (4); CUP 1999). xiii + 261 pp. £40.

Two caveats may be made about this interesting and worthwhile book, especially for readers of this journal. Firstly, it appears under a series sub-heading, 'The evolution of contemporary South Asia'. But, as one might expect from the author of *Peasant history in South India* (Princeton 1985), it takes a very long view of 'evolution', reaching back to 7500 BC. It leads to some hypotheses about the present-day but provides little coverage of 'contemporary' (that is, recent) South Asia. (As some other Cambridge History volumes have also paid scant regard to the sectional divisions, it is hard to see what purpose these serve). The ostensible justification for the focus of this book is that agricultural landscapes emerge over 'very long periods of time' (p. 19). This justifies, apparently, not only the overall bias of the work towards earlier periods, but also its rather disconcerting use of the continuous present for many of its ecological and geographical descriptions, and its bold claims about (for example) the striking political continuities from the Guptas to the Mughals, or the linkage of recent patterns of kinship to socio-political differences more than a century ago.

Secondly, Ludden's book says remarkably little about agriculture. It begins with two propositions that are worthy of debate rather than axiomatic: that agrarian history has been pushed to the margins by histories of nations and states, and that, in fact, though connected to state structures, it was 'embedded' in the everyday life of agricultural communities which was transformed primarily through 'the activity of farming itself' (pp. 1-3, 6-7 and 18-19). This raises two expectations - that this book will be a history from below, as indeed is explicitly promised, and that it will be much concerned with the daily and seasonal grind of sowing, harvesting, consuming and selling. Despite such preliminaries, however, this is agrarian history mainly concerned with politics and society rather than with the economics of production and exchange. The book is an accomplished transfer on to a broader stage of the insights provided by Ludden's *Peasant history* into the relationships between land control and socio-political structures (kinship, patriarchy, temple, king, state; ritual, myth, law; and so on). Its real subjects are revealed not so much in its enigmatic chapter headings (which conceal rather than explain the text's overlapping, sometimes discursive organization), but in some of the headings of its useful bibliography; namely: 'intellectual history', 'long-term history', 'early modern themes', 'modern issues'. This limitation of the subject has two unanticipated consequences: little consideration of broader economic and non-political forces, and few de-

tails about daily life in field and market-place. Further it follows that some generalizations and conclusions may be open to qualification.

Significantly, in Chapter One, agrarian developments are first discussed historically in regard to data and texts, and in Chapter Two in relation to the rise of Brahmanism and of warrior castes, rather than to the ostensible subject, the 'expansion of agrarian territory' through substantive changes in settlement, irrigation and cultivation. In Chapter Three a further evolution is described, but its origins are scarcely considered and the discussion quickly returns to taxation, social typologies and property, and then to agrarian resistance. Then, after a glance at commodity production and investment, and a quick denial of the role of either technology or demography (despite land competition and commercial opportunities), change is again defined as a transformation of agrarian 'territoriality' – that is, it is attributed to states, elites, and local responses to their demands. Chapter Four, similarly, deals with the modern implication of rural South Asia with centralized colonial and post-colonial administration, as well as with the emergence of capitalist farming; it emphasizes estate and village power, state attempts at economic development, rural resistance, political mobilization, and terminological changes.

Arguably, the largest events of modern times for the South Asian countryside follow the dictionary definition of 'agrarian' in relating to both property and cultivation: they are the gradual establishment of standardized property rights in land, and the expansion of commercial cultivation under the influence of long-distance trade. Only the first of these is really discussed here. The book includes a short exposition of colonial revenue policy – as good as one could hope for (pp. 156–66) – and some useful accounts of the nineteenth-century separation and enclosures of land, and of some entrepreneurial landholders' recent success, and their dependants' sufferings. But there is not even an entry for 'trade' in the book's index. Very little is said about changing patterns of production, demand and consumption. Bengal's temporary domination of world jute-growing, to take one example, is considered almost wholly in terms of its impact on agrarian relations (pp. 213–4). Readers will find little here about the nature and means of that expansion.

Nor, more generally, will they find distinctions between crops, or details about the changes in cropping and marketing patterns over the last two or three centuries. Instead there are some few crucial but unsubstantiated generalizations, such as: 'market crops ... are much more labour intensive than subsistence crops, especially millet, which they steadily displaced during the expansion of commercial farming' (p. 207). By contrast, even Shahid Amin's study (*Sugarcane and sugar in Gorakhpur,*

Delhi, 1984, p. 115) notes the continuing preponderance of food-crop production, and suggests only 'some substitution' of labour-intensive sugarcane for inferior food crops. By Amin's own figures, which do not quite add up, Gorakhpur's five-year averages of acreage under sugarcane increased markedly between 1911–16 and 1936–41 (by 88 per cent, from 4.3 to 7.9 per cent of the total cropped area), but the average acreage for 'other food crops', including millets, also increased by just under 10 per cent, or from 20 to 22 per cent of the total. (Average acreages for all food crops decreased by just under 3 per cent, from 90 to 85 per cent of the total cropped area, but the reduction was chiefly in barley, maize and gram. The wheat acreage increased. Double-cropping increased by only 4.3 per cent, and total cropped area by 2.3 per cent, but, in terms of acres, the latter increase was equivalent to more than two-thirds of the increase for sugar). Moreover, the labour, water and capital demands of different crops may be very different, whether or not they are intended for the market. And 'commercial' farming not only took varied forms but is a concept demanding to be unpicked, as I among many others have argued (see *Economic History Rev.* 45 1992). A similar view is taken by Ludden when he describes a symbiosis between capitalist agriculture and the subsistence strategies of some semi-landless agricultural labourers.

Ludden's socio-political story is an important one. Much of it will command agreement among specialists. Particularly valuable are his delineations of the regional 'types' of South Asian agrarian society, a major theme throughout the book. Despite the virtues of this study, however, there is room for further works of synthesis that will pay more attention to recent South Asian history and to the details of agricultural production and consumption.

PETER ROBB

MARK RAVINA, *Land and lordship in early modern Japan* (Stanford UP, 1999). 6 tables; 14 figs; 7 maps. £27.50. In this work Mark Ravina diversifies our standard understanding of Tokugawa Japan by exploring how three daimyo domains adapted their policies in the eighteenth century in response to a number of partly interlocking pressures (demographic realities, financial stress, economic output, protoindustrialization, and shogunal authority) that affected their political economies. They were large 'province-size' domains with various commoner-samurai population ratios that affected the tribute burden shouldered by the commoners. Hirosaki, located in the far north, with a large samurai population and an underdeveloped economy resorted to resettling samurai from the castle town, where they were supposed to reside, into the countryside in order to lessen the finan-

cial strain on the domain budget. (In passing Ravina surprises one with the startling fact that domains maintaining landed fiefs comprised half the territory of Japan by the late seventeenth century – p. 64.) This resettling of the samurai was thus not a survival of medieval practice, or some ideologically driven measure to reform feudal relationships (as Ogyu Sorai was envisioning in the early seventeenth century) but an early modern response to financial stress.

Tokushima domain, on Shikoku island, presents a totally different picture. This domain with a small samurai population developed a highly commercialized economy centred on indigo exports. Typical of large domains engaged in running domain monopolies – 75 per cent of them administered such monopolies from economic development offices after 1830 – Tokushima intervened early on (1673) in quality control of its indigo exports, regulating production methods in order to protect its market. In the eighteenth century it fought oligopsonies by establishing counter-cartels against cartels of urban dyers and dye wholesalers from Osaka and Edo in order to maintain high prices for its products.

Yonezawa in the near north has long been famous in Japan for the model rule of an exemplary daimyo, Uesugi Harunori (1751–1822), whose policies Ravina discusses in detail. Yonezawa was a domain with a large samurai surplus population. Harunori experimented with a domain monopsony in lacquer production, promoted sericulture and put his samurai population to work in the weaving of linen-silk blend textiles, a regional speciality. Harunori demanded quality production from his samurai as a form of loyal service.

The economic experiments in these three domains were often accompanied by fierce political struggles, including an assassination in one case. Ravina introduces some of these as well as local intellectuals, such as Nyui Mitsugi (1712–92) from Hirosaki, who developed detailed proposal for reforms.

A major theme in this study is a re-examination of the political balance between domain autonomy and shogunal authority. Relying on Mizubayashi Takeshi's term of 'compound state', Ravina emphasizes the degree to which Tokugawa Japan was a conglomeration of fairly autonomous states. Much of this part of the book re-treads very familiar ground and re-examines yet once more the question of the 'modern' character of early modern Japan. Even the distinctions between the various aspects of daimyo authority (feudal, patrimonial and suzerain) and the discussion of the multiple possible connotations of terms like 'kuni' ('land, country, domain') or 'kokka' ('house, domain, nation') have not produced, at least for this reviewer, new insights into the political landscape of Tokugawa Japan. On the other hand, Rav-

ina's closing argument that reconceptualizes the birth of Japan's modern nation-state not as a natural development out of a Tokugawa proto-form of it, but as a reactionary formation triggered by Japan's confrontation not simply with 'the West' but with a novel form of polity, namely the modern nation-state is very interesting. As Bob Wakabayashi has shown (*Anti-foreignism and western learning in early modern Japan*, 1986), Aizawa Seishisai's construction of the notion of 'kokutai' (national body politic) in 1825 was an attempt to adapt what he had learned about the West's formula for national power to Japan. Ravina lends support from a political economy point of view to Wakabayashi's argument in the field of intellectual history.

Other scholars like Philip Brown, Luke Roberts and David Howell have studied particular domains (Kaga, Tosa, and the Hokkaido region). Ravina's research is a most welcome addition to these monographs which together constitute the emerging field of regional studies of the political economy, mercantilism, and protoindustrial developments in early modern Japan.

HERMAN OOMS

THOMAS R. DUNLAP, *Nature and the English diaspora: environment and history in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand* (CUP, 1999). xv + 350 pp. 13 figs. £35 (hbk); £12.95 (pbk).

'Comparative' lines continue to provide stimulus and direction in highly successful university courses, and it is well recognized that they foment invaluable scholarly interaction. In some circles, however, the production of book-length comparative studies has been considered 'courageous', where the notion may be that an envied guarantee of wide readership brings commensurate exposure, heightened vulnerability and so on. That is an unfortunate attitude, given the proven capacity of such approaches to interrogate, situate and extend current understandings won from narrower sourcings. *Nature and the English diaspora* certainly deserves to be seen in more generous light.

Dunlap's repertoire already includes some 'applied' historical scholarship, notably on DDT and American wildlife policies. Quests for professional adaptability may cut corners, but at minimum teachers and students alike usually benefit from the packaging of scattered information. *Nature and the English diaspora* offers more of the same in effort, style and purpose. North American readers will have to forgive its title – more often seen in the text as less prescriptive Anglo, 'English' is only intended to signal an important but non-exclusive degree of cultural commonality – and Canadians and New Zealanders will balk at the relatively thin coverage of their respective countries. The traverse encounters changing ver-

naclar and scientific characterizations of the natural environment over the past two centuries, seen against a background of settlement expansion, appraisals of environmental limitations and the influence of diversely aroused ecological consciousness. Towards the end of the journey, 'settlers' whose forebears were 'invaders' seem to be glimpsing a chance to become 'inhabitants' – in each country a protracted coming-to-terms had shown that enduring relationships with nature required a vastly improved sense of reciprocity.

This challenging sketch is based on three overlapping chronological sections. The first, 'Making the Land Familiar', focuses on the role of natural history. That influential preoccupation is suggested to have sharpened the immigrants' resource appraisals, assisting them to connect their peripheral economies more intimately with those of the metropolitan hearth; but it is also noted that the ambiguities of acclimatization and hunting incorporated braking continuities. 'Beyond Conquest' concentrates on the period 1850–1930. It scrutinizes the maintenance of simple frontiering and the rise of the first acknowledged types of conservationism, the harnessing of 'native nature' for national identity, and the development of formal or institutionalized science and concomitant 'expertise'. 'Finding Firm Ground' covers developments between 1920 and 1950. Renewed debates on the positing of human dominion over Nature took optimistic and pessimistic turns in the 1920s and 1930s: before and after World War Two, intensifying scientific and cultural re-evaluations of natural systems included an emergent ecological perspective on environmental management. The final section, 'New Knowledge, New Nature' addresses the growth of modern environmentalism and its multi-faceted relationship with ecological thought. It proposes that the union of knowledge and concern may build a new foundation.

The touch seems surest in the United States encounters and less convincing elsewhere, notwithstanding an unmistakable but as yet unconsummated infatuation with most things Australian. And the occasional gaffe should not have missed editorial sieves – if New

Zealanders can complain of a loss of islands, we Australians are entitled to demand the return of a fifth or so of our national population (both on p. 13, much too early for comfort). Similarly, privileged socio-cultural contexts lose clout when so thinly buttressed with interpretative accounts from art and literature; furthermore, each section avoids or misses critical inter-country differences – especially in administrative, economic and political circumstances. Recourse to orthodox refereeing should have left better armouring. Viewed entirely in marketing terms, the clear and growing demand for such brave overviews is perhaps sufficient to over-ride some faults of omission. Even so, the favoured cultural designation disappoints. Timely panoramic surveys never fail to advance the comparative line, but other points of entry may do more for intellectual sustainability. Above all, the interlinked imperatives of economic development and resource appraisal proclaim themselves at every juncture. Why so much on acclimatization and hunting; why so little on the equally complex account of environmental learning and adaptation associated with the development imperative, and hence with the stories of commercial stock breeding, the introduction of new grains and grasses, innovations in soil science, and so on? There are indeed so many options, each of them justifying one or more sizeable survey volumes, whether single- or multiple-authored.

An epilogue, 'The Upshot', injects some late-retrieved restraint and an earnest recall of regional differentiation. But in truth, neither that nor the larger concerns noted here persuade me to resile from welcoming Tom Dunlap's highly accessible overview. The hat is in the ring. Fellow-travellers are now obliged to include *Nature and the English diaspora* in their reckonings for teaching and research. Until other authors deign to show their hands, this book's audacious readability will command no less attention than its obvious relevance to one of the most recently transformed sectors of our shrinking world.

J. M. POWELL