

# Book Reviews

## Britain and Ireland

DELLA HOOKE (ed.), *Landscape: the richest historical record* (Society for Landscape Studies, Supplementary Series 1, 2000). 170 pp. Illus. £28 incl. p & p from Kathryn Brown, 9 Rowan Close, Wellingborough, Northants. NN8 3GE.

Most multi-authored collections are to a degree like the curate's egg, allowing reviewers to savour and discard, but not this one which is wholesome in all of its parts. Richard Bradley discusses prehistoric landscapes and stresses that very often the interpretation of ritual monuments and rural features needs to be integrated (e.g. disused Iron-Age granary pits were used for ritual deposits, including human burial). Mark Corney reviews Roman Britain, painting a picture of a highly-cultivated and well-settled rural landscape from the North to the wetlands, to what we now call the downlands of Wessex (the location of his own expert researches). Stephen Rippon, surveying the later Roman and early medieval landscape, makes a convincing case for survival of the old alongside new 'Anglo-Saxon' settlements and fields – continuity not everywhere but in places and with marked regional variation in the relationship between the two. Brian Roberts and Stuart Wrathmell, spanning the periods covered by Corney and Rippon and concentrating largely on the Midlands, conclude from their innovative maps that the boundaries between open land (the 'champion' of later ages) and woodland were generally 'already well marked by the time of the Roman conquest', although of course we know of local exceptions to this generalization. There is no general chapter on the high middle ages but Tom Williamson takes up the story with a study entitled 'The rural landscape, 1500–1900, the neglected centuries'. He is absolutely correct when he says that the creation of around sixty per cent of the walled or hedged landscape of England post-dates 1450, and when he asks why the 'open lands' of Roberts and Wrathmell (above) were in arable cultivation in Roman, Anglo-Saxon and early medieval times despite the views of all later commentators as to their greater suitability for grazing.

There are chapters on more localized and non-agrarian themes, including those by Kevin Edwards (with

Y. Mulder, T. Lomax, G. Whittington and K. Hiron) on the Outer Hebrides where long sediment sequences stretching back to the Mesolithic reveal changes in land use which may be compared with distributions of settlements and find sites; by Angus Winchester on the hills of northern England, in which he makes the useful distinction between 'closed' upland strongly controlled by lords and 'open' tracts where peasant settlement was allowed and encouraged; and by James Bond who surveys 'Landscapes of monasticism' in a novel and interesting way. Terry Slater writes an extremely useful historiographical review of progress in our understanding of urban landscapes, pointing out, for example, that the plan of the very early (if not the earliest) English post-Conquest town with streets intersecting at right angles, Bury St Edmunds, may have been influenced by the geometrical works of Adelard of Bath, kept in the monastic library there. Marilyn Palmer also discusses historiography, in her case that of the study of post-medieval industrial landscapes, and she is one of the few authors here to include a formal discussion of methodology. John Chandler writes on 'The discovery of landscape' in a learned and novel way and considers that, in part, rapid changes in society and landscape were often the stimulus which led men in the past, from Leland to Hoskins, to go out and explore. Della Hooke, in a timely chapter, writes of the practical implications of the discipline, discussing the historical landscape characterization maps (a description almost designed to be off-putting) now being produced by English county councils, and the future European dimension. Christopher Taylor engagingly rounds off the collection with a wealth of reflections, that which struck me most being his comment that landscape history is not simply economic or agrarian or urban history with the difficult bits missed out and a few pictures substituted.

This collection of papers (and their excellent bibliographies which, collectively, provide a good survey of the literature up to 2000) prompts many thoughts. One is that landscape history is the most difficult and taxing of subjects. Another, and related one, is that we can only succeed by juggling together all of the different types of evidence, including the palynological, and including the documentary, which is highly important (I disagree with Robert Dodgshon's comment on this in his preface).

Multi-disciplinary is a term which usually makes me wish to reach for a gun and I would like to think that the discipline is now mature enough to take that approach for granted. Third, the influence of W. G. Hoskins on the subject is profound. His name, with a great variety of spellings in the genitive form, and his ideas appear everywhere in this collection, from his views on the great woodlands of Anglo-Saxon England to his comment on Leicestershire's industrial landscapes: 'profoundly dull, as one might expect from factories producing such prosaic things as vests and pants . . . biscuits and bricks'. The hare which he set running from the Department of English Local History in the early 1950s still has a good running ahead of it.

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J. G. MINTON, *Agrarian archives. A thousand years of records* (Durham: History of Education Project, 2002). xviii + 408pp. Illus. £25 plus p&p from History of Education Project, The Miner's Hall, Red Hill, Durham, DH1 4BB.

In 1539 Barking Abbey was surrendered to Henry VIII and subsequently granted by him to William Petre, the son of a Devon tanner and Secretary of State to Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary Tudor. The land formed the basis of an estate that eventually included over 30,000 acres. Fortunately for historians, William founded not only the Petre estate in Essex, but also an estate archive. This included records saved from the muniments room of the abbey. Altogether an archive of over 2000 'ancient' or pre-Dissolution records along with many later documents ranging from manor court rolls, charters, surveys and maps to account books, leases, crop books and wills is located on the estate, at the Essex Record Office, and at Wadham College, Oxford. The earliest surviving document in the archive is a charter from the reign of King Stephen. *Agrarian archives* relies heavily on these records, along with some from Scottish estates, to document rural development from prehistoric to modern times.

The task was ambitious, possibly too ambitious. There is often an ambiguity about the book. Is it a general history or an examination of an archive? The author seems uncertain. For the medieval and early modern period the book, based almost entirely on documentary evidence from the Petre archives, is an excellent study of the archive. Dr Minton quotes extensively from the records. Documents are placed in context. A range of topics from woodland management and medieval deer parks to field systems, the annual calendar of labour and land holding patterns are examined. Material is compared over time and across a range of different types of records including surveys and manor court roles, leases and

accounts. The author skilfully uses the Petre archive as foundation from which to explore agrarian issues. For the later period, particularly from the nineteenth century, the nature of the book alters. The close relationship between the Petre documents and text ends and more emphasis is placed on secondary sources and, perplexingly, on Scottish estate records. The contrast between the two approaches is stark. For example, the author convincingly uses a survey from 1280 along with other documentary evidence to argue that from the thirteenth century there was no open field system functioning in those Essex parishes later owned by the Petre family. However, a later section relying almost entirely on modern sources and devoted to Midland enclosures, is also included. Although most of the first 200 pages of the volume and the 78 pages of the appendices are about Essex, the section on enclosure makes only passing, non-specific reference to the county. As a general history of rural Britain, the book is unconvincing. There are other more widely researched studies available.

As a study of an archive, *Agrarian archives* has much to recommend it. The exceptional material in the archive is well presented. There are eleven appendices containing various documents and maps. It should be ideal for comparative studies. Unfortunately very few of the documents used in the text have been sourced. Possibly this was the result of the death of the author during the final preparation of the volume for publication. Without source information future historians will find it difficult to locate individual records in an extensive archive split between several repositories.

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CATHERINE DELANO-SMITH and ROGER J. P. KAIN,  
*English maps: a history* (The British Library, 1999). xiv + 320 pp. 163 figs; 26 plates. £25.

This study has its origins in lectures given to the Cartographic Institute of Catalonia, Barcelona in 1996, which were published by the Institute in 1997 as a monograph entitled *English cartography*. Delano-Smith and Kain have reorganized, reworked, and extended that text, and added a wealth of map illustrations in both black-and-white and colour to produce the present volume. Their approach remains unchanged – the appraisal of maps in their social and cultural context, with equal emphasis on both map-users and map-makers – but the material is presented, with advantage, with greater thematic emphasis. After a brief introduction discussing the spirit and purpose of maps, chapters examine medieval maps; country, county, and regional mapping; property mapping, especially estate, enclosure, and tithe surveys; travel and road maps; urban cartography; and maps in

everyday life. The final chapter is devoted to a short but welcome appraisal of map survival. Each chapter provides a clear introduction to its respective topic, a comprehensive review of existing research, and a measured assessment of current thinking. The authors' practice of highlighting areas and avenues for further research is thought-provoking and is to be congratulated. This reviewer, writing these comments in Keele's William Smith Building, named after the Cheshire sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cartographer, particularly appreciated their call for a major study of his work. In sum, Delano-Smith and Kain have produced a most authoritative and satisfying introduction to the history of English maps. With its modest price and its high-quality production, the volume is much recommended.

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D. A. CROWLEY (ed.), *The Victoria history of the counties of England. A history of the county of Wiltshire, XVII, Calne hundred* (Boydell and Brewer for the Institute of Historical Research, 2002). xxi + 204 pp. 70 illus; 18 maps. £75.

The latest volume of Wiltshire VCH deals with the eight parishes in the small hundred of Calne. This includes parts of both the 'chalk' and the 'cheese' areas of Wiltshire, since it comprizes the western edge of the Marlborough Downs and the low-lying land in the valley of the river Marden west of Calne. There was the traditional division of sheep/corn husbandry on the downland, and dairy farming along the river valley. The number of parishes is small because almost the whole of the western part of the hundred formed part of the large royal estate of Calne. Much of the rest of the hundred was likewise Crown land administered from Calne, and the parish churches continued to be dependent upon the church at Calne. The hundred was bounded on the west by the royal forest of Chippenham.

Calne hundred has always been primarily dependent upon agriculture, although the spinning of yarn and the manufacture of cloth, often combined with farming, also provided employment. Until the nineteenth century Calne was one of the centres of the west-country cloth trade; there were several cloth mills in the town, and no less than 14 mills along a short stretch of the river Marden. Two features of the hundred are of particular interest to agricultural historians. These are the development of Calne as a major centre of bacon curing and food processing, and the creation of a major estate at Bowood, involving a total transformation of the landscape.

As the cloth trade declined, it was replaced at Calne by large scale bacon-curing. This was largely due to the Harris family, who were butchers in the town by 1780.

A century later Calne was dominated by the factories of C. & T. Harris, and by those of their competitors. The Harris business alone employed some 230 people and slaughtered 2000 to 3000 pigs each week, producing bacon, sausages and lard. An idealized view of the Harris steam-driven factory in 1887 shows an orderly queue of pigs waiting to enter. The industry continued to flourish in Calne, and C. & T. Harris (Calne) Ltd. had 1171 employees in 1934, and 2116 in 1957.

This aspect of Calne's history illustrates a difficulty of the VCH approach. For details of how the industry was established, using some of the droves of Irish pigs regularly driven through Calne from the port of Bristol to London, and details of the special method of curing bacon which gave the name 'Wiltshire Bacon' such high esteem, the reader must turn to VCH *Wiltshire* IV, (1959), pp. 220–3. This was published before the total collapse of the trade during the 1970s; by 1982 all the factories were closed, and by 1986 they had been demolished.

Another notable feature of the volume is the account of the development of the Bowood estate. This had been part of the royal forest, and in 1754 was purchased by John Petty, earl of Shelburne, whose son, William was created marquess of Lansdowne in 1784. Work on the mansion, garden and parkland employed a succession of notable names including Robert Adam, C. R. Cockerell, Charles Barry, Lancelot Brown and the local firm of 'grotto-makers', Josiah Lane of Tisbury. The result is a classic estate landscape with characteristic farms, cottages, park, woodland, a mausoleum, and even an attractive wooden church with a thatched roof. The family still live on the estate, although much of their vast mansion was demolished in 1955.

Throughout the volume the maps and plans are, as usual, clear and informative, but the illustrations which have been such a useful feature of recent volumes are disappointing. There are seventy well-chosen illustrations, but the quality of paper used means that the reproduction is much less sharp than in previous volumes. Apart from this criticism, however, this is an interesting volume, with the customary wealth of detailed research and invaluable references.

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DAVID HEY, *Historic Hallamshire. History in Sheffield's countryside* (Ashbourne: Landmark Publishing, 2002) 176 pp. Illus. £19.95.

This book answers many questions that will have crossed the mind of any moderately curious person who lives, or has lived, in the environs of Sheffield. What was the origin of the name 'Hallamshire' and what did it refer to; who made the millstones that symbolize the Peak

National Park and strew the countryside, and how was the millstone industry organized; what kind of institution was Beauchief Abbey and why does so little of it remain? It also reveals and explains aspects of local history that even the more observant might have missed: the water troughs for grouse carved into moorland stones; a number of surviving houses built for the minor gentry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the unusual longevity and local origin of many Sheffield surnames. Yet the book does more: it provides an introduction to the local history of Sheffield's environs, avoiding the history of the metal-working trades and growth of the city which have been thoroughly treated elsewhere, to concentrate – as the title suggests – on the rural history of the locality. This includes both the countryside which remains around Sheffield (stretching out of Hallamshire into north Derbyshire in places) and that which formerly existed beneath the modern urban area.

While there are a few mentions of prehistory, the book's scope is primarily that of the documented historical era from the eleventh to the early twentieth century. Some topics, such as the development of the moorland landscape, cover the whole period – from medieval hunting reserves to early-modern pasture farms via parliamentary enclosure to grouse shooting in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The medieval period is well represented from the twelfth-century establishment of Ecclesfield Priory and Beauchief Abbey, to the development of local surnames from farm-names and occupations from the thirteenth century onwards, and an examination of the place and family names which did not survive beyond the late medieval or early modern centuries. The history of the local gentry encompasses both the Norman origins of some families, such as the Furnivals and Mounteneys, and the rise of others such as the Shirecliffs and Brights from local farming origins. As the subtitle suggests, this is not an all-inclusive history – it is 'history in' not 'the history of' Sheffield's countryside. For instance, there is no systematic treatment of the development of the region's agricultural economy, although there is a chapter on farming families and many other incidental references. And while there is a chapter on the historical background of the Dragon of Wantley, as recounted in a seventeenth century ballad (demonstrating the relatively recent origin of many ancient 'myths'), the local connections to the Robin Hood legends (Robin of Loxley, Little John of Hathersage) are not explored. Nevertheless, the topics covered are covered thoroughly, and carefully documented. Although the index is restricted to place and family names, there is an extensive guide to further reading, and the whole book is well illustrated with maps, photographs and illustrations. This is good local history designed to be accessible

to all those who want to know more about the area they live in or visit at the weekends, and could be used as a guide book to explore historical aspects of the locality. But it is also a book of sound scholarship written by an expert in English local history who comes from the locality under investigation. It provides a reliable background and methodology for any historian seeking to investigate this, or any similar locality, and is perhaps a start of a new genre – the rural history of England's industrial cities.

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ELIZABETH GRIFFITHS (ed.), *William Windham's Green Book, 1673–1688* (Norfolk Record Society, 66, 2002). vi + 301 pp. 2 illus; 3 maps; 6 graphs. £20 incl. p&p. Further information from the Society's website, [www.norfolkrecord.plus.com](http://www.norfolkrecord.plus.com).

Detailed estate accounts survive relatively rarely for England in the seventeenth century, and only a few of these survivors have yet been printed. Elizabeth Griffiths' edition of the estate accounts of William Windham of Felbrigg in north-east Norfolk is a significant addition to the published stock of such sources, and also to our understanding of the practice of estate management in this important century. As Dr Griffiths argues in her comprehensive introduction, the unrelenting fall in grain and livestock prices in the third quarter of the seventeenth century forced innovation and diversification upon Norfolk landowners in their struggle to maintain estate income. This sowed the seeds of changes in husbandry, tenancy-agreements and estate management that eventually came to fruition in the classic west Norfolk agrarian improvers of the eighteenth century – Coke, Townshend and the Walpoles. William Windham was one of their precursors, on his small East Anglian estates (2,300 acres in north Norfolk, north and east Suffolk, and north Essex). His account book reflects his efforts to bring order and systematic management to these properties, and his experiments with tenures and crops in the face of continuously falling grain prices.

Dr Griffiths details the scope of Windham's activities in her scholarly introduction. She describes the structure and organization of these accounts, the history of the Felbrigg estate, its arrangement when William inherited it in 1673, and his subsequent management of the house and farms. In particular, she highlights his very unusual attempts at share cropping or 'letting to halves'. Windham sought to overcome a shortage of properly capitalized tenants (and low rental yields) by supplying dairy herds and arable equipment to tenants in return for half the profits, generally with little success. The introduction also details Windham's relationship with his family,

the estate professionals, tenants and labourers, and locates his efforts effectively within the wider economic, governmental and intellectual contexts.

The accounts themselves are arranged in double entry form, detailing the debts followed by the credits of each tenant on the estate between 1673 and 1689. This is rare among printed estate accounts, although Blake Tyson's recent edition of *The estate and household accounts of Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall, Westmorland 1688–1701* (C.W.A.A.S. Record Ser., 13) does provide a northern equivalent, albeit one that is not arranged conveniently property by property. The historical interest in these accounts lies in the strategies that Windham adopted in order to balance the two columns. So, for example, the reader can trace how on Widow Skipper's 220-acre farm at Crownthorpe in central Norfolk arrears had mounted to £522 by 1675, and see Windham's response in the list of stock and contents sold to the value of £354 to clear the account. Such attention to detail, together with Windham's efforts at mathematical accuracy, and the editor's thorough cross-referencing of accounts, estate surveys and leases will allow students of agrarian history to use this volume to produce a systematic picture of estate management at this time. More unusually among seventeenth-century accounts, the double entry bookkeeping should also make possible a coherent analysis of Windham's solvency during this agrarian depression.

As a consequence, this is a very important source for the agricultural history of early modern England, and Dr Griffiths' edition makes it fully accessible for historical analysis, and sets it alongside a collection of other relevant estate records. At present, however, this source's greatest strength is also its single weakness, because as the editor observes, 'no other document of this nature has come to light'. Hopefully, this particular deficiency will soon be put right.

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JOHN BECKETT, *Byron and Newstead. The aristocrat and the abbey* (Associated University Presses, 2001). 347 pp. 14 illus; 1 map. £42.

When Sir John Byron managed to secure the grant of the dissolved Augustinian abbey of Newstead in 1540 he probably thought that he had provided a solid landed platform for his ancient family to rise steadily in wealth, status and power. For a couple of centuries, matters progressed smoothly as successive life tenants husbanded their resources, developed the estate, remodelled the house and managed to hand to the fifth Lord Byron (1743–98) a property unencumbered with debt. Thereafter followed a sad tale of profligacy and woe.

Although John Beckett manages in his meticulously-detailed study to rescue this particular Byron from the miasma of myth surrounding his seemingly picaresque life, the fact remains that in his penchant for overspending lay the foundations for later financial difficulties. Beckett's workmanlike, dusty legal detective work reveals that the fifth Lord Byron (among whose attributes included running a neighbour through the stomach in a duel following an argument over the preservation of game), though attentive to many aspects of the management of the estate and ingenious in his ability to sidestep his creditors, lived for long beyond his means. Estranged from his son following the latter's elopement to Gretna Green with his cousin, and deserted by his wife, Byron lived in a virtually denuded Newstead for the closing years of his life, in the hope that his grandson William John Byron would eventually inherit. But fate was to take a curious turn when that unfortunate gallant succumbed to a cannon ball at the siege of Calvi in 1794 and Newstead and the remaining family property descended to the fifth Lord's ten-year old great-nephew George Gordon Byron, the future poet, whom the former had never met. Due to various quirks in the family settlement, and the fifth Lord's numerous land sales, which Buckett explores in some detail, Byron inherited the estate both debt-free and in fee simple. The subsequent history of Newstead offers an exemplary case of precisely why the device of strict settlement was such an important means of restricting the ambitions of an heir for whom a sense of family responsibility and trusteeship remained forever on the back burner.

Byron, of course, in addition to having a towering ego and a libido to match, was a major poet of enduring genius. Following his return from Europe and the publication of *Childe Harold* in 1811, his dizzy literary career was launched, and with the appearance of the *Bride of Abydos* and *The Corsair* two years later he had become the toast of London and the possessor of debts of some £20,000. Whatever his qualities as a poet, his concern for business was vestigial and (for all his protestations in *Don Juan* and other works) his interest in the management of Newstead limited. Indeed, he seems to have regarded his landed property as little more than a milch cow from which his various agents (to a greater or lesser degree corrupt) could raise the wherewithal to enable him to pursue his epicurean lifestyle and operate the legerdemain required to keep his creditors at bay. In 1815 Byron left for Europe (under a haze of suspicion of all manner of salacious scandals) on a journey which was to take him to Italy and finally to his romantic apotheosis in Greece in 1824. As his creditors bayed and his finances descended further into

turmoil, so his love affairs flourished and the poetry poured from him. Meanwhile he bombarded his lawyers and agents with a mass of letters, in turns demanding and accusatory, but all with the ultimate objective of securing funds. His correspondence over the sale of property to secure cash emphasizes the point that however worthy the virtues of patrimony, matrimony and parsimony in underpinning the financial bona fides of an estate, an owner prone to profligacy can readily overturn the steadfastness of generations. After several abortive attempts to dispose of the property, Newstead and its 3200 acres was finally sold in 1817 to one of Byron's old school friends, Colonel Thomas Wildman, who subsequently spent lavishly in restoring the house and land. Ironically, especially since Byron cynically sold off portraits and heirlooms in addition to real estate, Newstead survives today largely because Wildman and subsequent owners developed the property as a shrine to the poet. The house eventually passed into the care of Nottingham City Council in 1931 through the good offices of that extraordinary philanthropist, Sir Julian Cahn, something of an unsung hero whose many financial contributions to the national good included the refurbishing of Trent Bridge cricket ground and the facilitating of Sir George Stapledon's remarkable land reclamation works in Cardiganshire.

John Beckett has produced in this book not only a vital source work for future Byron scholars, but a significant addition to the literature of eighteenth-century estate finances, more especially insofar as Byron's experience highlights the absolute importance of the owner's personal attention to his patrimony. Beckett's text is based on a rich variety of primary sources and is constructed on a massive reading of accounts, perusal of business letters and pouring-over of legal documents. It is a worthy work and a testament to the assiduous scholarship of the author and his assistant Sheila Aley. Despite the occasional irritating Americanisms, the mis-spellings of place and personal names and the *longueurs* almost inevitable in a book crammed with financial detail, it will prove an invaluable text for all interested in the economic and socio-cultural history of the later eighteenth century. Readers will, of course, realize that George Gordon, Lord Byron was different from other men. If, like the character in the Book of Ecclesiastes, he had been yoked to the plough and his talk was of bullocks, he would probably not have enriched the canon of English literature with such felicity. After all, as he noted in *Don Juan* with respect to marital fidelity:

Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,  
He would have written sonnets all his life?

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PATRICK POLDEN, *Peter Thellusson's will of 1797 and its consequences on Chancery law* (The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002). v + 484 pp. £79.95.

Once known as the most famous will in the world, Peter Thellusson's will has nevertheless had to wait for more than two hundred years before a book has been devoted to it. The will was famous for two rather different reasons. For a while contemporaries thought that it might pose a threat to the established social order, for it provided that the Thellusson fortune from trade and finance should be invested in land, and the income should be invested in more land to accumulate during the lives of his three sons and six grandsons, and on the death of the last of these nine lives the accumulated property should be divided into equal shares for the three eldest male lineal descendants of his three sons. Since the youngest grandson was *en ventre sa mere* when his grandfather died, the accumulation would continue for an entire lifetime before anyone could inherit the estates, and it was supposed that by then these would have grown to such a vast size that they would eclipse the grandest of the ducal estates. Precisely because the will disinherited the sons and grandsons, the family was bound to challenge it, and for a very long while, little short of 60 years, the Thellusson will was in Chancery. Practically every lawyer of note and every Lord Chancellor had a finger in the case, and many have thought it was the model for Dickens's *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce* (the case of William Jennens, who died in 1798, may have a better claim; claimants to part of the Jennens fortune were still appearing over a hundred years later).

Peter's sons tried to have the will set aside on the grounds that it ran foul of the rules against perpetuities, but much as some of the judges in the Chancery court may have wished to strike it down on social and moral grounds – that it amounted to an 'unnatural' disinheritance – they were obliged to uphold it on legal grounds since it did not attempt to tie up the estate beyond the term of lives in being. Loughborough, as Chancellor, delivered judgement upholding the will in 1799, and an appeal to the House of Lords was finally rejected in 1806. Meanwhile Loughborough as a cabinet minister, fearing that Thellusson had invented a device for the delayed action destruction of the power of the territorial aristocracy by the power of new money at compound interest, had put through the so-called Thellusson Act in 1800 'to prevent the effects of posthumous avarice' by limiting the right to provide for the accumulation of the income from real or personal property to a period of 21 years from the grantor's death. This was the effect of the will on statute law. Its effects on Chancery law are not so simple to detect.

Polden tells the story as legal history as well as family

history, and provides abundant information on all the leading cases affecting perpetuities, trusts, lineal male descendants, contingent remainders, and the like, but to the layman it seems that the Thellusson case was subjected to the established rules and doctrines and did not produce any development of them. It is true that because the will had been contested in Chancery the trust created by it was 'in Chancery' throughout its life, so that every decision by the trustees – not merely the big ones of what lands to purchase on what terms, but the minor ones on what repairs to carry out at what costs – had to be approved by a Master in Chancery. This was a slow and costly process, and the publicity attracted by this particular case may well have contributed to the pressure, eventually successful, for the reform of Chancery procedures. That, however, appears to be the limit of its 'consequences on Chancery law'.

As family history the book provides exhaustive information on Peter Thellusson's forebears as well as on all his descendants, in the remorseless detail which family historians find irresistible. The big disappointment is that very little can be said about the core operations of the will-trust as purchaser and manager of landed estates. Polden records the bare bones, concluding that by 1833, when some of the more irksome features of the trust were removed by a private estate act, the great accumulation had become a harmless laughing stock since instead of performing like some giant snowball threatening to crush the old aristocracy it had produced fat pickings for lawyers and precious little land. In fact by the time the accumulation ended with the death of the last of the 'measuring lives' in 1856 over £1 million had been laid out in the purchase of over 30,000 acres, not a spectacular outcome for a fortune valued at about £500,000 in 1797, but not negligible. Polden perhaps tends to underestimate its importance because in comparing the trust estates with long-established great estates an extra nought has strayed into the rental of the Duke of Bedford's estates in the home counties which he puts at £300,000. In the event there were only two eligible male lineal descendants of Peter Thellusson living in 1856, and they each inherited sizeable estates. One, centred on Rendlesham in Suffolk, went to the third Lord Rendlesham, grandson of Peter's eldest son, and the second, with a seat at Brodsworth near Doncaster, to Charles Sabine Thellusson, grandson of Peter's youngest son (the middle son died unmarried). The Rendlesham side of the family sold up in 1921. In the Second World War the land and house were swallowed by the U.S. Bentwaters airfield and no trace remains. Charles Sabine, on the other hand, employed the Tuscan architect Chevalier Casentini to build a splendid new house at Brodsworth, subsequently both supported and undermined by coal workings.

Brodsworth was given to English Heritage in 1988, and sensitively restored it has become Lucinda Lambton's favourite country house. Could Peter Thellusson have wished for a more memorable legacy?

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SUSANNA WADE MARTINS, *The English model farm.*

*Building the agricultural ideal, 1700–1914* (Windgather

Press, 2002). xiv + 242 pp. 21 plates; 105 figs. £18.99.

In an important and timely reassessment of the model farmsteads consciously built and planned as complete units, but often dismissed as trivial and impractical, this volume builds on an English Heritage survey of planned and model farmsteads. Research on surviving examples or documentary references has identified over eight hundred sites widely distributed over England's arable and mixed farming regions.

The author identifies the preconditions necessary for the movement, unique to Britain, to develop: the rise of the great landlords; the development of leases; the establishment of the landlord and tenant system, which split the use of capital between land and buildings on the one hand, and stock, crops, labour and manures on the other. Though much landlord wealth came from outside agriculture – property, mining, manufacturing, banking and shipping – the scale of investment suited only estates of over 3000 acres which incorporated mixed farms of over 200 acres.

Many great estates have archives of plans and documents, enabling their steadings to be precisely dated and firmly attributed not only to nationally-known architects such as Samuel Wyatt but also to versatile provincial land agents and architects like John Douglas in Cheshire and Frederick Chancellor in Essex. In some cases, sources of ideas and designs can be linked to the work of contemporary architectural and agrarian writers or to the RASE farm prize competitions. A strength of the study is that it avoids concentrating on well known examples and features estates, such as the Strutt farms in Derbyshire, which are little-known outside their own locality.

The emphasis is on motivation, design, and function, rather than structural technicalities. With an eye for practical detail, the author clearly elucidates the development and evolution of farmstead layout, showing the favoured courtyard arrangement to have originated in the combined influences of medieval English traditions and the Palladian villa farm.

The earliest phase, 1790–1840, affected newly-enclosed or reclaimed land which awaited infrastructure, notably in Northumberland and East Yorkshire, where labour was scarce due to industrialization. Cereals were the main

enterprise, hungry for manure produced by yarded cattle. The study highlights the distinction between horse-powered threshing in the mechanized north of England and hand-power in the labour-surplus south. Siting of motive power is shown to influence the orientation of the barn in relation to the yard. Wherever landlords were transforming estates, landscape enhancement with classical or picturesque designs, often sourced from pattern books, was part of the project. The freshness of the newly-built farmsteads is recaptured in the high quality colour photography.

Dr Wade Martins considers mid-nineteenth century examples, especially of the decades 1850–1870, to be of most value to agricultural historians. In this ‘industrial phase’ utility was the priority and technological advance more widespread, leading to greater involvement in planning by land agents and engineers. More livestock accommodation, especially for beef cattle, prompted renewed interest in mechanized crop and feed processing, efficient process flow, and economy of labour. In the late nineteenth century, highly specialized dairying farmsteads were constructed in districts convenient to urban markets, such as Cheshire. There was marked interest in reducing building and maintenance costs, seen in the popularity of iron-framed barns clad with corrugated iron. Planned and model farms were now widespread in mixed farming areas and, though not necessarily profitable, the innovation was known and potentially influential countrywide.

Although the complete database is located in the National Monuments Record, county summaries describe the more important examples. However, a differently arranged index would have improved the book as a working tool. Sites are currently indexed firstly by parish, then holding, then county. If re-ordered by county/parish/holding, the index could be more easily used in conjunction with the county synopses. Regrettably, proof-reading has been lax. There are spelling and captioning errors and, more seriously, a number of references in the notes are missing from the bibliography.

A wealth of carefully-chosen photographs and plans, combined with textual descriptions, make the farmsteads accessible, illustrate the dovetailing of enterprises and allow exploration of the relationships between the different functional parts. The plans emphasize the sharp contrast between the adaptable general purpose buildings of today and the highly specialized structures with precisely-named functions of the planned and model steadings.

Concisely summarized chapters trace factors which emphasize regional and sectoral differences within English farming, set in a clear context of time, place and personages. The author has produced an accessible, reasonably-priced source book which teases out the

influences behind the sometimes fanciful facades whilst bringing out the social, economic and agrarian background.

JOAN E. GRUNDY  
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IAN PACKER, *Lloyd George, Liberalism and the land. The land issue and party politics in England, 1906–1914* (Boydell / The Royal Historical Society, 2001). xii + 222 pp. £35.

One of the great paradoxes of late Victorian and Edwardian political history is that at a time when Britain was the most urbanized large country in the world, and when agriculture was rapidly losing its economic significance, land reform should have become a key arena of party conflict between Liberals and Conservatives. Historians have by no means ignored this, but most accounts (E. D. Steele’s *Irish land and British politics* or Roy Douglas’s *Land, people and politics*, for example), have focused largely on the role of the ‘Celtic fringe’ in pushing land reform up the political agenda. This can lead to the conclusion that land reform was not an important independent element within English politics and that in this respect at least late nineteenth-century British politics was driven by the agendas of the ‘periphery’ of the United Kingdom. Ian Packer’s study provides an important corrective to this in offering the first detailed study of role of purely English land reform.

*Lloyd George, Liberalism and the land* is attractively produced, fluently written and carefully researched. It provides the most detailed account available in print of Liberal policy on land reform between 1906 and 1914, and offers a significant reassessment of the role of land reform within the party, arguing that commitment to land reform, although long-lasting, was less deep-seated than many have supposed. Fully-fledged land reformers constituted a small and divided minority within the party. Some adhered to Henry George’s ‘single tax’ on land values, to replace all other taxes, but most avoided what was seen as an extreme position and until the early years of the twentieth century the single-taxers could only count on the support of one MP, the maverick William Saunders. Others favoured leasehold reform but this group was largely confined to London and a few other large cities where leasehold rather than freehold was the dominant form of tenure. The persistence and prominence of land-reforming policies within the party are to be explained, Packer argues, by short-term electoral and parliamentary exigencies rather than ideological principle. In some ways, this downplays the significance of land reform within the Liberal Party. But Packer’s account offers no support for the argument that land reform was a political irrelevance, indicative only of the

exhaustion of the late Victorian Liberal Party and of its increasing distance from its working-class supporters. On the contrary, Packer shows that land reform achieved prominence within Liberal policies between 1906 (and earlier) and 1914 as a pragmatic response to party divisions and to the perceived need to make inroads into rural constituencies through attracting the votes of agricultural labourers (and at times even farmers). This strategy had varying success – the Liberal government of 1892–95 received scant reward from the rural electorate for passing the 1894 Local Government Act (which created parish councils and facilitated allotment provision), whilst the 1906 government fared little better with its 1907 Smallholdings Act. Between 1909 and 1914, however, land reform paid dividends for the Liberal Party and would probably have produced electoral gains in rural areas in the 1915 election had the First World War not intervened. A particularly interesting feature of Packer's argument at this point is his assessment of Lloyd George's 1914 budget, which included site value rating proposals. The recent consensus has been that the inherent complexity of site value taxation and the carelessness with which Lloyd George put his proposals together caused a serious reverse for the cause of land reform, from which it might not have recovered even had war not foreclosed the issue. Packer rejects this, arguing that at most the treatment meted out to the 1914 budget would have forced Lloyd George to delay introducing his local authority grant and site value rating scheme by a matter of a few months.

Packer displays so much careful scholarship that it would be ungenerous to cavil at his book for failing to do things it did not set out to do. But it is right to point out that this book is essentially a detailed monograph on Liberal land policy with respect to England between 1906 and 1914. To set this in context, Packer's work (as he would be the first to accept) needs to be supplemented with older accounts – Green on Conservative and Tichelar on Labour policy, Ward's regrettably unpublished PhD thesis for the Land Nationalisation Society and the 'single taxers' of the English Land Restoration League, Douglas for his emphasis on the 'Celtic fringe' and for a longer-term perspective. Valuable though it is to isolate and explicate the specifically English component of land reform, the political profile of the issue only really makes sense when seen in this broader context. Nevertheless, *Lloyd George, Liberalism and the land* marks an important advance in our understanding and should be on the bookshelves of anyone with an interest in early twentieth-century politics, Liberalism or land reform.

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NICHOLAS MANSFIELD, *English farmworkers and local patriotism, 1900–1930* (Ashgate, 2001). xiii + 227 pp. 10 illus; 3 maps. £40.

Writing on the history of the English farmworker and his politics has concentrated overwhelmingly on the nineteenth century and particularly on the period between 1870 and 1914. The reasons for this are obvious enough. Especially for the historian of organized labour or of working class radicalism, this was the heroic period when the rural poor apparently threw off their bondage in the revolt of the field. For the same reasons, contemporary observers suddenly became interested in the newly-liberated Hodge and produced a mass of material, which makes the period one of the best documented in the labourer's history.

This concentration on the period of Arch's union is made even narrower by a concentration on the cereal-growing areas. Even where studies have moved outside the south and east of Britain they have, as with Caunce on Yorkshire and Carter or Devine on Scotland, remained focused on the larger farm units usually associated with arable farming. Again the reasons for this are clear enough. Nineteenth-century studies of the rural poor frequently have worked within a paradigm which saw a movement from a 'pre-class' social situation dominated by tiny producers and farm servants to a 'class' society dominated by landless 'proletarians' with nothing to sell but their labour power and no relationship between them and their employers but the cash nexus. It was on the large farms of the arable areas, especially those of the eastern side of Britain, that this was most obvious.

However, this version of the farmworkers history looks increasingly unlikely when we move away from these areas and this period – which is what Mansfield has done in this fine, illuminating, and very useful book. Born in and shaped by East Anglia, Mansfield is Salopian by adoption, and although he frequently glances over his shoulder at Norfolk, and especially at his Cambridge city family, it is Shropshire which lies at the core of this work. Here is a country, which, in most respects, is completely different from those studied by most historians of the farmworker and especially of farmworkers' trades unions. Yet, as Mansfield shows, in the early twentieth century Shropshire was the strongest union area in Britain after Norfolk. However, this was a different kind of unionism. Substantial numbers of rural workers were organized not into the farmworkers' union, the National Union of Agricultural Workers, but in the general labourers' union, the Workers' Union, which was dominated, even in Shropshire, by industrial or semi-industrial workers. As a result, even in periods of sympathetic local leadership, the interests and concerns of the farm labourer were all too often secondary to those of the more powerful

industrial sections. Further, the Workers' Union and the National were, in pre-Bridlington days, constantly at odds over recruitment and joint actions, with the Workers' Union often taking a much less progressive path despite its radical history.

Although the Great War saw union growth, as elsewhere in the rural districts, the division between the NUAW and the WU hampered a unified campaign. Further, the roots of radicalism in the co-ops and the new Labour Party were much shallower than elsewhere. As a result, the radicalizing effect of the war was short lived, especially in the face of falling wages after 1920 and the end of the Wages Board in 1920. The NUAW, with a much stronger local village base than the WU, fared better, but even here losses in membership were dramatic.

Most important of all, Mansfield sees the 1920s as a period in which older paternalist institutions were either revived or found their way into 'new' social organizations and rituals like the village hall or Armistice Day. It was here that 'local patriotism' – a sense of supra-class allegiance based upon the village – found its strongest expression. By the end of the 1920s, the county-wide celebration of Armistice Day brought into even the smallest village a 'new national occasion' and 'new village institutions' which were 'profoundly conservative' (p. 184).

In the 1920s and the 1930s, Shropshire, like most of rural England, returned Conservative MPs. Despite pre-war Union strength, Labour was only victorious once, and that was in the semi-industrialized Wrekin constituency in 1929. Local patriotism was at the base of this success, but on it was built a powerful Tory political organization, which managed to capture (or perhaps recapture) the local patriotism of rural districts for its own political ends. Despite the War and trades unionism's effects on the county, in Shropshire, as in most of rural Britain, the farmworker saw his political home within Conservatism rather than within Socialism, even in the diluted form offered by the Labour Party.

This is a complicated and interesting book. Its central argument, that local patriotism and the organizations associated with it before and, crucially, after the Great War shaped the social and political behaviour of Shropshire farmworkers, is well made and challenges many assumptions. What we need now is more local and national studies of this forgotten workforce in the twentieth century to see if Mansfield's findings are replicated elsewhere.

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## Elsewhere and General

DIANA WOOD, *Medieval economic thought* (CUP, 2002).  
xii + 259 pp. £40 (hbk); £14.95 (pbk).

Diana Wood's introduction to the economic thought of medieval Europe is the latest volume to appear in the excellent CUP Cambridge Medieval Textbook series. Although the book traces the origin of medieval economic thought in the work of Aristotle, the Bible, the Church Fathers and Roman law, it particularly concentrates on the period from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. One of its main aims is to relate the fundamental aspects of pre-Reformation economic thought to the actual economic practice of the day. To explore this relationship between theory and practice, Dr Wood draws on examples from all over western Europe although her main focus is on English and Italian developments. The book begins with a discussion of how medieval thinkers were able to reconcile the existence of private property with the common possession of the earth laid down in natural law. It then moves on to attitudes to poverty and charity; looks at views of money as a measure of value and as a commodity with its own value; examines the regulation of weights, measures and coinage; surveys opinions of trade and identifies the early development of mercantilist thought; analyses the doctrine of the just price and the just wage; and finally offers two chapters tracing the history of medieval attitudes to usury.

The book has a useful appendix with notes on key authors and works referred to in the text, provides a glossary of technical terms and includes a valuable bibliography of primary and secondary sources. Its argument is clearly signposted and its varied subject-matter is given a coherence by its stress on recurrent themes such as the need for justice in economic relations, justice being defined in terms of the Aristotelian virtuous 'mean' between two extremes. Student readers of the book will be grateful for the clarity and logical structure with which it puts across some extremely technical aspects of medieval law and theology whilst their teachers will profit from its learning and scholarship. Particularly valuable is Dr Wood's emphasis on the wide range of conflicting economic opinions which were put forward by theologians and lawyers in the middle ages as is her discussion of the economic attitudes implicit in contemporary legislation and everyday life.

Surprisingly, perhaps, given the importance of the church as a landowner within medieval society, it seems from Dr Wood's account that medieval economic thinkers had little to say about actual agricultural production since most of her discussion centres on of issues related to commerce and money. However, the emphasis placed by recent scholars on the impact of commercialization

on medieval agriculture means that these are now matters of prime interest to readers of this journal. In her preface, Dr Wood notes how, following advice from readers of her first draft, she had to abandon the assumption that it would be possible to 'write about economic thought in isolation from economic practice' (p. ix). Nevertheless, it is likely to be this aspect of her work which readers of this journal would have liked to have seen developed in even more detail. Of course, this matter raises questions which have been debated since the time of Max Weber's 'Protestant ethic' thesis and beyond. As Dr Wood says, the medieval church's otherworldly teachings would, if they had been put into practice, have 'put a firm brake on economic development' and would have inhibited the growth of the 'commercial or entrepreneurial attitude necessary for economic take-off' (pp. 3-4). Yet, in reality, this does not seem to have been the case. Rather, the economy changed and the attitude of scholastics changed with it. As Dr Wood concludes, whereas political ideas often anticipate actual practice, in the economic realm, ideas tend to trail behind reality (p. 208). Yet, in that case, it seems that the scholastic theories and attitudes set out in such detail here would have had little real economic impact and become chiefly an aspect of the history of ideas. Thus, if we hypothesized a counterfactual situation in which there was no scholastic economic theory, would the medieval economy have been significantly different apart, perhaps, from the extent of its production of parchment and ink? Similarly, whilst one of the strengths of Dr Wood's book is its insistence that there was no single economic teaching amongst medieval thinkers, the fact that medieval scholars and lawyers could not agree on what kind of economic behaviour was moral or licit seems to make the gap between theory and practice all the more marked. Was it, therefore, the attitudes implicit in everyday economic practice and in contemporary legislation, rather than the explicit theorizing of theologians, which had the greatest impact on economic reality? Of course, a definitive resolution to the debate which has raged for the century since Weber's work is unlikely. Nevertheless, flagging up these issues and the historiography which goes with them might have strengthened Dr Wood's book even further.

However, it would be wrong to end on a negative note. In its range and clarity, *Medieval economic thought* is an excellent introduction to its topic. If Dr Wood's volume encourages historians of the medieval economy to turn their attention to the impact of contemporary teachings and economic attitudes, it will more than have served its purpose.

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JOSÉ MIGUEL MARTÍNEZ CARRIÓN (ed.), *El nivel de vida en la España rural: siglos XVIII-XX* (Publicaciones Universidad de Alicante, 2002) 734 pp. €30.

This weighty edited volume offers a number of new and valuable insights into the recently-initiated debate on the standard of living in rural Spain from the eighteenth century down to the Franco era. Following an excellent introduction by José Miguel Martínez Carrión, the work is divided into four sections on agricultural wages and the cost of living, consumption and reproduction, health and stature, and child labour and education. Perhaps the main conclusion of the dozen contributions is that, notwithstanding modest advances that were made during the first third of the nineteenth century, the living standards of Spanish peasants and agricultural labourers deteriorated significantly over the period 1840-70, while further notable progress was achieved between 1900 and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

Traditionally, Spanish scholars have emphasized the poverty of the rural population in the contemporary period which was seen as a consequence of the backwardness of Spanish agriculture. The disentailing legislation of the mid-nineteenth century and the failure of the Second Republic's agrarian reform legislation in the 1930s are frequently portrayed as lost opportunities to improve the welfare of the nation's downtrodden peasantry. Spanish farmers, James Simpson informs us, indulged in a 'long siesta' from the 1760s to the 1960s. That said, agricultural historians south of the Pyrenees point out a number of positive factors at this stage including the adaptation of Spanish farmers to new opportunities provided by the market, the versatility of individual sectors and the emergence of regional specialization. Most commentators, moreover, now accept the revisionist picture of significant advances in Spanish agriculture during the early twentieth century, above all in horticulture and livestock farming.

The various contributors to this volume agree on a number of points. Firstly, it is not possible to speak of 'Spanish agriculture' as such, but rather of a variety of different 'agricultures' based on dissimilar environments and different types of labour organization, etc., all of which influenced the standard and quality of rural life. Secondly, while market integration undoubtedly brought about an improvement in peasant living standards in the long term, in the short and medium terms it could also lead to a widening of the gap between social groups. Many rural Spaniards lost out. For them, the development of markets entailed an increase in debt as usury became a common feature of rural society. This was partly due to the requirement to buy in farm inputs such as tools, machinery, seeds and livestock. Hence we arrive at the seemingly paradoxical situation where the

rise of agrarian capitalism in the middle decades of the nineteenth century resulted in falling consumption amongst the rural population – as a greater part of the harvest was directed towards the market in order to pay off debts – worsening diets, malnutrition and higher mortality rates. Thirdly, institutional factors had an important effect on the quality of life. For example, the parcelization of land in Atlantic Spain was to prove a serious obstacle to agricultural development and the welfare of peasant families while, in the case of Catalonia, the practice of sharecropping resulted in higher-than-average living standards.

Among the many interesting findings of these studies are new data on the height of different social classes and education levels. New research demonstrates that children born in rural districts before the 1880s were on average three centimetres shorter than their urban counterparts. Not until the 1920s and 1930s was there any significant convergence in the height of Spanish children thanks to a combination of more widespread economic growth and the appearance of welfare institutions. On the thorny question of truancy and high levels of peasant illiteracy, one writer argues that the increasing need to supplement family incomes, together with pitiful education facilities, led parents to keep their children away from school. In addition, an impoverished state made little provision for the education of girls. Overall, this pioneering work reflects the beginnings of a real debate on the standard of living in rural Spain in its widest sense. It also contains a useful statistical appendix on agricultural wages by province and an exhaustive bibliography.

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JESÚS IZQUIERDO MARTÍN, *El rostro de la comunidad. La identidad del campesino en la Castilla del Antiguo Régimen* (Consejo Económico y Social, Comunidad de Madrid, 2001). 795 pp. €9.

Jesús Izquierdo Martín's well researched monograph on the history of rural Castile from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries focuses on the peasant community of Spain's northern meseta. In particular, he is concerned with the question of peasant identity and for this purpose uses the tools of sociology and social anthropology. What started off as a study of the monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial was later widened to incorporate ninety-two small communities in the provinces of Madrid, Avila, Segovia, Guadalajara and Toledo. Most of these communities, though far from stagnant, maintained a population of less than 250 inhabitants throughout the three-century period, while their economic stability was closely linked to the preservation of communal lands. What should be of most interest to readers of the *Review*

are the more empirical sections of the book. Not least, Izquierdo stresses the low esteem which the peasant community of rural Castile continually attached to technological innovation. This negative attitude was mostly based on the survival of traditional values that placed an enormous emphasis on the practices of one's ancestors in a world where time immemorial seemed vastly more important than an uncertain future. In the social sphere, he argues, the peasantry's strong sense of belonging to a local community took clear precedence over such matters as class. Competition was rife between neighbouring towns and villages. Yet, within the same community different classes or factions generally co-operated with one another, even if most people could be classified as peasants (*campesinos*). Among the consequences of this localism was that outsiders were often denied access to markets of which they were not considered to be members, thereby severely limiting the possibilities of social change in early-modern Castile. At the same time, the evidence reveals a constant struggle for recognition within particular groups – an indication that these small peasant communities were by no means static or self-stabilizing. During the nineteenth century, the triumph of liberal individualism placed these communities on the defensive. Many local communities began to fragment after the 1850s. Even so, not until after the Spanish Civil War – and the imposition of urban values by the Francoist New Order – did real change occur in rural Castile, as resources finally became available for the 'systematic conversion of peasants into citizens'. Once converted into citizens, in the 1950s and 1960s, these men and women whose ancestors had once proudly proclaimed the sovereignty of their villages in the face of urban civilization set off on a one-way journey to the big cities. With its detailed archival research and extensive bibliography, this pioneering volume enhances our understanding of rural life under the Old Order in early-modern Castile.

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KARL DITT, RITA GUDERMANN and NORWICH RÜSSE (eds), *Agrarmodernisierung und ökologische Folgen: Westfalen vom 18. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001). 812 pp. €67.40.

In the agricultural history of Germany, as in that of Britain, the study of the interaction between agriculture and the natural environment is still only an emerging area of interest. On that ground alone a volume actually devoted to the theme of agriculture and ecology in Westphalia, a region of north-western Germany, would be most welcome. Unfortunately, very little space is given here to that subject. Some of the introductory essays to

the lavishly illustrated tome reflect older preoccupations in the discipline from a national perspective. Rolf Gehrmann looks at demographic theory and agricultural development and Rita Gudermann is concerned with the location and impact of a supposed 'take-off' in nineteenth-century German agriculture. Karl Ditt on twentieth-century agriculture, agricultural policy and environmental protection and Jürgen Büschenfeld on the adoption of pesticides/herbicides since 1945 barely mention Westphalia. As a conclusion, Verena Winiwarter presents a general 'model' of the changing interaction of agricultural change, nature and rural society that is little more than a synthesized general depiction of the process. Norwich Büsse offers the national policy of the Green Party (*Die Grüne*) on agriculture and the environment.

There are several contributions on aspects of Westphalian agriculture: Friedrich Becks on the spatial development of agriculture from the 1970s, with superficial reference to the ecological consequences; Hansjörg Küster's very short overview of the impact of agricultural change on vegetation and landscape; Willi Obermann on the consolidation of holdings from the 1950s, ostensibly from the viewpoint of the nature protectionist; Burkhard Theine's essay on agricultural mechanization from the 1920s – which is otherwise little more than a disaggregation of the Westphalian from the national statistics; Paul Walter on land consolidation (of the medieval strips) in Westphalia, principally the legislation of 1953 and 1976 – with little space devoted to the environmental impact; Michael Kopsidis's application to Westphalia of Thünens 'isolated state' theory of proximity to the market as the determinant of the degree of intensification in agriculture – which merely mentions the natural environment; and Bernd Tenbergen's longer-term analysis of the period from the early nineteenth century, with local examples and including landscape change.

The really outstanding contributions to the volume are among the regional and local studies. Bernward Selter provides a superb analysis of the nineteenth-century transformation of the forest economy of south-west Westphalia. This involved the replacement to a large extent of mixed deciduous forested areas, which were integral elements of the agricultural economy, by monocultural coniferous forests of trees of uniform height, that came paradoxically to be protected under nature conservation laws. Georg Fertig contributes an excellent detailed study of the division of the commons in one village (although he is more concerned with the demographic impact rather than the direct environmental consequences). Similarly, Volker Lünemann presents what is essentially a demographic study of two villages in different soil areas, which contrasts their reactions to the hunger crises of the period 1800 to 1850.

Some of the local studies are only indirectly concerned with agriculture. They include the well-researched essay on the development of sewage farms by Andreas Dix. Unlike those of the cities, where the impulse to create them stemmed only from a rapidly growing volume of effluent, in rural Westphalia they were inspired by the urge to fertilize land and were associated with water meadows. Now almost all closed down, this early effort in recycling waste has left a legacy of land polluted by heavy metals. Curriculum change from the 1920s at Westphalian agricultural colleges, which also functioned as farm advisory centres, is covered in Peter Exner's contribution. The teaching programme in the Nazi era was characterized by a strange combination of emphasis upon farm technology and the 'museumalization' (*Musealisierung*) of peasant culture, with more time devoted to paramilitary sports and shooting practice. (The acquisition of milking machines was discouraged by the Nazis on ideological grounds – the sexual division of labour – and for employment-creation reasons.) After 1945, the time left vacant in the curriculum was principally occupied by commercial subjects (farm management and accounting). The contribution of Gefion Apple and Jan Carstensen is a description of the open-air museum at Detmold. Ulich Bangert focuses on nature conservation in respect of an area of less than seven square kilometres. Ulrich Harteisen's otherwise interesting study of the Senne area of east Westphalia has little to report on agriculture, let alone its impact on the environment. An area of extremely marginal sandy heath, historically the habitat of the hardy semi-feral Senne breed of horses, it was otherwise used by peasants of surrounding villages as a source of heather litter for cowsheds and some extensive grazing. From the later nineteenth century most of it became an army exercise ground. Agricultural change is irrelevant in Matthias Frese's otherwise interesting essay on tourism and the landscape in Westphalia, which is actually almost entirely an historical account of the promotion of tourism in the area. Similarly with Rolf Spittler's offering, supposedly on the demands of landscape-oriented tourism on the future of agriculture in Westphalia. The obvious point is made that tourists are not attracted by modern intensive agriculture, especially on the generally flat landscape of Westphalia. Otherwise, there is no discussion of the impact of tourism or agriculture on the environment and more material refers to the island of Rügen in the Baltic than to Westphalia. The joint contribution by Ulrich Hüpke and Jörg Haafke is on nature conservation in the Ruhr, the industrial and coal mining region partly in Westphalia, where retreating agriculture merely serves as the conservationist backdrop to the devastation inflicted by industrial pollution. The same applies with the

contribution by Ulrike Gilhaus on the withdrawal of the state between 1870 and 1900 from the administrative protection of agriculture from industrial pollution, ostensibly in Westphalia but actually in the Siegerland and Sauerland districts.

In spite of the obvious faults of the volume, the relevant essays do represent contributions to a new direction in German agricultural history, towards the study of the environmental and ecological impact of agricultural change in the past. The pity is that so many of the essays are so influenced by the old and now somewhat antiquated paradigms of climacterics, legislative enactments, land occupancy laws and customs, and Malthusianism.

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WILLIAM R. LEONARD and MICHAEL H. CRAWFORD (eds), *Human biology of pastoral populations* (CUP, 2002). xi + 314 pp. 38 tables; 66 figs. £55.

Nomadic pastoralism forms a basis for colourful and distinctive societies found in widely separated niches around the world: the Evenki reindeer herders of Siberia, the Sámi of Finland, Basque herders of northern Spain, the Kurds of northern Iraq, the Phala of Tibet, Turkana and other groups in East Africa and the Herero of Botswana and Namibia are examples discussed in this book. Such populations tend to be relatively well bounded and small, ideal laboratories for seeing the diversity of patterns of demography, disease, and genetic distinctiveness.

The difficulty, of course, is that each society is enormously complex and it is difficult to isolate the topics of a single paper. Michael Little's paper 'Human biology, health and ecology of nomadic Turkana pastoralists' is a striking example. The paper covers climate, ecology, food production, diet and nutrition, growth, health, activity, and morbidity and causes of death – all in thirty pages. Clearly the material requires a monograph for full presentation.

Similarly William Irons' paper, on Yomut family organization and demography, integrates ethnography, economic studies and a brief but clear review of the history of the Turkoman, focusing his understanding of all these aspects of the society on the status of women and the details of their lives as they contribute to mortality rates. The article by E. Kobylansky and I. Hershkovitz on 'History, demography, marital patterns and immigration rate in south Sinai bedouins' is an interesting account of the intersection of social structure and demography within an isolated set of small intermarrying populations. Goldstein and Beall's article on Tibetan nomadic pastoralism also makes good use of ethnographic materials. In general, the links between demography and social structure are well illustrated in this collection of essays.

Some of the other essays are on a totally different level of abstraction: Crawford *et al.* shift from lists of genetic alleles in very small groups to worldwide genetic distance analyses. Calderon uses current genetic analysis as an entry to inferential population history of the Basques. In both cases those particular local facts are used to produce very high level generalizations while many other known aspects of the populations are ignored.

Other articles focus more narrowly on health issues and are hard to integrate into a pattern. It is interesting to see that Sámi herders are approaching the health standards of the general Finnish population without giving up their distinctive way of life. Leonard and colleagues report very detailed data on food consumption of Evenki herders of Siberia, but do not expand the discussion into their overall health status, so that the importance of diet is not clear. Pennington finds that children in poor Herero households are taller, heavier and apparently better fed than those from cattle-rich households. Overall, the Herero children are no taller or fatter than the neighbouring !Kung hunter-gatherer children under age ten, although Herero adults are much taller than !Kung, and often obese. The findings are unexpected and unexplained.

The editors start the volume with a quote from Spooner (p. 2): 'there are no features of cultural or social organization common to all nomads or even that occur exclusively among nomads'. Each of the societies included in this book could usefully support a whole volume on their population and health: it overloads this volume to try to present enough description to make comparisons worthwhile. Hence, this volume of high-quality papers will be of most interest and reward to the specialists in nomadic pastoral societies who already have a lot of factual knowledge about these societies.

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PETER H. LINDERT, *Shifting ground. The changing agricultural soils of China and Indonesia* (MIT Press, 2000). xii + 351 pp. 49 tables; 23 figs. £30.95.

Lindert suggests that the cultivation of cropland soils in China and Indonesia has not been decreasing soil quality, except for reducing some nitrogen and soil organic matter. His arguments rest generally on the facts that the total number of hectares under cultivation in China and Indonesia have not declined over time and that phosphorus and potassium nutrients have increased in some soils. Several of the tables lacked sources and this was disappointing.

Although the net area under cultivation may remain the same in China and Indonesia, this conceals changes in the land used for crops from one year to the next. In

China, more and more forest land and grassland have been cleared and converted into cropland in recent decades. Soil scientists have reported that in northeast China soil erosion is serious on about 13.3 million ha. Fu Dexin and Tang Defu estimate soil erosion rates in the rolling land area of Songhua Jiang-Nenjiang plain, with 2 million ha of cropland, at 50 to 70 t/ha/yr. In this region of rich soils, farmed for only sixty to seventy years, 60 to 70 cm of thick black soil has been reduced to 20 to 30 cm. Further evidence of soil erosion in China is the soil deposited on Hawaii during Chinese spring cultivations each year (see Parrington *et al. Science* 264 (1983), pp. 195–7). In contrast to dryland crop production in China and Indonesia, the production of paddy rice suffers little or no soil erosion because the land is flat and covered by water for most of the time. In these circumstances, wind and rainfall energy have little or no effect on the soil.

Lindert's view that there has been little or no degradation of cropland soil in China is therefore at odds with the assessments of many soil scientists. Wen and Pimentel (in Tao *et al.* (eds), *Agriculture in China* (1998)) estimate that China loses about 5.5 billion tonnes of soil each year, while Zhang and others (*Land Degradation and Development* 8 (1997) pp. 1–16) report that the Yellow River transports approximately two billion tonnes of soil per year to the sea. Loss of vegetative cover is widespread in China, Indonesia, and other developing countries. With high population densities and shortages of forests to provide fuelwood, people are turning more to crop residues for cooking and heating. Wen (in Pimentel (ed.), *Soil erosion and conservation* (1993)) estimates that about sixty per cent of the crop residues in China are stripped from the land and burned for fuel. In areas where fuel wood and biomass are scarce, such as northwestern China, even the roots of grasses

and shrubs are collected and burned, thus intensifying soil erosion.

Lindert reports that nitrogen and soil organic matter have declined in some soils in China and Indonesia but that total phosphorus and potassium generally increased from 1950 to about 1985. In both countries, fertilizer use has increased significantly since the 1950s in an effort to feed rapidly growing populations. In China, cereal grain production doubled between 1965 and 1983. To achieve this increase in crop yields, fertilizer inputs increased 7.5 fold, insecticide use increased two fold, diesel fuel use six fold, and electricity inputs eleven fold. In China, yields per hectare for several crops are now higher than in the United States, but so too are inputs of fertilizer, pesticides, and irrigation water.

The loss of soil organic matter and the loss of soil nutrients due to soil erosion in China, Indonesia, and other nations is serious. Soil loss and degradation are of concern to everyone because more than 99.7 per cent of world food comes from the land and less than 0.3 per cent from the oceans and other aquatic ecosystems. The loss of soil and land degradation due to erosion are having a negative impact on world food supplies. In 2000, the World Health Organization reported that more than three billion people are malnourished worldwide. This is the largest number of malnourished people ever in history.

Lindert is to be complimented for examining the issue of soil loss and degradation in China and Indonesia, even though his conclusions appear to differ from those of soil scientists in China, Indonesia, and elsewhere. *Shifting ground* is well written and carefully illustrated. Economists, agronomists, soil scientists, biologists, engineers, and environmentalists should find the book interesting reading.

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