

Book Reviews

DON and PATRICIA BROTHWELL, *Food in Antiquity. A Survey of the Diet of Early Peoples*. Thames and Hudson, 1969. 248 pp. £2.10.

In this first comparative study of food in ancient and primitive societies Don and Patricia Brothwell have made a fascinating survey of the whole field of human diet. They have correlated information gleaned from archaeological remains of animals and plants with evidence from written records and pictorial representations to provide a concise world-wide reference work on the eating and drinking habits of early man, and on when different foods were first consumed.

As long as primitive man, like an animal, spent most of his working hours in search of food, he could not progress far towards civilization. This crude food gathering of the Palaeolithic age led to the hunting and fishing cultures of the Mesolithic period, which allowed a slow increase in population. But the first population explosion occurred following the Neolithic revolution, after it was discovered that food could be obtained by cultivating plants and domesticating animals. Important as domestication was in easing food supply and allowing settled communities the leisure that provided the basis of civilization, the authors perhaps devote too many pages and illustrations to it at the expense of food preservation and cooking, since domestication has been well covered elsewhere.

The survey of food sources starts with the utilization of mammals, and covers progressively simpler animals down to molluscs and insects. The authors point out that there is no place for a food bias in a collecting economy, and so virtually all animals that could be caught were eaten, from the elephant to the dormouse, later specially fattened in earthenware pots by the Romans.

Following domestication, animals would tend to be more valuable alive, and so emphasis would be placed on the preservation of meat—first by drying, then by smoking (was this discovery associated with cooking, could the Brothwells have told us more?) and later by

salting, to which they devote two pages plus maps showing the distribution of salt workings.

The authors mention the use of blood from living animals (not, however, tracing it to the modern black pudding), but are apparently unaware that some tribes actually cut flesh from living cattle, afterwards pinning the skin over the wound.

Cheese represents a method of preservation, and dairy products receive three pages; Pliny is quoted as saying that camel's milk is the sweetest. The abundance of olive oil in the Mediterranean region apparently lessened the importance of butter to the Greeks and Romans, and milk products appear to have reached their fullest development among the nomadic peoples of central Asia. Here milk was fermented to preserve it just as in the west fruit-juice was fermented for storage as wine.

Yoghurt is not mentioned, but the authors raise the fascinating possibility of bog butter being a study source of the hairs of ancient cattle. I am told, however, that in the Near East one detects butter made from sheep's milk by observing the fuzz of wool fibres seen when the edge is held against the light!

The survey continues through fowl, reptiles (snakes and crocodile eggs), amphibians, and the very important fishes to the invertebrates. Molluscs are easy to collect and have a high protein value, and their shells are found on many sites throughout the world, from earliest times, even when vertebrates are available. The authors tell us that the Romans cultured land snails in addition to oysters, the elaborate Roman recipe for a sauce containing herbs and spices to accompany them being given.

The eating of insects was common among Palaeolithic peoples. These have high food value: locusts for instance in addition to having 20 per cent fat, and 75 per cent protein are rich in minerals and vitamins. I have urged archaeologists to look out for the tiny remains of insects, and the Brothwells endorse this plea by entreating us to excavate carefully the abdominal region of skeletons in search of such remains, as well as fruit and cereal seeds. The

one skeleton I found apparently had nothing but plain soil in this region, neither had it any remains of clothing around the bones.

This level of investigation, however, requires an entirely new approach at the literally microscopic level, which the authors describe as having already been followed, along with chemical analysis, with coprolites.

Plants and plant products cover even more variety than animals from fungi to the carbohydrate-rich cereals. Honey is three-quarters sugar, and was its main source, at any rate in Europe until sugar cane was introduced by the Moors. Among the many intriguing facts recorded is that the practice of glazing ham with honey was begun by the Romans. The two natural and concentrated foods, milk and honey, are often linked in myths. Mead was the first intoxicating drink, and they claim that the accidental discovery of fermentation was probably made from the half-empty honey-pot left out in the rain, leading man to alcoholism and the illicit still! Other drinks covered are tea, coffee, and cocoa.

The introduction of the different cereals, wheat, barley, millet, rye, oats, rice, and maize, is dealt with in detail, and there are chapters on vegetables (pulses, roots, and tubers, green vegetables including asparagus, mustard, seaweed, and salad plants); fruit and nuts (bananas to pomegranates, dates, figs, grapes—and a description of the widespread eating of acorns); olives, oils, herbs, and condiments (all more ancient than one might imagine), and finally diet and disease (famine, dietary disorders, infant feeding, and food poisoning).

The book has a bibliography of 117 references and a good index, and is lavishly illustrated with 67 plates, 46 figures, and 7 tables. It is packed with interesting and valuable facts, and all in all gives an excellent coverage, providing a unique survey of the vast subject of food that has never before been attempted in one volume.

M. L. RYDER

L. P. WILKINSON, *The Georgics of Virgil: A Critical Survey*. Cambridge University Press, 1969. 364 pp. £4.

This is a work of major importance. Sur-

prisingly, in view of the interest taken in the poem by generations of English readers, it is also the first full-length study of the poem in the English language. Your reviewer's task is the strictly limited one of assessing what the author, a classical scholar already well known for the excellence of his critical work on Horace and Ovid,¹ has to tell us about the technical elements in the *Georgics*, and how the poet has moulded them into the framework of a great work of art. The title of the ninth chapter—'Agricultural Lore'—gives a clue to the author's approach. The *Georgics* is not to be regarded as a didactic poem about farming, but as a descriptive poem in which the techniques of farming take their natural place among the varied activities of the countryside, the dances and the merry-making, as well as the unremitting struggle to make nature yield up her bounty to the husbandman.

Two chapters, the fourth and the ninth, are of particular interest. In the former chapter, Wilkinson writes with authority on the complex problem of the structure of the poem, dismissing the more fanciful theories of some recent critics, and showing, with apt illustrations, how the poet's growing mastery over his artistic resources was applied to the handling of the often intractable material which his choice of theme imposed upon him. He then presents us with an admirable outline of the content and structure of the whole poem with its recurrent poetic themes and ingenious variations (ch. IV, pp. 76-107). Particularly felicitous is his analysis of Virgil's treatment of field-crop husbandry in Book I, lines 43-203, which is worked out in detail as a fine example of the poet's way of handling a prosaic subject. In the ninth chapter Wilkinson addresses himself directly to the reader who is attracted to the *Georgics* largely, or even primarily, by its natural history and agricultural lore. While modestly disclaiming any competence in the technical aspects of the subject, and relying on what seem to be the best authorities, he begins by warning the reader "not to credit Virgil with being either an expert husbandman or a keen observer of nature without first reading the agricultural authorities." Wise words indeed,

¹ *Horace and his Lyric Poetry*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1951; *Ovid Recalled*, Cambridge, 1955.

which may well lead to a renewal of interest in a long-neglected aspect of classical antiquity.¹

After a brief review of the technical sources, Wilkinson proceeds to examine a number of passages of varying length to illustrate both the poet's method and the shortcomings of his technical knowledge. Both here and in Chapter IV the commentary is conveniently arranged under broad headings, such as 'field crops', 'weather lore', and so on, and items dealing with the same topic in different parts of the poem are brought conveniently together.

Not least among the pleasures of this delightful and stimulating work are the author's own felicitous translations. The following passage (*Georg.* III, 75-88) is set beside its original in Varro's *De Re Rustica* to show what the poet has made of a prosaic list of the 'points' of a foal suitable for breeding (*RR* 2.7.5):

"The quality of the horse can be determined from the foal; if it has a *head* of moderate size and well-proportioned limbs, dark eyes, full nostrils, and close-set ears; the *mane* abundant, dark, slightly curling with very fine hair, *falling on the right side of the neck*; the chest broad and full, broad shoulders, *a fair-sized barrel*, the flanks converging towards the base, broad shoulder-blades, *preferably with a double spine* or at any rate with the backbone not projecting, tail full and somewhat curly, limbs straight and sloping evenly rather inwards than outwards, the knees round but not large, and tough hooves; the veins should be visible all over the body, since a horse with this feature is easily treated when sick. . . It is an indication of future quality if the colt, while out at grass with its mates, challenges them in racing or in other activities to show its superiority; if, *when the herd has to cross a river*, it runs with the leaders and does not look back at the rest."

"From the first a well-bred horse in the paddock picks his feet up higher than the herd and brings them down again lightly. He is first on the road, first to venture into menacing rivers and to entrust himself to the unknown bridge, nor is he startled by chance noises. His

neck is high, his head well-tapered, barrel short and back full-fleshed, his gallant chest rippling with muscles. . . Again, if the clash of arms sounds from afar off, he cannot keep still, ears pricking, limbs aquiver, and in his nostrils rolls the breath of pent-up fire. His mane is thick, and falls, when tossed, over his right shoulder. A double ridge runs along his spine. He digs into the ground, and his solid hoof thuds heavily."

Georg. III, 75-88.

There are few errors on the technical side: the most obvious is the statement on p. 242 that trees, apart from the vine and the olive, were a 'sideline'. But even modest farms needed plenty of cut timber for various purposes, and the leaves of deciduous trees, notably the elm, were vital as fodder in the lean months when there was little else to be had.

Space forbids analysis of the many good things in the final chapter, but readers of this journal will find much to interest them in Wilkinson's account of the later history of the *Georgics*, which provides a fitting conclusion to a book which is both illuminating and immensely readable.

K. D. WHITE

H. P. R. FINBERG, *West-Country Historical Studies*. David and Charles, 1969. 232 pp. £2.50.

Professor Finberg's new collection of essays consists of revised versions of his *Devonshire Studies*, considerably augmented by three further large-scale studies with a west-country bearing. The earlier work contains the seminal study of the open field in Devon, and the delicious essay on Abbot Bonus, undone by lack of money and excess of drink. It is a good story very well told, and more important than might appear at first sight. Historians are familiar with the eternal squabbles of monks and bishops over exemptions and precedence: this essay gives life to the legal issues and shows in a microcosm just what was at stake. Most important, however, are the new essays. St Patrick at Glastonbury, an O'Donnell lecture,

¹ Columella, the most important of the Roman authorities, still awaits a commentary in any language, and the last full-length study of Roman agriculture appeared as long ago as 1788 (Adam Dickson, *The Husbandry of the Ancients*, Edinburgh, 1788).

achieves the rare distinction of being both hard-headed and original on its thorny and cloudy subject. But it is the sixty pages of charter studies that have most relevance to readers of this review. In particular Professor Finberg has a general point to make about the principles of charter criticism which needs to be pondered over. He wishes to disagree with the line taken by Dr Chaplais in a number of recent studies, and he points to what he considers fundamental differences of method and approach which lie between their differing verdicts on particular charters. Dr Chaplais, it is well known, relies exclusively on diplomatic and palaeographic criteria, Dr Finberg, following Stenton, lays most weight on the *Sitz im Leben* of charters, in particular their topographical context. Dr Finberg scores what seems a bull's-eye in his discussion of the *Homme* Charter of 846. This is one of those mysterious charters in which a king—Æthelwulf of Wessex in this case—books an estate to himself. This charter has not seemed hitherto of very great importance; it amounts to a modest but unsensational grant of twenty hides. Dr Finberg has shown by following up the boundaries that this twenty hides amounted to "65,000 acres of the best land in Wessex." He argues, convincingly, that it was rich but unsettled land—it had been a frontier area—and this was the beginning of the process of settlement which culminated in the imposition of a much greater rate of assessment by the time of Domesday. The whole discussion is an exemplary reminder of the danger of treating hides as though they were units of area and it suggests that the topographical-historical discussion of the other charters, in which kings booked land to themselves, might elucidate this mysterious practice.

The essay on 'Fact and Fiction from Credition' seems to me less happy, especially Dr Finberg's defence of Crawford Charter IV, the first Sandford charter. This charter, Dr Chaplais—and myself—have argued, is a post-Conquest forgery. It seems to me that what is really and fundamentally at issue on the problem of charter-criticism is the assumption, made by Dr Chaplais, that charters are criminals in the dock, guilty until proved innocent, and the

assumption, made by Dr Finberg, that in the dock they should go but as innocent until proved guilty. In this case I should find for Dr Chaplais and against the authenticity of the Sandford charter although I would allow a little but not much mercy in the sentence, in view of Dr Finberg's topographical plea. The charter, according to Mr Ker as well as Dr Chaplais, is in an imitative script of much later date than it claims. It is not a cartulary copy but appears to be a genuine title-deed, sufficiently cleverly got up to deceive Stevenson. It is the only 'original' charter to abolish completely the common burdens; it is yet to be proved that this was ever done by any Anglo-Saxon king. It contains a number of other unique proposals which smell of the aftermath of the tenth-century reform to me. Dr Finberg, who is less interested in the inner life of monasteries than what went on in their fields, has overlooked the possibility that the charter was forged, not to deceive the king, but to improve the position of their *mensa* against the bishop. More important, it seems to me that these judicial approaches to charter criticism are beside the point. To judge a genuine instrument false, or, as is commonly done, to reject a genuine instrument altogether when its falsity is only partial, is tantamount to taking a piece of precious evidence and eliminating it from historical discussion as effectively as by burning it. Clearly, certainty will never be achieved. What we must seek is to reduce to a minimum the risk of either over-scepticism or over-credulity. We must, I believe, treat them as narrative sources are treated, to be tested line by line by every means available. In no sense are the diplomatic-palaeographical criteria privileged. It was exclusive reliance on these that induced Ewald and Drögereit to attribute CS 54, an obvious late forgery, to St Aldhelm. And they must be supplemented by considerations of context, especially the topographical context which is the lesson above all we need to learn from Dr Finberg. If we put Dr Chaplais's comments—and I may add mine—alongside Dr Finberg's on the Sandford Charter we shall, I think, see that it must be a forgery intended to deceive. Equally we shall also see what the motive of deception was, and, most

important, how far and with what degree of confidence its evidence may be used. It is too often forgotten that a forgery is evidence of something no less important than a genuine charter, and the function of criticism is to make the one as the other useful for the appropriate purpose. I have before, and shall probably again, point to the necessity of a study of the techniques of forgery in Anglo-Saxon diplomatic. Until we attempt such a study a dimension will be missing from our criticism. This is unfortunate because Anglo-Saxon charters can alone solve the basic questions of the social structure of early England, and its relationship to contemporary agriculture.

ERIC JOHN

J. Z. TITOW, *English Rural Society 1200-1350*.

Allen and Unwin, 1969. 208 pp. £2 cloth, £1.10 paper.

Dr Titow's book consists of a collection of documents chosen to illustrate the nature of the source material for the study of rural society at this period, and a long introduction. This includes some guidance as to the use of the documents, but is mainly taken up with a discussion of a number of the problems at present occupying economic and social historians of the period. The open-field system, population increase and land shortage, agricultural improvement, demesne cultivation and landlord investment, peasant status, and what Dr Titow dubs the standard of living controversy are amongst the topics dealt with. This part of the book is lively, clear, and thoughtful. It should provide an interesting introduction for those newcomers to the subject at whom, we are told, the book is primarily aimed, although they might find some preliminary reading necessary to get full advantage of parts of the discussion. There is also much to interest the specialist. Dr Titow briefly recapitulates the arguments, criticizes, often at some length and sharply, those historians he disagrees with, and gives his own opinions. These are often supported with new evidence from that veritable cornucopia of documents which survives from the estate of the Bishop of Winchester.

Many of the views Dr Titow expresses are already familiar from his previous, valuable

work, and much of the argument is convincing. Few would disagree with his criticisms of Professor Russell and Lynn White Jnr, who are singled out for particular attack. Nevertheless, there are several points in his discussion of the problems and sources which are worth taking up.

At several points Dr Titow emphasizes, perhaps in fact over-emphasizes, what he calls the business acumen of the landlords of the period. For example, their accounting system comes in for some praise which might mislead beginners. Not every historian, or for that matter, contemporary, has found the calculation of profits, or total production, from ministers' accounts as simple as Dr Titow seems to suggest, and it surely is significant that much greater emphasis is put on checking on manorial officers than on the calculation of profits, important though the former obviously was to absentee landlords. Also, it should be remembered that even the unusually sophisticated methods of profit calculation described by Dr Stone at Norwich Cathedral Priory showed grave flaws, at least in the early fourteenth century.

Dr Titow again praises the landlords when he raises the important question of their investment in their estates. He asserts that although investing only a tiny proportion of their estate incomes, they yet invested enough, that is as much as "the ceiling on what could usefully be spent on an estate" allowed, and, rather more vaguely, "enough to expand production or maintain it at as high a level as was possible in the circumstances." This seems doubtful and fits uneasily into Dr Titow's own thesis about the development of agriculture on the Winchester estates at this period. Surely more could usefully have been spent by most or all landlords on the wider application of a number of improvements found in the thirteenth century or soon afterwards? And should not the absence of more spectacular improvement in the thirteenth century rather be explained in terms of, for example, landlord mentality, social structure, easy availability of other sources of income, or the nature of the market for agricultural produce, than by reference to some insuperable technical limitations?

Dr Titow's own contribution and his summary of recent discussion of the peasant standard of living at the end of the thirteenth century is most useful and his conclusions convincing. However, one can accept these and still wonder if, concerned primarily to demonstrate wide-spread poverty, he dismisses too easily the possibility that non-agricultural incomes could be important to significant numbers of the peasantry. Off-farm opportunities for peasants would, admittedly, vary from region to region, and a supplementary income from industrial (or pastoral) activities, such as was clearly common in the forests, need not make a peasant smallholder rich. But the expansion of agriculture alone must have stimulated other industries. For example, the new barn whose construction is described in document 19 needed about 10,000 laths, 67,000 tiles, 70,000 pegs, and 67,700 nails, all goods typically made in the country.

The account of the cost of the new barn and those of new assarts and improvements on other Winchester manors and of St Giles's fair are interesting additions to the selection of examples of manorial documents—chiefly accounts, court rolls, and various types of survey—in the section devoted to documents. Many of these, like many of Dr Titow's examples in the Introduction, are from the Winchester estates. Designed for non-specialists, they are translated with the Latin included for doubtful passages.

There is much more of interest in the book. For example, Dr Titow adds to the fascinating body of information about the role of peasant widows, which he and Professor Postan have already provided, an inventory and valuation of the widows of Brent. Throughout, Dr Titow gets over admirably his own enthusiasm for what he shows to be an important period.

JEAN BIRRELL

R. E. F. SMITH, *The Enserfment of the Russian Peasantry*. C.U.P., 1968. 180 pp. £2.10.

This is a slim volume but it contains a wide-ranging and thought-provoking collection of documents of great interest to anyone concerned with the relationship of lords and pea-

sants in the Middle Ages, and the factors which led to the second era of serfdom in the seventeenth century. This development was completely at variance with that which occurred in western Europe and there is still plenty of scope for discussion of the reasons.

The problem is presented by means of a selection of Russian documents in English translation (and the English really is English; Professor Smith eschews the use of Russian terms wherever it is possible to employ an equivalent English one), each of which is preceded by some explanatory comment. In addition, an introduction, which is a joint effort by Professors Rodney Hilton and R. E. F. Smith, sets the problem in broader perspective; Professor Smith describes the political and economic history of Muscovy and summarizes the main social trends to be inferred from the documents; Professor Hilton explains the differences in the documentary evidence and the substantive condition of the peasantry in eastern and western Europe. The capable translations of Professor Smith and the crystal clear analysis of Professor Hilton together bring out both the similarities in the obligations of servile peasants in both halves of Europe, and the contrasted territorial circumstances. Western Europe was an old-settled, even in some places a congested, land by 1200; Russian villages were tiny oases in an expanse of forest and steppe. Western European landlords busied themselves with listing labour services and food rents in refined detail, while Russian landlords laboured to prevent, or at least to restrain, the mobility of peasants and to devise means of reclaiming those who fled their jurisdiction.

The rigour of servile obligations varied considerably from estate to estate in the Middle Ages—in the manner familiar in western Europe. Some landlords attracted tenants with special privileges and exemptions; some peasants had wrung rights to pass land to their heirs, and to move from one lord to another. But the growth of state power in the late fifteenth century was everywhere accompanied by a tightening of control by lords over their tenants. For example, the permitted movement of peasants from one estate to another began

locally to be associated with one season of the year only—around St George's Day (26 November); in 1497 it became the law of Muscovy in the Law Code of that year. Events were leading on inexorably to the second era of serfdom. But how is it to be fully explained? These documents are concerned with social organization, and they shed little light on farming systems. They show peasant communities with ample means of voicing their protests against coercive stewards and unjust landlords. Indeed, some of the most interesting documents are those written on tree bark by the peasantry and recovered by archaeologists, the earliest printed here dating from the late thirteenth century. Yet these communities lacked the power to resist enserfment. Why?

Professor Smith's final remarks seem to put the responsibility for enserfment on the growth of market demand and the growing maturity of the state machine. What he does not discuss is the commodity which was principally in demand. Was it grain? The second serfdom in eastern Europe seems generally to be associated with great grain-growing estates rather than with pastoral country. Thus East Germany affords one of the best-known examples of a territory where the demand for grain—from western Europe—played the major role in enslaving the peasantry. Poland offers a like example. But Muscovy, if Professor Smith is right, was different. The foreign demand for grain did not impinge much on its economy. Demand arose out of the military needs of the state. This must necessarily imply a considerable internal movement of grain and other food, similar to that which developed in England. The rise of the food market in sixteenth-century England is thought to have been deeply influenced by the demand for food to supply armies and the royal household. What then was the condition of Muscovy's internal trade in food when the peasants were submitted to a second serfdom? This book does not set out to answer such a question, but raises it indirectly. It is a most stimulating contribution to the comparative history of agrarian societies in Europe.

JOAN THIRSK

R. B. PUGH (ed.), *A History of the County of Dorset*, Vol. III. O.U.P., 1968. xiv+190 pp. £6.30.

The whole of this volume is devoted to the Dorset Domesday and Geld Rolls, translated by Ann Williams, who also contributes extensive introductions and notes. The editors of the corresponding volumes for Devon and Cornwall based their work on the Exeter Domesday, merely noting such variants as occur in the abbreviated Exchequer version, but as four-fifths of Dorset are missing from the Exeter manuscript, here the Exchequer version takes first place. The blurb on the jacket states that the Exeter Domesday, so far as it survives, is printed side by side with the Exchequer, and if this had been done it would have facilitated comparison between them; in fact, however, Exeter is printed after and below the corresponding paragraphs from the Exchequer.

The translation adheres faithfully and impenitently to the models which have been current in the Victoria County Histories for some three-quarters of a century. *Servi* are still disguised as "serfs," and *villani* as "villeins." This is nicely designed to mystify anybody who looks up "villein" in the Oxford English Dictionary and finds that it means "one of the class of serfs."

The introduction, running to 60 pages, provides a painstaking digest of the Domesday particulars. It is not clear why the writer considers it unlikely that the petty boroughs of Dorset had courts of their own; there is documentary proof that those of Devon already had them in 1018. One wonders whether the heads of the religious houses would have agreed that they "suffered no major upset" from the impact of Norman rule (p. 36). The enfeoffment of knights on their land, mentioned only two pages later, must have struck them as a grievous imposition, involving as it did a serious loss of revenue. On p. 41 the bishop's ship-soke is confused with his diocesan endowment.

The Victoria History may or may not be right in assigning the Geld Rolls to 1084 and rejecting the arguments for 1086, but it is simply not true that this is the "view of most scholars" today.

H. P. R. FINBERG

ARTHUR RAISTRICK, *West Riding of Yorkshire*.

Hodder and Stoughton, 1970. 192 pp., illustrated. £2.00.

CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, *Dorset*. Hodder and Stoughton, 1970. 216 pp., illustrated. £2.00.

Sixteen years ago Messrs Hodder and Stoughton launched a series of books dealing with the history of the English landscape county by county. They fixed the price at too low a figure to admit of satisfactory production, and the printing of the carefully chosen plates left nearly everything to be desired. Moreover they published the overall survey by the editor, Professor W. G. Hoskins, as an introductory volume, and as his book had all the hallmarks of a classic it naturally skimmed the cream off the subject and the market. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the venture came to an abrupt stop after only four counties had been dealt with. Those four volumes are still available, but the publishers—are they perhaps ashamed of past incompetence?—refrain from listing them as such.

The series has now been revived under the same editor but in a greatly improved format. No one is better qualified to cope with the West Riding than Dr Raistrick, the distinguished geologist and engineer, who has known the Riding all his life. The area extends over nearly 3,000 square miles, from the high fells bordering on Westmorland to the low-lying agricultural vales on the east, with vast industrial conurbations in between. The man-made history of this landscape is as diverse as its scenery is dramatic. To do justice to it, a writer needs wide knowledge, good judgement, and affectionate enthusiasm. Dr Raistrick has all three. They are notably in evidence in his final chapter, where he discusses the new phase upon which the landscape is entering today at an accelerated pace. He does not pretend to like the new, terribly monotonous, multistorey blocks of offices and flats, but has great hopes that the Country Parks envisaged by the Act of 1968 will soon occupy the place which the private parks of the nobility and gentry occupied in the past, and may preserve some of the best of them in the process.

The book is illustrated with thirty-two plates and thirteen diagrams. Students of our early

history will note with particular interest the author's stout refusal to take the Domesday record at its face value (pp. 39–41), his fascinating analysis of the village plan at Linton revealing the outline of original settlement (pp. 68–70), and his description of the small farms characteristic of Norse rather than Danish occupation (p. 92). It is, however, disconcerting to find him repeating the hoary fable that in 886 Alfred the Great "incorporated" Ripon with a Wakeman, twelve Elders, and twenty-four assistants—this at a time when Alfred's writ did not run in Yorkshire, and four and a half centuries before any borough was "incorporated."

Mr Taylor's book has a distinctly individual flavour. A good third of it is devoted to the pre-Domesday landscape. We are all familiar with the notion that prehistoric man occupied the downlands and left the valleys to be settled later by his descendants or conquerors. In Dorset the notion is encouraged by the remarkably large number of Neolithic barrows, Bronze Age burial mounds, and Iron Age fortresses visible in the high places of the county. It is easy to assume that where the remains of the prehistoric and Roman past abound, there the builders must have lived. But Mr Taylor will have none of it. Armed with the knowledge gained during seven years of work in the county with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, and enjoying the advantage of access to the Commission's as yet unpublished material, he stoutly asserts that both the prehistoric and the Romano-British inhabitants made their homes in the valleys and low-lying areas as well as, or even more than, on the downs which have preserved so much of their handiwork because—and only because—they have been less intensively used by their successors.

I have no doubt myself that he is right. Even a sceptical reader can hardly fail to be impressed by the well-argued case he sets forth in his first two chapters. It looks as if this book will have the honour of pioneering a reconsideration of long-cherished ideas and a fresh approach to the history of the landscape.

The rest of the book in no way falls below the standard of the opening chapters. There is

much of interest on the extension of settlement, the formation of manors and parishes, and the growth of towns. As Dorset has been little damaged by industry in any period, the author has no depressing tale to tell of derelict areas or blighted scenery. The book is even more fully illustrated with photographs, maps, and plans than its companion in the series, now so happily revived.

H. P. R. FINBERG

V. M. and F. J. CHESHER, *The Cornishman's House: an Introduction to the History of Traditional Domestic Architecture in Cornwall*. D. Bradford Barton, Truro, 1968.

142 pp. 17 plates, 5 figures. £1.60.

Mr and Mrs Cheshier have produced a very valuable addition to the small but growing number of regional studies of rural houses, based on examination of buildings and study of documents, especially probate inventories. Their book is modest in scope; it leaves aside houses in towns and villages; it is not concerned with the great houses, nor does it deal with the results of the industrial revolution, but within its limits it provides a very valuable account of surviving houses dating from the Middle Ages to the eighteenth century. Their number is small owing to the thin population in the Middle Ages and even later. The idiom, owing to natural and climatic conditions—Cornish gales, a relative scarcity of good timber, and a humid atmosphere that means “sweating walls and rotting timber” (pp. 13–14)—recalls that of the Scottish highlands and islands rather more than Wales or Cumberland. Buildings are extremely difficult to date, because ornamental or structural features found in other parts of England or Wales can scarcely as yet be used for comparison, and in plan they seldom conform to expectations. Cornish society was less diversified than elsewhere and houses of superior social status were of very modest scale. Nevertheless, medieval homes with open hall, or a first-floor hall, can be found, and a great rebuilding can be demonstrated, both from Richard Carew and from surviving houses, to have started before 1600—earlier than in other parts of the highland zone. The new houses are remarkable mainly in that,

within the limits imposed by the environment, those which can be proved to have belonged to gentlemen or yeomen are so small, and include types of plan not found elsewhere. Nevertheless, in other respects, Cornishmen of the seventeenth century were behaving as would be expected, by, for example, adding a parlour wing or a storeyed porch to their houses.

It is to be hoped that *The Cornishman's House* will have wide sales—wide enough eventually to justify a second edition. If that hope is realized, the book would be improved by having a map (especially one of building materials), more plans, and references in the text to illustrations. Further thought will have to be given to such outstanding problems as that of the place of the long house or byre house in Cornwall. The evidence from other counties may not solve such problems, but reference to other studies, such as those of S. R. Jones and J. T. Smith in *Brycheiniog* (long houses) or R. W. Brunskill in the *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological Society* (tower porches in Cumberland), would further enhance the value of a very courageous study.

M. W. BARLEY

BARBARA KERR, *Bound to the Soil: A Social History of Dorset, 1750–1918*. John Baker, 1968. xix+288 pp. £3.50.

From the 1840's onwards, thanks to the visits of Free Trade propagandists and the publication of the *Reports of the Special Assistant Poor Law Commissioners on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture* (1843), Dorset became the stock example of an overpopulated and backward county in the Deep South of England. Miss Barbara Kerr's highly original, even idiosyncratic, book is therefore a welcome addition to the literature on the social and economic life of the English countryside for the past two hundred years if only because it corrects this nineteenth century oversimplification. It does much more, however. Written with a constant awareness of the basic importance of the different soils to be found in the county, it is firmly based on research in the various classes of material in the Dorset

County Office and the Public Record Office. These sources have been skilfully supplemented by the personal reminiscences of those who remember the county as it was before 1891 and by some documents still in private hands. Many interesting topics are touched upon, e.g. the decline of maritime occupations, and the vital importance of the estate agent or steward in the rural economy. Where else can one find documented such a striking example of bad management as the sad story of the great Earl of Shaftesbury and his rascally agent R. S. Waters, whose misdeeds hindered the noble lord's wish to improve the living conditions of the labourers on 18,000 or so acres of Dorset? Eight of the ten chapters deal with specific localities (Arne, Whitchurch Canoncorum, Burton Bradstock, the Vale of Blackmoor, Bere Regis, Thornford, Gillingham, and Wimborne St Giles), and their histories are used to illustrate the wide variety of farming conditions in the county. There is a final chapter on Dorchester itself, in which Miss Kerr, among other things, documents the rise of the nineteenth-century contractors, auctioneers, and estate agents who grew to dominate the town by 1914. There are many excellent illustrations and maps. Inevitably omissions occur, e.g. there are only a few slight incidental references to the Tolpuddle labourers' case of 1834. The same is true of the coming of the railways. Here a map would have been useful. There is a repeated howler, too, about the non-existent "Speenhamland Act" of 1795 (pp. 97, 106). And were the English industrial poor really "a byword of destitution among the countries of Europe?" (p. 224). These are minor flaws, however, in a first-class addition to agrarian history.

W. H. CHALONER

J. M. G. VAN DER POEL, *Honderd jaar landbouwmeechanisatie in Nederland*. Veennam en Zonen, Wageningen. 307 pp., 127 illus. 35 f.; GÜNTHER FRANZ (and eighteen specialist contributors), *Die Geschichte der Landtechnik im 20 Jahrhundert*. DLG Verlag-G.M.B., Frankfurt am Main. xii+449 pp., many illus. DM.80.

It is a matter of common knowledge, indeed, the casual observation of the tourist, that the

last hundred years have seen the almost wholesale mechanization of farming processes in western Europe, U.S.A., Australia, New Zealand, Argentine, etc., but the histories of this development so far written are few. Those that have been written do not, in general, deal with the whole subject in a comprehensive way, but are confined to the story of the use of individual machines in particular places. Examples spring to the mind, such as Ronald H. Clark's *Development of the English traction engine*, 1960; Reynold M. Wik, *Steam power on the American farm*, 1953; Clark C. Spence, *God speed the plough; the coming of steam cultivation to Great Britain*, 1960.

Both the above-named books are more comprehensive than this, and are planned to describe the whole range of machines etc. that have been adopted in their respective countries. At first glance, therefore, it seemed possible to review them jointly, but closer examination showed that this would not be possible because of the different structure of the two books, the Dutch one being the individual work of Dr van der Poel, and the German a symposium under the editorship of Professor Dr Günther Franz. Separate notes therefore follow, but first of all a definition of mechanization may be useful—to the writer if to no one else.

Possibly the general impression of farm mechanization is that the adoption of the self-propelled or earlier tractor-hauled combine harvester marks its apogee, the average non-farmer being quite unaware of the wide range of other machines now in use. Others, even farmers, think of the initiation of mechanization as the adoption of a power unit, first the steam engine, later the oil-fuelled tractor, that superseded animal power used in an earlier time—at least in some parts of the world. But the first machine in the proper sense of the word used on farms was not a power unit. It was the seed drill; but even that first machine was not very widely used a century ago. The second true machine was the threshing drum. Other things, especially those used in Dutch dairies, were in some degree mechanical.

(a) Inventiveness was not lacking in the Netherlands before the present age. The fore-

runner of the so-called Dutch barn was a hay barn which had an adjustable roof fixed on wooden uprights on which it could be raised and lowered according to the amount of hay that must be stored. It was much admired and recommended to Elizabethan farmers by Sir Hugh Plat. The *dorsblad* was a heavy, ribbed cone, the small end of which was attached to an anchor so that it would run round in a circle over the ears of corn and thus rub out the grain. Various patterns of semi-mechanical churns were made, the motive power being provided manually or by a horse or horses walking in a circle, horse gear as it was called in England when applied to driving a threshing drum or other barn machinery.

But modifications of hand or horse-power implements were also made in other countries before the age of true mechanization. It was in these other countries that factory production of farm implements and machines was born. There is some slight possibility that a factory for making ploughs was started at Rotherham, Yorkshire, in the third or fourth decade of the eighteenth century, but this is only a possibility. The Rotherham plough owed something to the Dutch plough. Robert Ransome's factory at Ipswich, 1783, was the first plough-making factory. The Smyths of Peasenhall, Suffolk, began making their seed drills in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Germany followed with Schwerz's factory that was a department of the Hohenheim Agricultural Institute. Enterprising Americans entered the market at about the same time with McCormick's reaper and other farm requirements, such as the steel plough, the sulky plough, etc., but these were the forerunners of an industry that could grow and expand only with better knowledge of the requirements of manufacture, and a keener appreciation of the use of the things in the field.

The Netherlands, however, remained a non-industrial country until the mid-century. More, the average farmer was handicapped by his limited financial resources, and mentally inhibited by his prejudice in favour of using the appliances to which he, and indeed his forefathers, were accustomed. Nevertheless, the efforts of enterprising representatives of

English firms had some effect, although, as in other countries, the introduction of elaborate and expensive machinery, like steam-propelled ploughs, depended upon the initiative of wealthy landowners and the richer farmers. An early factory for making implements in the Netherlands was established in 1847; but it was one of the members of the Netherlands Royal Agricultural Society who was a great enthusiast for steam-ploughing, J. P. Amersfoodt. He made a journey to England and visited makers of this kind of tackle. An interesting feature of his journey was that he did not think the Fowler plough was suited to Dutch conditions, so he took a Hohenheim plough for them to copy, for the Dutch trade. Oddly, this plough itself was derived from a Low Countries' pattern. The first steam plough worked in the Netherlands was used in October 1862. Steam power, too, was applied to driving the threshing machine, the number of these machines rising from 33 in 1870 to 266 in 1900; but in 1885 there were still 5,802 horse-driven threshing machines in use as well as 901 manually operated. Seed drills, grass mowers, grain reapers, and haymaking machines were in use, but it was after the turn of the century that the new machines were more rapidly introduced, and these included the whole gamut of what was then to be had. The development of the oil-fuelled tractor, which was more mobile and handy than the vast steam engine, gave a further impetus to this tendency. The existence of 600 manure spreaders in 1900 is a measure of the enterprise of the Dutch farmers. There was probably none in England at that date.

From that time onwards the use of more complex machines became more commonplace until today it is no unusual sight to see the most modern types of machine at work on the farms. The self-propelled combine, potato and sugar beet harvesters, and seed drills of the most up-to-date type are illustrated in Dr van der Poel's book. It would be a work of supererogation to try to mention them all here, but this work is one that could not well be done without. It could be translated into English with advantage, and it is undoubtedly a contribution to knowledge of the progress of farm

mechanization in a small country which is of the greatest value in making comparisons with the progress in larger ones with more varied conditions to contend with: perhaps it even carries some lessons for the developing countries.

(b) This book's title limits its range to the twentieth century, but Professor Dr Günther Franz's introduction carries the story well back into the nineteenth, when a marked degree of mechanization of the kind then possible took place, especially on the larger German farms. At the same time there was a large number of small peasant farms where traditional methods continued, and continue, to be employed.

The German authorities were evidently concerned about the progress of agriculture, and collected statistics of farm machinery some sixty years before a similar scheme was launched in this country, and at that late date only because of the need for precise information to underpin the wartime food production campaign. Steam ploughs were naturally more frequently in use on the larger holdings of 200 hectares upwards. Some quite small holdings were then (1882) using seed drills and reaping machines as well as steam-driven threshers, but there was also a large number of other powered threshers, some manually operated, though the greater part of all this apparatus was used on the big farms. The number of these things rose rapidly, and a type of motor plough was designed in 1909. Factory production of ploughs had been initiated at Hohenheim in 1818, and both ploughs and other farm machinery were produced industrially after about 1850.

Electricity was made available in rural Germany between the wars, and this enabled electric motors to be used as power for barn jobs. Milking machines to the number of 9,000 were being used in 1928. The first combine had been imported in the previous year. The tractor and rubber-tyred wagon both became ordinary farm equipment, and, as in other countries, the rate of acquisition of all sorts of mechanical devices rapidly increased after the Second World War. Details of the new devices and their application to farming processes are supplied by the specialist contributors. It

would be invidious to choose between them in this kind of commentary. Taken as a whole they demonstrate that German agriculture is today highly mechanized, and that German farmers, more especially those working the larger holdings, are using all the most modern apparatus that is on the market. This symposium forms an invaluable work of reference on the history of farm mechanization in Germany as it has taken place during the past hundred years, a development that has been pretty general in all of what are now designated developed countries.

G. E. FUSSELL

CLARENCE H. DANHOF, *Change in Agriculture: The Northern United States, 1820-1870*.

Harvard University Press; London, Oxford University Press, 1970. xiv + 322 pp. £4.75.

Mr Danhof's long-promised book originated with a suggestion by Professor Arthur H. Cole that entrepreneurship in agriculture required investigation. The field chosen for examination here is the commercialization of farming in the states from Massachusetts west to Iowa; the choice of period is defended with the argument that these fifty years saw near self-sufficiency give way to market-oriented agriculture (while a copious periodical literature starts after 1820, but statistical materials which would need quite different handling start after 1870); and the chief theme is that the farm population included a key minority who were innovators with characteristics like those of contemporary innovators in industry. Mr Danhof involves himself, and the reader, in what the livelier farm operators sifted out as likely to prove useful in their individual localities from the mass of information about new managerial skills, new plant varieties and crop rotations, breeds of stock, implements, and machines, which equally novel farm journals put before them. Until now the activities of the advanced American farmer of the nineteenth-century have perhaps been obscured by the longer persistence of obsolescent values and practices within agriculture than in many other sectors of the economy.

The core of the book is made up of the chapters which describe and document closely the adoption of innovations. Students of the

diffusion of new farm practices, equipment, or even whole new systems of farming, and not merely those concerned purely with historical cases, will find detail of great value here, enough no doubt to push generalizations beyond those offered by the author. The business unit in the agriculture of the northern states was the family farm in 1870 as it had been in 1820, and faced with this appearance of structural stability one does not anticipate that institutional changes were the propellant of technical advance. Mr Danhof does not think so either, and it is almost with surprise that a re-reading shows how carefully and at what length he has considered 'external' developments—in markets and marketing institutions, transport, capital supply, agricultural societies, and the foretaste of governmental involvement when the Morrill Act of 1862 induced the states to found the land grant colleges. Nevertheless the direction of this enquiry is towards the response of individual farmers to new opportunities or pressures to sell their produce rather than sitting down to eat it in the farm kitchen. No heroes are elevated amongst them, though the author's eye is fixed firmly on the emergence of business methods and the striking change in values which accompanied this shift in the behaviour of what was a comparatively small proportion of farmers. No heroes: but some enterprising individuals can be singled out by name as their experiments pass along the conveyor belt of the historical record.

The struggle between the old and new value systems is nicely brought out. The dominant generation of 1820 most approved the man who added acre to acre and whose family toiled and trod most skilfully to avoid buying consumer goods. By 1850 loud voices were submitting that "money making . . . is, in our country at least, the main point in farming." By 1870 this view had more or less prevailed, and while Mr Danhof gives all due weight to the "invincible *inertium*" of agriculture's silent majority, this victory for commercialism in farming was basic to the urbanization and economic growth of nineteenth-century America.

The strength of the book lies in the thematic approach. Concentrating on the uptake of in-

novations by farmers makes for a more coherent volume than the textbook approach where a chapter on this chases a chapter on that without properly interlocking. But the trunk of the tree is not delineated only for the branches to be lopped off; instead they are drawn from less stereotyped angles. For instance, while Mr Danhof is not strictly concerned with that relentless driving force of American agricultural history, the frontier movement, he succeeds in marking out the changes which cheap western produce forced on farmers in the eastern states, mentions the paradoxical flow of food towards the outermost frontier line, points to the void of falling yields which followed a decade or at most a generation behind the grain frontier, and describes the methods of recovering soil fertility (by conserving FYM and using rotations centring on red clover) which flowed in turn into the threatening vacuum. In short, the book could be used as a text while being less disjointed than most such, or even than most regional studies.

Commercializing agriculture meant a concentration on some products at the expense of others, which was an inducement to improve certain promising breeds of animals and varieties of crops. Who pioneered these improvements in an egalitarian rural society? There is a special fascination here in the contrasting patterns of innovation in the United States and in the landlord-tenant-dominated agriculture of Britain. Mr Danhof describes the marks of the innovating American family farmer—he sold his produce on the market, was a good manager, made plans and constantly revised them—but admits that printed sources do not expand on the way such a man arrived at his decisions. Nor do the observations about growing urban markets, the suffusion and commingling of ideas from different countries in Europe, or the new techniques in transportation, really explain why one man responded eagerly though his neighbours plodded along in their ruts. I am sure that this stimulating book will attract other scholars to delve into the wells of human creativity which turned American farmers so speedily and forcefully into businessmen.

E. L. JONES

POLLY HILL, *Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa*. African Studies Series 2. C.U.P., 1970. xxiii+174 pp. £3.50.

For nearly twenty years, Polly Hill has visited remote villages of West Africa and explored the history and structure of economic activities conducted by farmers, fishermen, and traders. The present book contains six of her studies, covering cocoa farming, seine-net fishing, cattle owning, and cattle trading, all in Ghana; and in Nigeria, the nineteenth-century trade in tobacco from Katsina, and the farming structure of one village near the same ancient trading city.

The emphasis in these studies lies on the acquisition and use of capital in various forms in the indigenous economies. They all show the importance of family inheritance and family connections for the successful entrepreneurs, since capital, credit, and information do not move easily between strangers. Another interesting point is the mutual support provided by traders within the migrant communities which engage in long-distance trade across the boundaries set by states, tribes, and languages. Immigrants manage the cattle herds in Ghana for crop farmers who invest their capital in livestock, and other immigrants organize the trade in beef cattle from the northern savannah regions to the meat-eating towns in the coastal belt of West Africa. Information about supplies and markets, the provision of credit, accommodation, and insurance against bad debts and other losses, all come through personal connections in these trades, not through commercial institutions, common in industrial countries.

The final study in this collection, on the farming structure of a Hausa village, also suggests the existence of a minimum level of capital in determining future differences in wealth and income. Above a certain level, these farmers could afford to buy manure for their fields, to store their crops for sale some months after harvest when prices had generally risen, and to trade in grain or other products in the dry season. Below this critical level, farmers tended to become increasingly impoverished, as they ceased to buy manure, sold at low prices after harvest and bought food

later at higher prices, and finally sold their manured plots to pay their debts. These studies of enterprise and accumulation in farming, fishing, and trading offer fascinating parallels to the development of similar businesses in the early stages of economic growth in other countries.

E. H. WHETHAM

KWAMINA B. DICKSON, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*. C.U.P., 1969. xiv+379 pp. with 58 maps and diagrams. £7.50.

This major work by a leading African geographer provides the first comprehensive account of the historical geography of Ghana. The book is divided chronologically into four parts. Part I covers the long period from the earliest archaeological evidence of man's existence in Ghana (more than 40,000 years ago) to the end of the seventeenth century. Naturally, historical and archaeological sources for this immense period of time are scarce but the author sets the scene for later events by summarizing the existing state of knowledge concerning the introduction of farming to West Africa in neolithic times (about which there has been controversy) and describing the different regions and peoples of Ghana before the arrival of the Europeans.

Part II covers the period from about 1700 to about 1850, and is mainly based on the observations of a Dutch trader, William Bosman, who published a detailed account of the coastal area around 1700 (the original Gold Coast only penetrated a few miles inland and most of modern Ghana was not included in it). Bosman was a thorough observer and this section has much of interest on early agriculture, trade, and settlements.

Part III covers the period from about 1850 to 1936 and is the fullest section of the book. After the establishment of British control over the whole coast in 1872, and its extension inland to cover Ashanti and the Northern Savanna lands after 1900, the output of colonial records rapidly increased, enabling the author to give a much more detailed picture. After 1900 economic development was rapid, primarily in cocoa production, as Ghana rose to be the world's leading producer, and second-

ly in mineral production as the gold, manganese, and diamond-mining industries developed. The book ends with an analysis of the population, settlements, and economic geography of Ghana in 1939, since the author maintains that all the basic elements of modern Ghana were in existence by that date. Nevertheless it would have been interesting to have had a comparison between 1939 and the present day, although one can see that this might have made the book unduly long. It is much to be hoped that the author will fill this gap by a second volume covering the period since 1939.

It is difficult to do justice to a book of this length and scope in a short review. The 58 maps and diagrams are fascinating in themselves and agricultural historians will particularly welcome those showing export statistics and the two distribution maps defining the

area and extent of cocoa purchases in 1927 and 1936-7. There is an excellent bibliography, and the author has made profitable use of original documents in the Public Record Office in London, particularly for the early period of British rule in the 1880's. His analysis of the relationship between the transport problem and economic development is also excellently done. Some sections would have been even more interesting if it had been possible to go more deeply into the causes of development. This applies to subjects like the beginning of cocoa cultivation and European investment in gold mining. In places, too, more comparison with other West African countries would have been illuminating, but these are minor criticisms of an absorbing book which is likely to be the standard work on its subject for many years to come.

M. A. HAVINDEN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *continued from page 87.*

willing archbishops by influential courtiers.¹ Sandys's laments were all too well justified after all. Even the recovery in the seventeenth century was not very impressive, since the result was a mere 15 per cent improvement on the position in 1600. In 1700 the real income of the archbishop was not very much more than a third of what it had been in the palmy days before the Reformation. The Archbishops of York were certainly never impoverished during this period, but the "myth" of permanent despoliation is fully confirmed rather than destroyed by the new evidence.

LAWRENCE STONE

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MADAM,—I think Professor Stone's disagreement with me is more apparent than real and

largely depends upon our different opinions over what constitutes royal spoliation of the see of York in the sixteenth century.

My argument is that although the see of York underwent a considerable loss in income through the two Henrician exchanges of ancient archiepiscopal manors for royal impropriations, the restoration of archiepiscopal manors in the reign of Mary brought the endowments of the see (on the 1536 valuations) to within striking distance of what they had been in 1536. These endowments remained permanently with the see and were not interfered with by Elizabeth. I agree, of course, that the archbishops suffered severely from inflation, as did so many great lay landowners, but the crown can scarcely be blamed for a fall in the real value of the income of successive archbishops of York caused largely by economic forces outside the control of monarch and archbishop alike.

¹ For a description of these more subtle methods of exploitation, see L. Stone, *op. cit.*, pp. 405-8.

Professor Stone is quite right to point out that the archbishop's income of about £1,800 in 1600 was worth very much less in real terms than an apparently similar income of rather over £1,800 in 1536. However, I question the usefulness of adjusting the archbishop's income at different dates in the sixteenth century in accordance with the Kerridge Rent Index or the Phelps-Brown Index.

The assumption behind Professor Stone's argument seems to be that if the archbishops had been permitted by the crown to retain undisturbed their ancient archiepiscopal lands they would have stood a significantly better chance of ensuring that their income more nearly matched the rise in prices. The positive evidence we have does not support this assumption. Just before Archbishop Holgate surrendered the regality of Hexham to Henry VIII it was valued, in 1536, at a little under £197.¹ The crown retained the regality, perhaps partly for military reasons, until 1632, and when it was surveyed in 1608 it had actually fallen £5 in value.² If the crown failed to raise rents in the regality over three-quarters of a century it is hardly likely that an archbishop would have done so. The ancient lands which the archbishops of York retained, or had restored to them before Elizabeth's accession, were not improved over the century. The lordship of Ripon was valued at almost £263 in 1536; in 1597 it brought in almost £267; the income from the lordship of Otley apparently rose by only £5 between these two dates, whereas the lordship of Scrooby brought in £13 more in 1597 than it had been valued at in 1536. Clearly on these lands the archbishops had as yet made no attempt to raise rents. On the other hand, it cannot be argued that the archbishops of York had been forced to exchange manors which at some future date could have been improved for impropriations which were

not capable of improvement. Because of the absence of receiver general's accounts before 1597 it is not possible to know in detail how the mass of impropriations were administered. The 'Great Collection' of impropriations was valued at the time of the 1545 exchange at £505;³ in 1597 apparently the same collection of impropriations was worth only just under £458 but in 1700 these thirty-three rectories together with some of their corn rents brought in a gross £999.⁴

Why the archbishops of York in the second half of the sixteenth century failed to raise their rents can only be a matter for speculation since no detailed information about their economic activities survives earlier than 1597. They may well have found it easier, and less contentious, to exploit their patronage than attempt to increase rents. Archbishop Sandys, for example, granted lucrative ecclesiastical offices in the northern diocese as well as leases of archiepiscopal land to his sons, and, despite his complaints, succeeded in founding at least three county families.⁵ Because of the lack of precise evidence it is not possible to assess how often archbishops of York granted leases to their dependants to the long-term disadvantage of the see, or were forced to make unfavourable leases to courtiers, but from this latter practice not even their pre-Reformation predecessors had been exempt. Taking an overall view, it seems not that the archbishops of York were deliberately despoiled by the crown after 1553, but that the crown and the archbishops stood together in a similar defensive position: both were caught by the little-understood phenomenon of inflation with which both in the short run were ill equipped to deal.

CLAIRE CROSS

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¹ These valuations are given to the nearest pound and, unless otherwise stated, are taken from Tables I and II in my article in *Agric. Hist. Rev.*, vol. 18, Supplement, pp. 82-3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 75-6.

³ P.R.O. C 66/750.

⁴ Borthwick. CC Ab. 2. 6.

⁵ The archbishop's eldest son, Sir Samuel Sandys, settled at Ombersley in Worcestershire, Sir Edwin Sandys at Northbourne in Kent, and Sir Miles Sandys at Wilburton in Cambridgeshire.

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JOHN HATCHER

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CONTENTS

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CONTENTS *continued*

<i>Change in Agriculture: The Northern United States, 1820-1870</i> , by Clarence H. Danhof	<i>E. L. Jones</i>	108
<i>Studies in Rural Capitalism in West Africa</i> , by Polly Hill	<i>E. H. Whetham</i>	110
<i>A Historical Geography of Ghana</i> , by Kwamina B. Dickson	<i>M. A. Havinden</i>	110
Letters to the Editor		87, 111, 112
Notes and Comments		24, 64
Notes on Contributors		41

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