

Book Reviews

W. G. HOSKINS (ed.), *History from the Farm*.

Faber and Faber, 1970. 141 pp. 16 photographs. 13 maps and plans. £2.50.

This is an unusual book about farming history, written mainly by non-professionals. Not quite, however: the influence of W. G. Hoskins is there from the beginning, providing essential expertise and continuity.

In 1968, the *Farmers' Weekly* organized a competition, 'History Starts Here', in which readers were invited to submit histories of their own farms. They received timely guidance in an article by Professor Hoskins, and some of them, no doubt, read his book *Fieldwork in Local History*. The twelve prize-winning entries became the foundation of *History from the Farm*. Six further contributions were added, from other parts of the country not covered by the basic group.

The editor provides a general introduction, 'Farms and History', and prefaces each short study with a paragraph or two of his own, to give emphasis to particularly interesting or unique features. The farms range from Land's End (Glebe Farm in Sancreed parish, Cornwall) to John O' Groats (Summerhill Farm in Caithness), and their histories from prehistoric times to the present century. However, it should be said at once—and Professor Hoskins says it—that "the coverage is uneven in relation to Britain as a whole." In the south-western part of the country, five counties (Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, and Gloucestershire), between them contribute eight farms, which account for something like a third of the book. Seven northern farms and three in Scotland make up the total. The uneven coverage of the book reflects the uneven response to the competition, eastern England and Wales producing very few entries. The reticence of Wales is, on first sight, a puzzle. There is none of the unique flavour of Welsh farming to tempt our rustic palates. Is this, perhaps, because the true Welsh farmer feels much more at home in his own language than English? Regarding the eastern half of the country, there is probably more than a grain of

truth in the editor's comment that "farmers in the West Country and the North Country are more interested in the history of their farmsteads and farms, partly because these have not changed their old identity so much as the large-scale arable farms of the eastern side of Britain." May it not also have something to do with the fact that large-scale, intensive arable farming leaves the farmer and his family with less time on their hands than the mainly livestock producers?

We shall be disappointed if we look into this book expecting to find complete farm histories or a comprehensive history of British farming. They are not intended. However, there is plenty of variation in farming types (as well as in modes of presentation), and each study provides an interesting, individual instance of some of the social and technical changes that have taken place in the English countryside over many hundreds of years.

'Continuity' is a theme that is particularly well-developed, with the Norman Conquest (or even an earlier Conquest) as a frequent starting point: a Dartmoor farm of the 'long-house' type was occupied almost continuously by one family from 1545 to 1958; a holding in North Dorset has been farmed continuously since Roman times; in County Durham, no fewer than fourteen generations of the same family have farmed in the same place without a break from the 1520's to the present day.

At times we seem to spend over-long in the farmhouse and too little time outdoors: in one instance, we hardly set foot in the fields, although there are some 500 acres of them waiting to be tramped! However, in some of these essays there is the sort of farming material that pays proper regard to the farm as a productive unit, and not simply a place to live: the Teesdale farm (production changes over the past thirty years), Craighlearn in Dumfriesshire (Blackface sheep and Galloway hill cattle), and Pittendrum in Aberdeenshire (in 'a treeless land where beeves are good') are all excellent in this respect.

It is gratifying to witness, in this bold

assembly, a "very humble little dairy farm of 56 acres" (Carnpessack in Cornwall), and an even smaller holding of 12 acres (Hatchett's Farm in Nether Wallop, Hampshire) which supports a flock of 50 breeding ewes, take their places alongside a twelve-hundred-acre hill farm in the southern uplands of Scotland. In reality there is a basis for this happy co-existence: four out of five farms are indeed small, that is less than 100 acres; the number of farms of over 300 acres is only 4 per cent of the whole.

Professor Michael Wise's account of Brick House Farm is cruelly depressing. It is meant to be. This is "a classic study of how the Industrial Revolution overwhelmed one of these old farms step by step." A hundred yards below the surface of this little (66 acres) Midland farm lay valuable seams of coal and ironstone. Mineral exploitation from 1824 had, by mid-century, left the land "in a bad state and excessively poor;" in 1885 the farm was so impoverished that it was said to be "worth not more than £50 a year." Today no farm buildings remain, and "the debris of an exhausted industrial landscape" which, until recently, littered its former fields, has been replaced by a council housing estate. Urban and industrial development continue their relentless encroachment on our countryside, engulfing viable farms in a welter of tarmac and concrete. It would seem that the lessons of Brick House Farm have not yet been fully learnt. Nevertheless, there is an antidote in *History from the Farm*: the study of a South Lancashire farm (Allwood House, Astley) shows how the nineteenth-century industrial and urban revolution helped, in a variety of ways, to *create* a new farm in the English landscape.

An attractive feature of this book is the collection of superb photographs, one for nearly every farm (why were two penalized in this respect?), and the plans and maps which accompany the text: the plan of the house and buildings at Lake Farm, Poundsgate (Devon), on p. 44, and the map of Brick House Farm, Rowley Regis (Staffs.), on p. 136, are models of their type. There are also, of course, all the unseen documents, private and public, ancient and recent, which together with the visual

evidence, provided the contributors with a wide variety of source material. We should like to know more, sometime, about the seventeenth-century farm accounts of Thomas Hinson of Hunt Court (Gloucestershire), and the eighteenth-century accounts of John Dent of High Green Farm (County Durham).

In several instances the photographs are not located in the best position in relation to the text. Agrarian historians have a tendency to push back their dates, but 1068 for the Domesday Survey (p. 90) is pushing things a bit too far! But errors of this sort are few.

These delightful, down-to-earth studies are all about real British farms, each an individuality. There is none of "the weary stuff about Top People." Altogether, they give us some of W. G. Hoskins's kind of history—*real* history.

DENNIS BAKER

DOROTHY SYLVESTER, *The Rural Landscape of the Welsh Borderland*. Macmillan, 1969. 548 pp. £8.

The Welsh borderland from the Dee down to the Wye is not only one of the most beautiful parts of Britain, with some of the richest farmland also, but is of the highest interest from the standpoint of the landscape-historian. Its pattern of settlement, as revealed on the Ordnance map, is markedly like that of south-western England: the intermixture of nucleated villages with large areas of complete dispersion into single farmsteads, the great number of isolated churches, the mingling of Celtic and Old English place-names, and so on. Miss Sylvester has written extensively in the past on this region from various aspects, and here gathers together in one large (and extremely expensive) book the fruits of her great knowledge. It is sad that one must say that her book is disappointing in the last resort.

She begins with ten chapters on the region as a whole, purporting to range from Celtic times to the present day. Then follow nine chapters under the general heading of Local Studies, taking the counties one by one and occasionally getting down to smaller areas in great detail. There are 21 plates and no fewer than 58 maps and plans. Many of these are excellently drawn, but some of the general

maps are far too overloaded with different symbols and seem to me, at least, to defeat their object entirely.

Unfortunately, too, the book is written in a turgid, old-fashioned geographical 'style' which makes for heavy going. Jargon abounds, with such words as 'de-ruralisation' and 'Normanisation', and one has to work hard to get a picture of the whole. Certain important subjects are not followed up at all. For example, though Miss Sylvester several times draws attention to the feature of the isolated parish church, she nowhere seems to discuss the siting of these interesting buildings, except a tantalizing reference to those that stand on mounds. Surely this is worth exploring? And the caption to Plate X, showing the village of Alveley in east Shropshire, says "Strongly nucleated . . . Celtic and early Anglo-Saxon roots are claimed for it." We are nowhere told who claims this, and on what grounds. Now that we are all so interested in the problems of continuity of occupation from Romano-British times onwards, it is exasperating to be told no more until pages 344-5, where Alveley appears for the first time in the text as part of the estate of Algar, earl of Mercia, in 1086, or is it 1066?

On page 99, Miss Sylvester refers twice to two Offas as kings of Mercia between 757 and 796. Most of us know of only one. And her long bibliography does not mention one of the most important sources for the history of her region, namely Professor Finberg's *The Early Charters of the West Midlands*, published back in 1961.

The great value of Miss Sylvester's book, into which so much work has clearly gone, lies in the later period, from the seventeenth century onwards. The medieval side, so important in this region, suffers from the fact that little or no use has been made of the manuscript sources such as extents. One cannot discuss the knotty problems of dispersed settlement without the aid of these documents, and even they are not as revealing as we would like. On the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries her book will be constantly used as a quarry, with its excellent use of tithe and estate maps, and of modern printed records.

One is pained to see that Miss Sylvester has nothing new to say about drove-roads. She

makes only one small reference to this subject (p. 136) although Dr Margaret Davies has given a flying start on the Welsh side with her map of these roads in *Wales in Maps* (p. 70). Considering the great number of these roads that cross the frontier, heading right across her region towards English markets and fattening grounds, it is a remarkable omission not to trace them on their way across the borderland if no farther. There is no reference to the cattle trade in the index.

Miss Sylvester's book ends with a glossary of Welsh and English terms. One of these—*berewick*—deserves a gloss from this reviewer. The author defines the word as "a wick in which barley was grown. In practice, a detached part of a manor and semi-independent." This is clearly our old friend *bere-tun*, which has come down to us in south-western England, and as far up as Oxfordshire, as *barton*, with the special meaning of the demesne farm of a large estate. So, too, with *berewick*. It must surely mean the demesne farm of an estate. I do not know that anyone has noticed this simple explanation in print before.

W. G. HOSKINS

A. T. GAYDON (ed.), *A History of Shropshire*,

Vol. VIII. O.U.P., 1968. xx+356 pp. £8.40. The *V.C.H.* for Shropshire has followed the familiar pattern of publication. The first volume came out in 1908: after that, silence for sixty years until the volume under review appeared. It is volume VIII in the new sequence, a topographical volume covering the two hundreds of Condover and Ford. This piece of country includes twenty-two parishes in central Shropshire, from the Severn valley southwards to the foothills of the southern uplands of the county. Mr Gaydon, as the local editor, has produced a book of first-class quality, not only up to the high standards of scholarship one now takes for granted with the *V.C.H.* but advancing notably in some directions under his aegis.

Having said this, it is necessary to utter a loud moan. In reviewing volume V of the *Leicestershire V.C.H.* (A.H.R., vol. xvi, Part 1) I drew attention to the fact that the *V.C.H.* in general seems strangely allergic to maps, and this is

still all too apparent. For example, there is no map showing whereabouts in the county the hundreds under review lie, and no map showing contours and the principal physical features. I found this so baffling and irritating as I read different parochial accounts that I cut up a half-inch map of the area under survey, when I could work it out, and pasted it into my own copy of this volume. One simply cannot understand what is being said on the topographical side without such an elementary guide. This piece of countryside runs from the flood-plain of the Severn up to the high moorlands of the Stiperstones at some 1,600 feet above sea-level, and is a complicated landscape altogether.

There are 46 illustrations of churches, fonts, castles, monuments, roof-trusses, and various kinds of vernacular building, including some most instructive aerial photographs. Among the latter we have a very good air-view of squatter settlement at Exfordsgreen, and another of the village of Pontesbury. The air-view of Pontesbury is particularly revealing, showing as it does the early topography of the village with its pre-Conquest *burh* (or the line thereof) and the Norman castle and the line of its baileys, which has dictated the road-plan to this day. I am all for this kind of illustration, but we must have more line-maps even if it means sacrificing a roof-truss or two.

Under Mr Gaydon's hands, the *V.C.H.* makes in this volume a notable contribution to landscape history in a particularly obscure part of England, above all to the elucidation of the settlement pattern which is so distinctive and so hard to explain without exhaustive documentary research such as we have here. On the whole, large compact villages are few and far between, as in Devon, and we get instead large parishes with scattered settlements: single farms and small townships abound. The maps of Westbury and Pontesbury are well chosen to illustrate this type of settlement. In each case we have a large mother-village associated with a vast hinterland dotted with daughter-townships. But the history of rural settlement is even more complicated than this, for a great number of single farms today represent the shrunken remains of medieval hamlets. Thus in Alberbury-with-Cardeston some hamlets survive,

but no fewer than seventeen others had dwindled to single farms before the end of the Middle Ages.

The process of agrarian change is, indeed, well illustrated by the statistics of changes in the size of settlements. In Condovery hundred, out of some 70 hamlets marked on the map, 22 survive today, 31 have shrunk since the early thirteenth century, and 8 are wholly deserted. A few are uncertain of diagnosis. In Ford hundred, 12 hamlets survive, 51 have shrunk, and 7 are completely deserted.

Two excellent maps show the landscape of the region as it was about the year 1200. A vast amount of research has clearly gone into compiling these maps. They show the extent of common-field land at that date, and the extent of woodland and waste. In both hundreds the wood and waste is considerably more extensive than the common-field arable, so that the later generations are mainly a story of clearance and new settlement. The open fields, too, seem to have been enclosed at an early date.

Interesting squatter settlements make their appearance on the extensive commons. On Kenley common, for example, the first cottage is noticed in 1537, and by the end of the century a dozen had been built, symptoms of land-hunger and of rising population in the second half of the century. There are several other examples of this phase of agrarian history.

Though this was above all a farming region all through its history, there were also important coal, iron, and lead workings, which gave rise no doubt to the dual economy of farmer-craftsmen or farmer-miners so well described by David Hey in a recent issue of this REVIEW.

Altogether a mass of valuable material for agrarian history lies firmly embedded in this volume, which later workers must quarry for with infinite patience. Once again one wishes that the editor had given us a summary introduction to the volume, in order to ease the path of the searcher. I said this in reviewing the Leicestershire volume on Gartree hundred, and I say it again. One realizes that the *V.C.H.* is too massive and well-set to permit of major changes of format, but this is something which could be done without difficulty in the future. After all, the editor, by the time he has com-

pleted his histories of every parish in a region, knows far more about the main lines of agrarian development than any desultory reader could hope to know, and is in the best possible position to produce such a guiding line through the formidable mass of detail. How much longer must we wait for this elementary help for students of regional history?

W. G. HOSKINS

COLIN R. TUBBS, *The New Forest: An Ecological History*. David and Charles, 1969. 248 pp. £2.50, Paperback edn, £1.25.

This book gives a detailed, yet lucid, account of the New Forest from pre-Roman times to the present day, examining such topics as the Royal Forest, the Statutory Inclosures, and the Future. The history of agriculture in the New Forest was examined by the author in the AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW in 1965. The unenclosed commons sustained a vigorous pastoral economy of cattle, pigs, ponies, and to a lesser extent sheep. In many ways, grazing was complementary to the prime use of the Royal Forest, deer-grazing. For example, green acorns were good pig food, but an excess of acorns without any fibrous food could kill deer and cattle. Thus pigs were allowed to compete with the deer during the autumn when the acorns were falling. The author finds his way through the thickets of Commissions, bylaws, and legislation with admirable ease. There are only one or two blemishes—Wilkinson, not Williamson, wrote the 'Prize Essay on Hampshire' for the Royal Agricultural Society, and a key would have helped to sort the ponies from the cattle and deer in Figure 3. Overall, this is a most valuable addition to the studies of the rural landscape and economy of distinctive parts of the country in the past.

There is an extremely significant subtitle to this book, 'An ecological history'. Almost all previous regional studies have been rather narrow in their outlook on the farming environment. All too often, the reader has wondered whether the ploughman ever saw a wild plant, and whether the shepherd, his sheep, and dogs ever shared the downlands with any other animals. Many economic historians and historical geographers have de-

scribed a 'sterile' world, growing corn, sheep, and cattle, without a wild plant or animal in sight. In view of the large sums of money being spent today on pesticides and attempts at wildlife conservation, the absence of concern for the natural environment by the agricultural historian is quite remarkable. Colin Tubbs tries to broaden the historian's vision of the past.

He writes, "The function of the ecological historian is to synthesize information derived from many different, though often allied fields of research." His book is a model of how this difficult assignment may be carried out. He notes the distribution of pre-Roman settlements and suggests that these people may have begun the clearing of large parts of the forest, causing widespread soil deterioration. The soils became so base-deficient that only light grazing was possible. The vegetation cover in the Dark Ages and medieval period degenerated from woodland through a hazel, grassland, grass-heath stage to heather. The soil scientist and pollen analyst have suggested the various ways in which early farmers changed the vegetation and caused extensive areas of the forest to remain unploughed.

The documentary record of changes in fauna and flora in the forest before the nineteenth century is fragmentary. It can be supplemented by field observations and an assessment of the age of trees and periods of forest regeneration. The oldest generation of trees in the unenclosed woodland dates from between 1650 and 1750, when there was a period of regeneration following one of widespread woodland exploitation. Documentary evidence confirms that efforts were made to reduce grazing and encourage timber growth at that time.

The unenclosed woodlands and heathlands comprise the largest single unit of 'semi-natural' or 'unsown' vegetation remaining in Lowland England today. In addition, a long history of varied land use and land management by forester, farmer, and sportsman has produced a diverse habitat, populated by a unique range of animals. Agriculture has played a large part in forming this landscape, changing the distribution of wild plants and animals. At the same time, the natural environment had a great impact on cultivation and grazing, and Colin

Tubbs, in his book, has shown the close relationship between the farmer and the natural environment. He has given a stimulating boost to work in this field of environmental research.

JOHN SHEAIL

A. L. F. RIVET (ed.), *The Roman Villa in Britain*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969.

xvi+299 pp. 74 plates, 46 figures. £3.75.

All disciplines need their synthesizers and their Nestors; Roman Britain has had Haverfield and Collingwood. The late Sir Ian Richmond might have worn the cloak if he had not departed so soon after his translation from the military to the civil zone of Britain. Is Mr Rivet emerging to assume the task? At all events, for some time now he has sat like a robin on a branch observing the students of Roman Britain with a bright observant eye, summarizing here and criticizing there, and beckoning us back to the broader vistas of classical learning and the profounder considerations arising from the fact that Roman Britain was, all said and done, a Roman province. In this capacity he is a fitting editor of the present collection of essays—the first of its type that deals squarely with the Roman villa in Britain.

High time too, if only to tell us how little we know. The province has been too long the near-monopoly of the militarists and the urban diggers. Agriculture, after all, was the foundation of ancient civilization, and the villa was nothing if not the most developed expression of the Roman Empire's agrarian system—though not the only one. And before we consider the work of Rivet and his colleagues, let us pause to honour the not quite unknown soldiers on whose achievements they stand—Paullett Scrope, Cocks, the Curwens, Corder, Winbolt, Radford, Moray Williams, Mrs O'Neill, and many more. There is another aspect that invites meditation: the yet unconsummated marriage of archaeology and agrarian history. In the present collection there are some symptoms of pregnancy—the work of Glanville Jones is mentioned and almost discussed. Nor let us forget that C. E. Stevens, in the steps of Vindogradoff, has for many years been drawing our attention to the Celtic legal and tenorial undertones of Romano-British agrarian life.

Not all the chapters of this collection will be of equal interest to students of agrarian history. D. J. Smith on mosaic pavements and Miss J. Liversidge on 'Furniture and Interior Fittings' help to fill in the cultural and sometimes the economic picture. But readers of this REVIEW will find their pabulum rather in H. C. Bowen on the Celtic background, Richmond on Villa Plans, Rivet on social and economic aspects, and Webster on the future of villa studies.

Bowen's chapter is the fruit of a year-long wrestling with the remains of our 'Celtic' field systems and as such the product of a scholar who not only takes it for granted (the awareness was new in the 'fifties) that by and large Roman villas stood on a Celtic agricultural basis, but is also strongly aware of their agricultural function. He really grapples with what the farming of the pre-Roman British Iron Age was, and surveys it from the archaeological evidence. He is thus conscious that a proportion at least of Roman villas cultivated what were in effect 'Celtic' fields (Messrs P. J. Fowler and G. Webster have recently presented us with two more such associations to add to that of Brading)—although he draws no technical conclusion from this discovery, and such conclusions ought to be drawn by anyone interested in farming techniques. He also rejects the existence of genuine Romano-British strip-fields, although a pretty good example exists near Kings Worthy villa, Hampshire, and an air-photograph leaves no doubt that these strips co-date with the Roman house. Similar associations, moreover, are now known in the Trier district. Where settlement pattern is concerned, Bowen shows plainly that in both pre-Roman and Roman times, *Einzelhöfe* (isolated farms) existed side by side with smaller and larger rural nucleations—a fact demonstrated by him and others in the 1965 C.B.A. conference on Roman rural settlement; but the connection (if any) between villages and villas remains unclarified.

The weakness of Bowen's account is, I think, its inadequate evaluation of the technical progress of agriculture in the Roman period: Bowen is aware of the advance and multiplication of well-made tools, but prefers to be silent

on the implications of the increased variety of cultivated plants, of better-built byres, granaries, stables, and the like. He does not believe much in the value of the Romano-British wine industry, yet Bede mentions British vines, so perhaps they were a Roman gift to Saxon England. Bowen's treatment of Romano-British livestock is cursory, nor does he discuss the problems of Roman introductions, or improvements of native breeds. And since experts have decided that winter-killing was not invariable in the Early Iron Age and Roman period in Britain, surely the problem of how stock were maintained in winter deserves a mention. Bowen does not, in fact, attempt to build a comprehensive picture of a developed villa-agriculture.

Richmond on villa plans is an uncompleted fragment, and as such it must be judged. It is clear and cogent like everything he wrote, but confines itself chiefly to the residence, whereas, it seems to me, the villa-house should always, where possible, be taken as part of a farmyard with its outbuildings. J. T. Smith would probably reject Richmond's continental parallels of British basilical houses, but the former's protoplan is perhaps too restricted and subjective for reality. We might add that the German 'hall' type of villa, of which Mayen is an example, is indeed represented in this country (Titsey).

On social and economic aspects, Rivet is certainly *primus inter pares*. We read his chapter, in which he says many new things and adopts many new lines of attack, with a sense of refreshment and chastisement. His first theme is, What did the Romans mean by the word 'villa'? This is a peculiar discussion, because the word has been used for Roman rural residences in Britain for over a century, and even if misapplied (and I am not sure that it is) or even if it occurs only once among known Roman place-names in Britain (I have suggested that it must be *understood* after at least two other place-names—*Sulloniacae* and *Vagniacae*; and the word 'villula' is applied by a biographer to the estate of St Patrick's father) it is the phenomenon of the romanized rural residence in Britain that primarily concerns us, and not what it was called. All the same, Rivet's central

thesis—that the British villa was essentially a concomitant of town life and dependent on it, agrees with the conceptions of the *Scriptores Rustici* who held that a productive country estate was among the necessary appurtenances of a civilized Roman gentleman. The difference is that a Roman gentleman could live in town without farming; I doubt whether a British nobleman of the first century A.D. could have done so. The origin, moreover, of many villa-owners among the Celtic nobility might well direct attention to the interesting correspondence that appears to be traceable between some computed villa-estate areas and traditional Celtic units in Wales and Ireland. Rivet demonstrates his own point by showing on maps the intimate connection of known villas with urban centres and with roads. This demonstration, however, leaves us unhappy over two other phenomena, namely that the densest villa concentrations are often near the smaller centres, and that areas without villas appear round some towns, suggesting what we know to have been true in the classical world, *viz.* that town dwellers cultivated the areas about their towns. The connection between decurions and rural estates is not, in fact, quite so simply demonstrated; the phenomena suggest that the immediate vicinity of some towns was cultivated by a different class of inhabitant.

In reviewing agrarian progress against the background of taxation and commissariat demands, even though an estimate of yields and demands is a slippery business involving a number of unknowns, Rivet is tackling essential problems, and I rejoice that he has had the courage to make the attempt. Yet why does he allow for a fallow every third year only? The implication is a three-year course, two crop and one fallow, and in fact the testimony of plant-finds in recent years, including evidence for the cultivation of oats and legumes, is much in favour of the introduction, or promotion, of three-course cultivation in the Roman period. But this is most likely to have been primarily a feature of the progressive villa estates free of communal custom and able to enclose. Recent work by Fowler, indeed, suggests that 'Celtic' fields were both enclosed and open, but much more research is necessary to discover the

scope and implications of this fact. All the same, it would have been well if the problem, at least, had been stated.

Nor can we ignore Rivet's view that the ideal villa produced everything that the household needed. Perhaps it did, but very few villas were 'ideal', and Rivet's own evidence is against him (the connection of villas with towns and communications), as is the evidence of archaeology; salutary, for instance is Rahtz's list of finds of extraneous origin in the relatively insignificant and remote villa of Downton, Wiltshire. Nor can we feel comfortable with Rivet's account of British villas in the third century. Disturbances, even abandonment, undoubtedly; but did these precede a recovery at the end of the century, or was an era of progress under the Severi followed by recession? Archaeological reports of recent years, admittedly often brief, inform us of numerous rural buildings originating in the third century. Are all or most dated to the end of the third century, or are we faced with too little attention to the dating of colour-coated ware? One point, however, must be made: third-century inflation certainly aided agriculture in so far as solid produce rose in value as the value of money dropped. But it is good to see Mr Rivet emphasizing the immigrant element among the villa proprietors. The general evidence on the identity of proprietors, though not ample, has been neglected and, when assembled, is found to be sufficient to furnish something of a picture: the extraneous element appears quite plainly, and this surely invites agro-technical inferences.

On the obscure problem of the Roman legal status of British lands, Rivet has a keen point to make, to wit, that one of the aims of the *Constitutio Antoniniana* was to increase income from the 5 per cent inheritance tax, and this would not have been achieved had not the majority of provincial proprietors then acquired complete ownership of their estates. But on actual tenurial problems Rivet has little to say.

As in the Roman bath, the cold douche is kept for the end; Webster on the future of villa studies has some wholesome shocks to deliver. It is not simply that (as he tells us) no more than eight villas have been scientifically excavated

in Britain with anything like completeness; he critically reviews three relatively modern villa excavations (Llantwit Major, Lockleys, and Langton, Yorkshire), and shows how much the conclusions drawn from them require revision. Only the last site, indeed, comes out with anything like credit. Our faith in one aspect of British archaeology is thus gravely shaken. But Webster is also constructive, and proposes a plan for villa research. To his recommendations we would venture to add one more: a villa should never be studied in isolation, but always in terms of its region, communications, soils, position, and its neighbouring sites; also in relation to what happened later in the same area. It is, in fact, the ecology of the villa which stands in need of development.

Rivet ends with a few words on the continuity problem, and Webster deals with the same subject at somewhat greater length. I would confirm Rivet's view that continuity is to be found, if anywhere, among the lower classes of the rural population, including the *coloni*. Webster's discussion is more exclusively archaeological, and he has much to say of coin-evidence (or the lack of it); but he is convinced that evidence will be increasingly forthcoming of the persistence of some form of Romano-British rural life into the sixth century, at least in the south-west. Such evidence has, indeed, considerably increased since he wrote. On one point, however, I would suggest an emendment: the belt-buckles of Sonia Hawkes and G. C. Dunning now seen to evidence military occupation at some villas well into the fifth century, and do not represent *foederati* turned *hospites* as in late Gaul; the continental affinities of their accoutrements now prove to be with those of barbarian troops of the imperial field army, the *Comitatenses*. Honorius, it seems, did not leave Britain as naked as contemporary sources would have us believe. Such settlers may well have been one of the elements making for the occasional survival of villa-estates within identifiable boundaries such as can be found, I believe, about the Roman house of Ditchley, Oxfordshire.

This book is meritorious in its self-criticism, in its fresh approach, and in its active thinking. It gets to grips with much of the economic and

social background that produced and affected the villa. Its deficiencies are accentuated by its own trenchant thinking and we shall anticipate much more of such thought (and action) from its authors in the future.

SHIMON APPLEBAUM

J. GILCHRIST, *The Church and Economic Activity in the Middle Ages*. Macmillan, 1969, xi+309 pp. £4.20.

This book falls into two parts. The first 139 pages are devoted to an analysis of the economic doctrines of the medieval Church as expressed in its canons; and this is followed by a range of extracts (translated) from these canons, beginning with the Council of Nicaea in 325 and ending with the Fifth Lateran Council, 1512-17. The 20 pages of bibliography and 60 pages of notes reveal something of the industry of the author.

The book is concerned with what the Church had to say, in its most formal pronouncements, about economic activity. According to Dr Gilchrist, the views expressed were formulated most clearly during the period 1000-1300, an age of "economic revolution". But what the Church *said* and what the Church *did* were not always the same things, and part of the introductory section is devoted to 'The Doctrines at Work', in which the author explores, necessarily briefly, the implementation of the views on property, usury, the just price, and charity. Dr Gilchrist sees the later Middle Ages as a period of "economic recession," with the canonists fighting a losing battle against newer, more secular (perhaps 'realistic' might be the term used today) forces.

Dr Gilchrist's brief is limited. He is interested in ecclesiastical law rather than in the Church as a great estate holder and financial organization; although he does indicate somewhat briefly that the Church's interests in economic activity was always a mixture of remote idealism and practical involvement. But even within his own sphere one or two small points may be made. By concentrating on what was said in the Councils, the author has minimized the differences between the various units that made up 'the Medieval Church'. Further it may be doubted whether sufficient weight

has been given to the doctrine of apostolic poverty and mendicancy which troubled the Church so much in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Nor is it clear for whom the extracts from the canons are intended—but this book is the first of a promised trilogy, and the whole may make the purpose of this volume clearer. At £4.20, however, it is too dear, even for a specialist work like this.

ALAN ROGERS

PHILIP A. J. PETTIT, *The Royal Forests of Northamptonshire. A Study in their Economy, 1558-1714*. Northamptonshire Record Society, Vol. XXIII, 1968. xvi+236 pp. 7 maps. £2.62½ plus 25p postage.

Here at last we have Dr Pettit's frequently cited D.Phil. thesis on the royal forests of Rockingham, Salcey, and Whittlewood. As one of the first studies of a local forest economy to appear it will be welcomed by those historians and geographers who in the past few years have become increasingly interested in the woodland regions of England.

Dr Pettit begins his account by helping us to gain our bearings. He establishes the locale of the three royal forests in this populous Midlands county, and sets down the fundamental facts of forest law and administration. His three principal subjects are tackled in turn—the Crown's management of its forests and in particular the early Stuarts' attempts to exploit them for revenue; the story of the timber supply in the Northamptonshire forests and the light that these examples throw upon the thesis of a national 'timber crisis'; thirdly, and perhaps of most interest to the readers of this journal, the economy of the Northamptonshire forests, including a case study of the forest village of Brigstock in Rockingham.

The outstanding fact about the Crown's management of its forests that emerges from Dr Pettit's account was its failure. Whether in the preservation of game, in making traditional rents and fines a viable source of income, or in employing the resources of the forests in timber and underwood at all efficiently, successive royal governments from Elizabeth I to Charles II failed dismally. Chiefly to blame was the "anachronistic and discordant ag-

glomeration of private interests" that was supposed to serve as a forest administration. In practice, this meant that the very officials appointed to safeguard the royal interest were often its worst enemies in poaching and depredations upon land and trees. The crookedness of the royal officials was only one of many private interests conspiring to thwart the royal interest. From the top of the social scale to the poor cottagers at the bottom, Dr Pettit's evidence makes it clear that hundreds of local inhabitants were involved in violations. Is it any wonder, then, that the early Stuarts failed in their schemes to revive forest law?

The timber in this group of royal forests began to be exploited with a modicum of effectiveness only after 1660. In the previous hundred years the profits from wood sales had been unimpressive. The lack of a good market was one reason: the county was isolated from water routes and industrial areas, and alternative supplies were held by local landowners keen to exploit the local market. Another factor was once again royal policy. It was marked by "unimaginative and sometimes fatuous conservation," so extreme that timber was often kept until it became worthless for the shipyard. After the Restoration better communications and a growing Navy created markets for Northamptonshire timber, but over the period 1558-1714 there was no timber shortage in the county, and only a slight decline in the size of its forests. Dr Pettit's account shows convincingly that throughout the period the most destructive elements in these forests were the forest officers and the local inhabitants. In short, there is ample testimony in these pages to the incredible neglect by the royal bureaucracy of royal interests under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts.

The final section of the book is in many respects the most interesting, for here the author brings to light a number of important changes in the local forest economy. He shows that the population of most of Northamptonshire's forest villages grew sharply in the sixteenth century as people came in search of land, many no doubt from the fielden parts of the county which were increasingly afflicted (as is shown) with land shortage. Villages often

doubled in population from 1520 to 1670, and some were so large at the latter date—e.g. King's Cliffe in Rockingham with over 800 inhabitants—that they could hardly be called villages any longer. Because of this population growth, however, pasture land became more and more scarce, and after 1600 social tension rose when a handful of well-off farmers stood as islands in a sea of poor cottagers. With land ever scarcer, industrial employments were taken up more and more in the following century, although they were still not commonplace until the end of the period. The study of Brigstock is put to good use in showing how a single village experienced these changes. From it, for instance, we see how thoroughly dependent upon the forest for a living were the mass of cottagers.

These studies afford us a valuable close-up view of the forest communities of Northamptonshire. Many of the changes that Dr Pettit has found taking place there conform broadly to the experiences of woodland communities in other parts of the country. Yet these studies inevitably add nuances and make us aware that there was no 'typical' forest village. Occasionally they suggest questions: for example, was a large class of smallholders and cottagers peculiar to the late sixteenth century and the seventeenth century? Dr Pettit finds this class in considerable force in Northamptonshire forest villages in the reign of Henry VIII; in the case of Brigstock as early as 1400!

Dr Pettit succeeds therefore in his stated aim of writing a history that encompasses political, social, and economic aspects of this group of royal forests, and his proposition that "no forest ever consisted merely of woods and trees" is well borne out in this book. Moreover, the author's command of his material would appear to be nearly complete; he obviously is familiar with the area about which he writes from the ground up and not only on paper. One must, nevertheless, take exception to his *modus operandi* on one or two counts. For one thing the account is not as balanced as it perhaps might have been. Too much space is given to the administration of the forests, nearly two-thirds of the text being spent on matters of

revenue and policy, important subjects to be sure but not ones that will keep the interest of even the most devoted reader after a few dozen pages and where one would have hoped for more space to be given, the evidence allowing, to forest villages such as Brigstock. (It is worth noting that Dr Pettit promises a larger study of this village in future.)

Moreover, Dr Pettit's study of the forest economy reflects too little of the light shed upon the subject by other researchers in the past decade. He might perhaps be excused no reference to the discussions of agriculture and labouring life in the forests in the recent volume of *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1500-1640*, which appeared a year before his own book, although one might still have expected reference in the preface or bibliography to such a major work. But the disregard of Dr Thirsk's essay on the origins of rural industries in England, which appeared in 1961 and which had a good deal to say about woodland areas, is difficult to excuse. Studies of the forests of the south-west are also ignored. The result is that the author misses some at least potentially important questions—for instance, why were industrial by-employments taken up comparatively late in the Northamptonshire forests; or, why was the popular reaction to Charles I's revival of forest law so mild in the county by comparison with that in the south-west—and his book is somewhat poorer for it.

What Dr Pettit gives us, therefore, is an extremely well-researched study of the royal forests of Northamptonshire which it is good to have at last in print. One's only major reservation is that more time could have been profitably spent in revising and updating a thesis originally submitted in 1959.

A. L. BEIER

ALAN MACFARLANE, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin*. Cambridge University Press, 1970. xiii+241 pp. £2.75.

Ralph Josselin was vicar of Earls Colne in Essex from 1641 to his death in 1683. His lengthy and detailed personal diary covers nearly every day between 1644 and 1665 and thereafter at least one entry each week. It is this

diary which forms the basis of Dr Macfarlane's study of Josselin's family life. This book is subtitled 'An Essay in Historical Anthropology'. In the author's own words it "deals with the problems of a demographic and sociological kind which currently intrigue many historians." Trained both as a historian and as a social anthropologist, Macfarlane is eminently suited to undertake the task.

His analysis of Josselin's life falls into four parts. Two chapters of the first, 'The Political, Ecclesiastical and Economic World', are of the greatest direct interest to agrarian historians. Josselin was not only a priest but also a farmer—his grandfather had been a wealthy yeoman who left over £1,000 in his will. Josselin himself, demonstrating considerable energy and planning, spent over £1,000 on the purchase of land during his life. A further £900 went into payment of taxes, to running costs, and to agricultural reinvestment. During the 1650's he saved up to half his annual income and subsequently at least one-third. Land came second only to his children as a form of investment. All this was achieved from an income which averaged between £120 and £180 per annum.

At least one-third of this income came from the land itself, largely in the form of profits earned as rentier or farmer. He leased the bulk of his holdings, farming only 12-20 acres himself. As a farmer Josselin concentrated on arable crops, though he later purchased cows, pigs, and steers. From the 1660's he also kept sheep. His orchard formed another source of profit, and in this Josselin grew mainly apples and pears, together with apricots, gooseberries, and mulligatawny. But the bulk of his farming income came from his corn—wheat, rye, oats, and maslin—and hay crops. As a farmer and a yeoman, he provides an interesting comparison with Robert Loder. In the words of the author, "his whole Diary is an example of the hard-working, endlessly accumulating and re-investing type whose features have been so widely analysed in recent discussions of the 'protestant ethic'."

It is, however, in the other three sections of this book—'The Life Cycle', 'The Social World', and 'The Mental World'—that the novelty of Dr Macfarlane's approach is shown.

It is here that he illuminates so many of the imponderables of seventeenth-century society alluded to by Peter Laslett in *The World We Have Lost*. Josselin's family shows us a personal aspect of historical demography for here we find not only statistics but also *attitudes*. Thus Josselin spoke of "... our Wives like Vines, and our Children like Plants and Branches." Here, therefore, Macfarlane analyses both the statistics of, and the attitudes to, the three components of the 'Life Cycle'—Birth, Marriage, and Death. He includes a particularly valuable analysis of adolescence and the placing of children in work.

Dr Macfarlane also uses another basic anthropological technique in extracting Josselin's kinship ties. Indeed, a kinship diagram illustrates the dustcover of his book. Josselin's case supports the hypothesis of the Cambridge Group—that the extended family was not a significant feature of English pre-industrial society. The welfare functions performed by such family units were provided instead by servants; servants who perhaps represented exchanges of children between households. To Dr Macfarlane, "... geographical mobility, high age of marriage, low expectation of life, and inheritance concentrated in the nuclear family, were some of the major factors militating against the importance of his extended kinship network." Josselin's kinship ties resembled those of a highly mobile modern family.

The final section of the book, 'The Mental World', examines Josselin's attitudes to pain, sin, and the deity, his dreams, imagery, and the structure of thought. It will provide a stimulating text for the historian of ideas.

What therefore has been Dr Macfarlane's achievement? He has produced a fascinating biography of one of the 'middling sort of men', a man who was, moreover, a Puritan cleric. In some ways this compensates for the lack of a full printed edition of the diary. To more conventional historians, the anthropological approach may seem the weakness not the strength of this book. The contrasts of the *mores* of an English clergyman with those of the Comanche may seem more eccentric than credible, but in Dr Macfarlane's hands they are always illuminating. The novel analytical tools he has brought

to bear on Josselin may refresh our reading of other familiar diarists, but this book does not entirely establish their validity. The essentially subjective diary is not ideal material for the social sciences, and this study, based largely on one such source, is at many points unconvincing. Single-instance evidence is not entirely substantiated by cross-references to other societies. The kinship diagram sacrifices the precious chronology of the historian to the grand analytical design. But the weaknesses of this book are probably only those of a 'pioneer' and one looks forward to seeing these methods gainfully employed in the study of a community, rather than an individual. Dr Macfarlane has suggested that anthropology and sociology can make vital contributions to the historical method: further studies may establish their place. His book, therefore, will be a stimulating and useful, but not essential, addition to the bookshelf of the agricultural historian.

J. A. CHARTRES

Agricultural History, Vol. XLIII, no. 1, January 1969. Published for the Agricultural History Society by the University of California Press. 214 pp.

The major part of this issue of the American journal, *Agricultural History*—186 pages—is devoted to the proceedings of a 1967 symposium on eighteenth-century agriculture. The symposium, held in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, was sponsored by the Smithsonian, the Accokeek Foundation, and the [American] Agricultural History Society. The objects were varied: to obtain practical advice on running a living eighteenth-century farm, to bring eighteenth-century agricultural history to a wider public, and principally, to bring together for exchange of ideas and information a varied group of distinguished specialists, historians, both political and agrarian, biologists, horticulturists, and agricultural economists.

The meeting produced ten short papers and nine comments, and in the tradition of American academic gatherings some of the comments are as lengthy and as valuable as the papers on which they are based. Only one paper, that by

Dr Fussell, is specifically on England, although one other by Slicher van Bath deals with the broad evolutionary development of agriculture in eighteenth-century Europe. The remaining contributions provide a varied view of farming conditions, knowledge, and practices in America, with a certain concentration on Virginia, Maryland, and Georgia, but with topics ranging from landscape architecture and plant hybridization to the political role of small tobacco farmers.

Dr Fussell offers a provocative opening to the symposium by denying the influence of science in English farming of the period. Such contemporary writings as had a scientific basis were neglected by farmers "soaked in local lore," hard-headedly practical in their attitude to novelty, the majority of whom "lived and died without reference to the printed word." The advances made resulted from experimentation and imitation where encouraged by visible results. It is a big subject, of course, and needs more space and deeper consideration than Dr Fussell was allowed to give it. In his urbane commentary, Professor Brandenburg complains that Dr Fussell gives 'science' too restricted a definition and neglects the contemporary belief in enquiry, the enthusiasm for carefully controlled and measured experiment, which was at least scientific in spirit. He instances the activities of the early societies, particularly the Bath and West of England, which from 1783 published 14 volumes of detailed reports on members' experiments.

Slicher van Bath's paper emphasizes the great variety of practices and standards to be found in western Europe, and he points out that the English development of a mixed farming system based on relatively large farm units was unique. In his comment, Folke Dovring criticizes van Bath's reliance on figures of yields related to amounts of seed sown. He argues that the ratio of yields to land area provides a better index of agricultural progress, but the examples he gives for England seem to be unhappily chosen. Can it really be held, for instance, that the yield per acre figure for 1812 "represents the peak of the results achieved through eighteenth-century advances in British agriculture"—in the face of the great extension of cultiva-

tion to inferior soils under the pressure of wartime shortages, and in view of the excessively wet and deficient harvest of 1812 itself?

Regrettably, the main body of the contributions on America must be dealt with even more summarily. Those on plant hybridization, silk-culture, and horticulture are primarily bibliographical in character, but are none the less interesting for that, and they provide many valuable insights into the technology of the period. Professor Land's study of the problems of the tobacco planters is principally a statistical exercise based on an examination of Maryland inventories and accounts. It reveals that some 70 per cent of the planters were small men owning no slaves and worth £100 or less. For cultivation they relied heavily upon hand implements, possibly, as Conway Zirkle suggests, because ploughs were of little use on holdings encumbered by rotting tree stumps or on light soils subject to loss of humus and mineral nutrients through leaching. D. Alan Williams shows that the small tobacco farmers of Virginia participated widely in local administration, and he argues that by providing an outlet for ambition this prevented the farmers from challenging the political leadership of the large gentry planters, and so secured political stability in the middle eighteenth century.

Merrill Jensen's paper is much wider in scope. He gives an analysis of what is known about the role of agriculture in American foreign trade before and after the Revolution. Of great political significance was the way in which the various States dealt with the 'farm problem' of the 1780's—the burden of wartime taxes and debts upon the farmers. The new Constitution stopped the States from yielding to the interests of debtors, most of whom were farmers, as opposed to the interests of creditors, most of whom were merchants. Thus developed from old beginnings the portentous division between mercantile and agrarian interests, between city and country, and North and South, which was to play so large a part in American history.

Finally, on a theme which links England with the United States, Professor Loehr writes about Arthur Young and American agriculture. The paper is weak on Young himself, repeating

the old myth of his failure in farming, and neglecting the significance of the many contradictions and changes of mind to be found in his writings. It is more a broad review of the effects on America of progress in English agriculture in general. Professor Woodward's discussion is in fact fuller on Young, and is particularly interesting on his relations with George Washington, and on the intriguing possibility that Young was the author of a contemporary work on *American Husbandry*.

These few inadequate remarks will give some idea of the variety and richness of this valuable collection of papers and comments, to say nothing of the bonus provided by the excerpts from contemporary writings interspersed among the papers themselves. The collection deserves a wide readership, and if it does nothing more, it should attract attention to the important work carried on by *Agricultural History*. Over a great many years now it has published some very significant articles, mainly on American agriculture, of course, but also on England; certainly, its neglect in this country is no compliment to English scholarship. Perhaps a small blow against English parochialism will make a fitting end to this review: may I remind you that a joint subscription of £4 will secure you not only the two annual issues of the *Agricultural History Review* but also the four issues of *Agricultural History*?

G. E. MINGAY

J. H. NORRIS, *The Water-Powered Corn Mills of Cheshire*. Reprinted from the *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, vols. 75 and 76, 1955-6, Manchester, 1969. 37 pp. 75p.

This reprint makes available to a wider audience an excellent piece of industrial archaeology which is the result of a considerable amount of painstaking research and fieldwork. Mr Norris is to be congratulated on adding yet another valuable piece to the patchwork which is the history of corn milling. It is an odd fact; bearing in mind its importance to basic food production and, no less significant, as a school for many early engineers, that the corn-milling industry has received scant regard from

economic historians. The only full-scale history of corn milling relating to Britain was published as long ago as 1899 and, since then, work on the subject from a purely historical standpoint has been sparse.

Mr Norris and a number of other industrial archaeologists have provided a valuable collection of material bearing on the technological history of corn milling which at the same time throws some light on the industry's general development. This particular work is clearly set out and has a number of very good photographic illustrations. A useful introductory section explains many of the basic technical aspects of water milling and this helps place in perspective the detail given in the gazetteer. The list of Cheshire mills mentions nearly two hundred sites with varying amounts of information on each.

A close analysis of the technical detail given bears out at least one point—that technological improvement in milling was irregularly adopted and old methods persisted, often alongside new ones. Even the comparatively simple change to iron working parts was delayed, in many instances while existing mechanisms continued to function. It is unfortunate that little precise dating of changes and rebuilding could be included but this, of course, would have made the research infinitely more complicated and in many cases may have proved impossible.

The value of the industrial archaeologist to the historian is in his assiduous collection of detail which can provide the groundwork for assimilation and interpretation. Mr Norris has done his part of the job well. It is to be hoped that similar surveys of other areas will appear and that some historian will attempt to do justice to the history of corn milling.

DAVID GRACE

HENRI MENDRAS, *La Fin des Paysans. Changement et Innovations dans les Sociétés rurales françaises*. Librairie Armand Colin, 1970. 306 pp.

This book was first published in 1967, but now appears in a paperback edition. It is of absorbing interest to historians, for it treats of issues which in England were settled in a compara-

tively detached, but socially ruthless manner in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but which are burning current problems in many European countries today. Fortunately, they cannot nowadays be "settled" in a *laissez-faire* way, and it will bring comfort to English historians who have studied the process by which the peasantry was destroyed at home to see the sympathetic understanding with which French sociologists discuss the problems of their peasantry in the modern world.

In a masterly introduction, Professor Mendras presents the dilemma: the need to grow more food without precipitating the social disaster of destroying a large peasant class. Indeed, Professor Mendras does not think that the peasantry will allow itself to be destroyed, but considers rather that a different framework must be devised within which peasant farming can flourish and yet serve the nation efficiently in food production. He then proceeds to a survey of peasant agriculture in the past and the present. He has an instructive tale to tell of the attempts to introduce hybrid maize in recent years into peasant areas of France. He also offers the results of a recent questionnaire among the peasantry, in which they were asked to comment on their prospects for the future. Professor Mendras's title seems to predict the end of the peasantry, and yet his sympathetic book inspires hope for their future, for as he says in his last line: "What would the world be like without peasants?"

JOAN THIRSK

L. T. C. ROLT, *Waterloo Ironworks: a History of Taskers of Andover, 1809-1968*. David and Charles, 1969. 250 pp. £2.25.

The important part which the manufacture of farm tools and machinery played in the British economy during the nineteenth century is often overlooked; the largest firms in the business employed thousands of workers just before 1914, and, as Professor Saul has reminded us, Britain exported agricultural machinery on a considerable scale even to a major industrial power such as Austria-Hungary. It is therefore useful to have this solid and scholarly addition to the literature on the subject from Mr Rolt. He writes most authoritatively on technological

matters, but does not neglect the entrepreneurial, social, and religious aspects of the firm's impact on the Wiltshire-Hampshire countryside (the Taskers were Congregationalists and strong advocates of temperance). There is also interesting new material on the Swing riots of 1830. The founding father of the Waterloo Ironworks was, naturally and fittingly, a blacksmith who added first a foundry and then an ironworks, built on Clatford Marsh, to his original smithy at Abbots Ann. From 1869, Taskers began to build steam traction engines. After about 1900 this developed into a specialization in 'Little Giant' tractors, trailers, and semi-trailers which stood the firm in good stead during the Second World War when tanks and aircraft fuselages had to be transported rapidly by road over great distances. The vicissitudes of the firm between 1896 (when it was joint-stocked) and 1932 show some similarity to those of Napiers. Taskers Ltd were in the hands of a receiver by 1903, and after a revival just before the First World War went into voluntary liquidation in 1931-2, by which time the total number employed in all grades had sunk to 25 and the weekly wage bill totalled only £63 16s. Its expansion since the 1930's is a tribute to the recuperative power of private enterprise when combined with a sound technological base. The book is generously provided with interesting illustrations of the firm's premises and products since 1809.

W. H. CHALONER

A. E. B. OWEN (ed.), *The Records of the Commissioners of Sewers in the Parts of Holland, 1547-1603*, Vol. II, The Lincolnshire Record Society, Vol. 63, 1968. ix+187 pp. £3.

It is difficult to review this volume of the Lincolnshire Record Society, edited by Mr Owen, without referring back to its predecessor, Volume 54, published in 1959, under the same title. That earlier volume was edited by Miss Mary Kirkus, who had conceived the plan and selected the documents to be included in the two volumes (and indeed for another two as well), but her death in 1959 stopped the work which Mr Owen ably continued.

As verdicts for the Holland Courts exist for almost every year of the period under review,

the present volume is only a selection, and consists of those verdicts that are representative of the whole class of documents, both chronologically and from the point of view of their intrinsic interest, so that now three volumes are planned instead of the original four. Mr Owen has also made other alterations, such as printing accounts (e.g. of the dyking of the Welland in 1567) which tell us what was done, rather than what was not done or what ought to be done, as in the verdicts. Other alterations in the present volume include rearrangements of the text and the adding of very helpful explanatory headings to all documents.

But, other than these, there is little that is new in the present volume. Mr Owen himself, in his preface, readily acknowledges that Miss Kirkus in her introduction to Volume I "effectively extracted all that this class of documents [the verdicts] can be made to yield concerning the administrative history of the sewers courts." Indeed, she did more. The sections of her Introduction on the physical conditions and early history of draining in Holland, the Acts of Sewers, the Commissions of Sewers, the analysis of the meeting places of the Courts, the biographical details of the Com-

missioners, the bibliography, and, perhaps above all, the glossary of local draining terms, cover nearly a hundred pages of fascinating reading. It was a pioneer effort that takes us beyond Dugdale and the Webbs in our understanding of drainage administration.

To someone, like the reviewer, who has done work in the Somerset Levels, a similar lowland area on the west coast of England, perhaps two comments could be made. First, in Somerset, barely any documents of the Court before 1780 have come to light, and the surfeit of material in the Fenland areas makes one envious. Secondly, the existence in Holland of Joyce Banks, embankments maintained in sections not by frontagers, but by people who exercised common rights, suggests analogies with the Somersetshire Austre tenements. There were holdings which had unlimited commonage rights on the newly reclaimed marshes in return for specific duties of either wall work or ditch scouring. Clearly, there is room for much comparative work on draining, maintenance, and administration, to which these two volumes of the Lincolnshire Record Society offer an interesting beginning.

MICHAEL WILLIAMS

Shorter Notices

GORDON WINTER, *A Country Camera, 1844-1914. Rural Life as depicted in Photographs from the early Days of Photography to the Outbreak of the First World War*. David and Charles, 1971. 120 pp. £2.25.

Gordon Winter's book, first published by *Country Life* in 1966, is a splendid source of illustrative material on rural social life, drawn from many different parts of the country. Its re-issue is to be warmly welcomed.

THOMAS C. SMITH, *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*. Stanford U.P., 1970. 246 pp. £1.30.

This book originally published in 1959 now makes a welcome appearance in paperback. Its

account of the growth of industries in Japan within the framework of rural society offers many remarkable analogies with English experience. Anyone interested in investigating the development of handicraft and other by-employments in England before 1800 and analysing their impact on social life should read this striking study of parallel circumstances in Japan.

HELEN HARRIS, *Industrial Archaeology of the Peak District*. David and Charles, 1971. 256 pp. £3.15.

Although this volume is mainly concerned with industrial sites in Derbyshire, it also contains descriptions and photographs of agricultural

structures, namely, cornmills, pinfolds, sheep-washing places, packhorse ways and bridges, cheese factories, long walled fields, and lynchets. A parish-by-parish gazetteer at the end gives the precise locations of each site.

JOHN T. SCHLEBECKER, *Bibliography of Books and Pamphlets on the History of Agriculture in the United States, 1607-1967*. American Bibliographical Centre, Clio Press, Santa Barbara, California, 1969. \$15 cloth bound; \$5.50 paper bound.

This is a useful list of over two thousand titles of books (but not of articles) on agricultural history, including significant novels. It has a copious index almost as long as the bibliography.

JOHN BATEMAN, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland*, with an Introduction by David Spring. The Victorian Library, Leicester University Press, 1971. xxviii + 534 pp. £3.50.

For those who do not possess a copy of an early edition of this work, first published in 1876, with its fading red covers and yellow, foxed pages, this new edition will afford a good substitute. It contains an introduction by David Spring—short, but helpful inasmuch as it fills in the historical background to the New Domesday of Landowners, the source from which Bateman drew up his own list of great landowners. It also tells something of Bateman's career and the four editions through which his work passed, adding a salutary warning to users of this work, since town properties were excluded from the calculations of landowners' wealth.

H. C. DARBY and I. B. TERRETT, *The Domesday Geography of Midland England*. 2nd edn. C.U.P., 1971. xvii + 490 pp. £10.

This new edition of a work first published in 1954 has been substantially revised. Many of

the maps have been altered and re-drawn, place-name identifications have been revised in the light of more recent research, and some alterations have been made to the text.

ARTHUR YOUNG, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Hertfordshire (1804)*.

David and Charles, 1971. 236 pp. £5.25.

David and Charles, publishers, continue their programme of reprinting the County Reports of the Board of Agriculture. In this volume Young reviewed the agriculture of a county which had been loudly praised for its high standard of farming in the early eighteenth century, but which was thought, by some at least, to have rested on its laurels since then. Young's verdict was ambivalent; but anyone attempting to define more precisely the chronology of agricultural improvement in different counties of England between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries will find useful material in this account.

THE CLEVELAND AND TEESSIDE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY, *Bulletin*, nos 11, 12, 13. Dec., 1970, Spring, 1971, Summer, 1971.

The Bulletin of this Society started publication in June 1968, and deserves to be better known. Its contents include transcripts of original documents and research articles. No. 11 prints the 1563 census of households in County Durham, an article on the port of Coatham, and another on the Eston gypsum mine in Cleveland. No. 12 contains a valuable article by Roger Fieldhouse on population movements in north-west Yorkshire, 1377-1563; and no. 13 an article on place-names indicative of Danish settlement in north Yorkshire. The *Bulletin*, issued quarterly, is available from D. W. Pattenden, 45 Stanhope Grove, Acklam, Middlesbrough, Teesside, at a subscription of £1 per annum.