

Book Reviews

RICHARD DUNCAN-JONES, *The Economy of the Roman Empire: Quantitative Studies*. C.U.P., 1974. xvi + 396 pp. £7.60.

This book, portions of which consist of revised versions of work already published, examines in great detail, and, where this is at all possible, on a quantitative basis, some of the more important elements in the economic structure which underlay that vast political entity we call the Roman Empire. The economy of this remarkable political and military system was, despite its size, strikingly primitive in many respects, and certainly less developed than those of many an undeveloped country of the modern world. While the book is indispensable to the ancient historian, its prime interest for readers of this journal will inevitably be centred on those chapters which are directed to agricultural problems; your reviewer has therefore concentrated his attention on the following chapters: ch. 2, agricultural investment and profits; ch. 4, the section on subsistence costs; and ch. 7, on the alimentary institutions, together with the relevant appendices.

In a terse yet well-documented introduction, the author picks out the salient features of the economy, stressing in particular two contrasts: (a) that between the low general level of the technology and the outstanding achievements of builders and engineers; and (b) that between the low level of agricultural production and the remarkable capacity of the rulers to organize labour "in a way that produced results on a scale not usually associated with primitive European economies" (p. 2). He further emphasizes those aspects of the social system which "both permitted and encouraged extreme inequalities of private wealth." The largest part of the population in almost all areas was engaged in the tilling of the soil and the processing of its products; and land was the most important field for investment, whereas industry was rarely organized in large production units. The result was that the most substantial fortunes were those derived from the accumulated surpluses of many generations, which became concentrated in fewer and fewer hands as a result of significant reductions in the reproduction rate of the upper classes. At the other end of the economic spectrum were large numbers of peasants eking out a bare subsistence on the land, and a fairly large population of slaves "many of whom would retain little of what they produced beyond what was needed for bare subsistence" (p. 3).

This preponderance of landed wealth was reflected in the political as well as in the social structure. Access to all important offices from provincial town councillors to Roman magistrates was determined by property qualifications. The "spread" was

a wide one: a prospective senator needed to have twelve times as much "in the bank" as a would-be councillor. Using wheat (in metric tons) as his measuring unit, Duncan-Jones shows that the capital requirement for a senator of the early Empire stood very little below the largest individual fortune recorded for England in the mid-seventeenth century; with death duties as low as 5 per cent, and no progressive taxation of the rich, it is not surprising to find a phenomenal growth in private wealth.

Side by side with this goes an equally characteristic feature of the economy—the powerful role of the private sector in financing all kinds of public works and services, not only by means of loans (though these, as Duncan-Jones demonstrates, were common enough, and many ambitious local authorities got into serious financial difficulties through overspending), but in the form of outright benefactions. The aim here, as the author points out, was not primarily to do good to others, but to enhance the prestige of the donor. This feature incidentally provides, as the author's own researches have shown, a great deal of information about prices, which is all the more valuable since statistical information is non-existent. The tabulation of this material for the African provinces (ch. 3), and for Italy (ch. 4), while falling short of anything like a price-index, nevertheless provides the economic historian with a quantity of useful and carefully annotated data in a readily accessible form.

The main body of the work begins with an account of the finances of that remarkable public figure of the late first century, the Younger Pliny, who, though not in the top income bracket, possessed at least six houses, and perhaps as many as 1,000 slaves. His munificence was also very impressive, his native city of Como benefiting from the provision of a public library and a fund to maintain it, as well as a private charity which supported more than forty local boys and girls (pp. 23–7). From this opening the account moves naturally into the topic of investment and profits in agriculture, with a detailed study of the one area of production for which we have explicit evidence on profitability, namely wine-production. Vines were commonly regarded as highly profitable, and Columella's balance sheet seems to show a rate of profit of the order of 25 per cent. These figures are scrutinized in detail (pp. 39–54), and shown to be "palpably inaccurate", the result of a much too optimistic estimate of profits, and of several important omissions on the expenditure side. Scaled down to a modest 9–10 per cent, the rate would still be favourable against an agricultural dividend for Italy usually reckoned at 5–6

per cent, and viticulture is thus shown to have been "potentially more profitable than most other forms of cultivation" (p. 59).

The long lists of prices from Africa and Italy which form the core of this wide-ranging economic survey include almost everything except commodity prices, but normal levels of the all-important price of grain can be deduced from the maintenance charges set out in the alimentary inscriptions. On the reasonable assumption that only the bare minimum was provided in these primitive schemes of social welfare support for children, and that the main component was grain, Duncan-Jones attempts to arrive at some estimates of basic wheat costs (pp. 144-6), rounding off this section with some interesting, but tantalizingly brief, observations on subsistence diet and its calorific value. That chain-gang slaves got a bread allowance of 120-150 Roman pounds per month (equivalent to 3-3½ lb per diem), according to the time of year, is not surprising; like the working cattle, the agricultural slaves were well cared for, since they represented a heavy capital outlay which must not be allowed to lose its value through inattention to health. The figure of 3,000-3,500 calories per day suggested here compares favourably with modern dietetic requirements, but "the calorific value of Roman bread may have been less than that of modern bread" (p. 147 and n. 2). On the other hand, experiments in the controlled growing of emmer at the Butser Bronze Age farm apparently show better values than those of *triticum vulgare*. This is an area given over to unsupported generalizations and wild surmises, and there is a great need of solid research, based on close analysis of both archaeological and literary evidence.

On population and demographic policy the author provides a full discussion of the evidence for estate-sizes, demolishing in passing the common assumption that government alimentary loans were intended to favour the small landowner. Indeed it looks very much as if these loan schemes for funding "social welfare benefits" were introduced not in the interest of landowners but because "local banking facilities of the kind needed to guarantee an annual interest payment did not exist in the smaller centres" (p. 300). The discussion of the observed variations in loan rates on the two major schemes concludes: "the predominance of round totals shows a lack of arithmetical diligence. The commissioners seem to have been inclined to do as few exact division sums as possible." What a contrast to the fractional niceties of the ancient Egyptian land records!

The importance of these chapters to the student of agricultural history is obvious; but from a wider angle Dr Duncan-Jones has put all those concerned with the history of the Roman Empire in his debt by providing solid foundations for further research on the economic side. The book conforms in all re-

spects with the high standards of production associated with the Cambridge Press.

K. D. WHITE

J. R. RAVENSDALE, *Liable to Floods. Village Landscape on the Edge of the Fens, AD 450-1850*. C.U.P., 1974. xii + 206 pp. £5.50.

Mr Ravensdale has given us a book on the historical geography of three Cambridgeshire villages, Cottenham, Waterbeach, and Landbeach, which, as the flap suggests, "studies the evolution and destruction of part of the English landscape." The book is especially detailed on the interaction of human and physical changes in the environment of the southern fenlands, and Mr Ravensdale has not hesitated to deal with the economic and social problems caused by the alternation of inundation and dehydration which has characterized the region since the earliest period of human settlement. The story effectively begins with the English recolonization of lands forsaken by Romano-British farmers, and it ends, more or less, with the Parliamentary inclosure of Cottenham in 1847. In between, the ebb and flow of fenland reclamation, the impact of particular personalities, and the growth of the peculiarly close-knit sense of community found in the bigger fen villages are all examined in some detail and with skill and perception. The book is not organized chronologically, nor around themes which immediately illuminate the patterns of continuity and change. Hence, it is not an easy book for a stranger to the locality to use without taking some pains. This is partly because, although short, *Liable to Floods* is a dense book, and partly because Mr Ravensdale writes with an intimate topographical and historical knowledge of his subject matter which makes few concessions to the outsider.

Chapter I is a survey, entitled "The Setting", of the whole environment of the three villages from the sites upon which they were founded, through the drainage and communications upon which their success came to depend, down to the first impact of the railway upon the Cambridgeshire fens after 1845. Chapter II likewise deals with the impact of man upon his physical surroundings. We are given a description of the interrelationship of forest and fen in the region in medieval times, and a detailed account of the grasslands, their quality, extent, and maintenance throughout the era when pasture provided the principal livelihood of the population. Mr Ravensdale does not forget the contribution of fishing and fowling in the local economy. So far, the work depends upon a disparate account of often discrete elements, and the whole picture has not been made clear to us. The emphasis upon the medieval period gives a somewhat unbalanced view of the subjects dealt with, and the intricacies of local topography could well have been abridged in a book

with only 177 pages of text. Nevertheless, a number of interesting points emerge. In referring to the forgotten delicacy of Cottenham cheese, Mr Ravensdale quotes Albert Pell's encomium: "'Single Cottenham' with the flavour and consistency of Camembert." It was always a restricted delight, but important to the local economy in its heyday before 1840. The complex problems of common-grazing, agistment, and folding are perceptively discussed, especially as regards sheep, of which substantial peasant flocks contributed notably to the accumulation of wealth and status of many fenland families from medieval times onwards. Mr Ravensdale notes the significance of flock management for the formation of the post-medieval local gentry of the region.

Chapter III, on the open fields, is better organized. This is partly because the author has a yardstick, the thesis of Dr M. R. Postgate, by which to compare his own research. The analysis of structure and change in the open fields of the villages is satisfying at both a local and a general level, and deserves a place in the developing historiography of the subject. The last two chapters, "Village Patterns" and "Topography, Economy and Society", owe a good deal to modern preoccupations in local social history. The former discusses the nucleated villages and their buildings over a long span of time, but, inevitably, with special emphasis upon the periods of extensive rebuilding in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The last chapter is ambitious and in many ways unsatisfactory because it attempts to analyse the whole of rural social structure in two dozen pages—Leroy de Ladurie, as it were, in a gill pot. Mr Ravensdale has tackled social stratification, demography, and working conditions almost as an afterthought. What he has produced is a sketch with a few of the highlights touched in—interesting, illuminating, and up to date—but incomplete. Altogether, the hero of this book is the landscape of the southern fenlands, not the village and its inhabitants. But that in the fenland is not a bad priority for the local historian.

B. A. HOLDERNESS

V. H. GALBRAITH, *Domesday Book: its Place in Administrative History*. O.U.P., 1974. xxxv + 193 pp. Plate. £4.

This is an extraordinary book. The work of a distinguished medieval historian now over eighty, it is written with the trenchancy and authority which has characterized his work for the last half-century. What is Domesday Book all about, how was it compiled, and what importance did it have in the practice of Anglo-Norman government, as well as in the shaping of the medieval English monarchy? These are that bundle of related problems with which Professor Galbraith has been concerned since 1942. Then, in an article in the *English Historical Review*,

he first outlined what many found an alarmingly new interpretation of the meaning and purpose of the Domesday survey. This notion was fully articulated, argued and justified in his *The Making of Domesday Book*, published in 1961. Now, in this new book, he has fitted his own contribution into what he himself describes as "a survey of the progress of research upon Domesday Book since it was first printed in 1783."

What Professor Galbraith has done is to destroy the still generally accepted view of the nature and purpose of Domesday Book. This view, which has an unacknowledged but indubitable Tudor ancestry, was given its scholarly formulation by J. H. Round, and summed up by Maitland when he wrote "Our record [i.e. Domesday Book] is no register of title, it is no feodary, it is no custumal, it is no rent roll: it is a tax book, a geld book." As such it continues to be regarded by most historians as a great and fortuitously provided compilation of social and economic facts about the Conqueror's England, but as of virtually no importance in enlarging our still rudimentary understanding of Anglo-Norman government and of its development before the time of Edward I. This established attitude was epitomised only a dozen years ago by Mr Richardson and Professor Sayles, who described Domesday Book as "an inestimable boon to a learned posterity, but a vast administrative mistake." To Professor Galbraith such a view is not only erroneous, it is downright perverse; an outworn conclusion of nineteenth-century scholarship. Not a small part of this book is devoted to a conclusive demonstration of why this is so.

But Professor Galbraith has not busied himself in hacking at this jungle of scholarly error for the mere intellectual pleasure of the exercise. His purpose is to show Domesday Book for what it is, and not for what many have thought it ought to have been. His answer is simple and convincing. The survey was made for the King's use to summarize the total assets of the new feudal aristocracy headed by the monarch himself. So the fiscal resources of the Royal Demesne are carefully detailed, and then those of some hundreds of baronies held by the tenants-in-chief, lay and ecclesiastical. This had to be done county by county through the machinery of the village and the hundred simply because there was no other method available. A survey made for this purpose means that the full feudal order with all land ultimately held of the king through the system of contractual baronies was already in being. Thus, contrary to the general belief, such a system was not introduced piecemeal over a considerable period of time and painfully accommodated to the existing arrangements. Looked at from the standpoint of the Conqueror and his helpers, which is what matters, in Normandy lands were held of the

Duke, who in turn held of the King of France. It had to be the same in England for no other system was conceivable. So the conquerors simply arranged the English kingdom on these lines without feeling it necessary to consult anybody else or to fit what they wanted to do into what was already there. Viewed in this light Domesday Book was the essential instrument of that harsh fiscal and tenurial policy, itself the central feature of Anglo-Norman government as practised by the Conqueror and his two masterful successors.

GEOFFREY TEMPLEMAN

ELEANOR SEARLE, *Lordship and Community: Battle Abbey and its Banlieu 1066-1538*. Studies and Texts 26, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1974. 479 pp. Maps. \$20.

This immense work is the fruit of many years' perusal of the archives of Battle Abbey in Sussex. The title of the work aptly describes the twin preoccupations of its writer and its six parts are titled accordingly. Part One deals with the Conqueror's foundation of his *eigenkloster* at Battle and its acquisition of suitable manors. There follows a description of the settlement of the Weald and the new town of Battle, a description of the town's population and the constitution of the new borough, and the way in which, in the twelfth century, patrons and their servants dominated the Abbey. Part Two deals with the assertion of lordship in 1235 to 1310. There is a discussion of the thirteenth-century land market, the nature of tenure in the borough of Battle, and the impact of the burgesses upon the land market. There is a substantial and revealing account of the Abbey's own use of the land market, its pattern of purchasing, its revenues and expenditures, and its relationships with the gentry. Then follows a description of the customary tenants in the mid- and late-thirteenth century, and as seen in the customal of 1310. The struggle between the Abbey and its tenants was very mild and ended in compromise. Part Three is purely judicial and deals with the origin and establishment of the liberty, the age of the eyres, and *Quo Warranto*. Part Six continues this theme with a discussion of the withering of lordship at the end of the Middle Ages. Part Five continues the account of the community between 1303 and 1538, the setting of the *leuga* farmlands to rent, and discusses the customary tenements of Telham as seen in the records of the hallmoot in 1430-57.

Readers of this *Review* will be most interested in the hundred pages of Part Four, which deal with the Abbey's estates in the fourteenth century and later. Of the four chapters in this part the most interesting concerns the manor of Marley in 1310-85. Students of the earlier periods will be disappointed to find that the Battle records cast little light upon the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but there is enough

to satisfy our curiosity about the fourteenth century. At Marley, between 1309 and 1385 the number of horses fell to almost half, the number of cattle to less than a half, and the number of swine to one-fifth. Marley was like the majority of manors in southern England, since in 1309 it relied more upon oxen than upon horses for ploughing and carting, but by 1321 there were more than twice as many horses as oxen, and horses continued to predominate until 1385. The decline of oxen is a major part of the decline in cattle, for the dairy herd, though smaller in 1385 than in 1309, was still considerable, and reached its greatest size in 1358. With the decline of Marley's herds went a decline in the estimated acreage in pasture by about one-third between 1310 and 1385. The greatest extent of pasture was in 1356. There was a similar decline in the demesne acreage sown to less than one-fifth of the area sown in 1309-10. Between 1321-2 and 1358-9 the area was fairly constant and the great cuts in sown land took place between 1309-10 and 1321-2, and between 1358-9 and 1384-5. Marley was an oats and wheat manor, with no barley, but lesser crops of rye, beans, peas, and vetches. The combined acreage of legumes was greater than that of rye in 1309-10, and between 1358-9 and 1384-5 became greater than that of wheat. Marley is yet one more example of the advance of legumes, but this took place much later than in Norfolk and Suffolk. In one respect the agriculture of Marley was progressive. This was in its use of convertible husbandry. Dr Searle's discussion of this is one of the best parts of this interesting chapter. Most useful too are her strictures upon the heaping of bushels and the payment of reapers from the heapings. The corrupt and wasteful nature of medieval demesne agriculture must make us pause whenever we discuss yield ratios or the quantities of crops grown. Lastly, the reader should notice her account of the tannery. "Sheep" and "wool" do not even appear in the index. It is time we had more books about parts of England where they were unimportant or did not exist.

By English standards this book is very large, and at 20 Canadian dollars is not cheap. It is good to see that somewhere somebody can give distinguished work the space it deserves. The reviewer must, however, be allowed a complaint. In all his years of reading books on medieval history he has never seen a book with more misprints. Since they were more than one a page, after the first score of pages he gave up the count, and is willing to admit that the last 100 pages or so are less bad, but there must be, all told, at least 500 printing errors. Whatever has happened to the publishing industry in Toronto? One presumes that this is the result of printing the book in Belgium, but surely better co-operation between printer and publisher could have been established.

This is the one flaw in an otherwise excellent book.

H. E. HALLAM

S. F. HOCKEY (ed.), *The Beaulieu Cartulary* (with an introduction by P. D. A. Harvey and S. F. Hockey). Southampton Records Series, xvii, 1974. lxx + 281 pp. Southampton U.P. 9 maps. £8.

This is an impeccable work, well illustrated with nine very clear maps. In the substantial introduction Dr P. D. A. Harvey and Dom Frederick Hockey have both shared. Dr Harvey describes in the first two chapters the manuscript, its history and compilation, and Dom Frederick Hockey continues with a description of the Abbey and its estates, the purpose of the cartulary, an analysis of its contents, a discussion of its financial aspects, and notes on the Faringdon cartulary and the Abbey's later acquisitions.

The site of Beaulieu Abbey was in the "angle" of the New Forest, between the Solent and Southampton Water. The cartulary is a record of purchases and acquisitions in six areas. Faringdon and surrounding places in the Upper Thames Valley in Berkshire and Oxfordshire were part of John's original endowment. Most of the new acquisitions were in Hampshire, in the Meon Valley, especially at Soberton, in the Avon Valley, at Ellingham, Blashford, and Burgate, and in the estuary of the Test at Eling, Exbury, and Lepe. Nine charters refer to Southampton, and thirty-one are for places in the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall.

The Hampshire charters refer to the meadows of the Avon valley, but the agrarian interest of the cartulary is otherwise disappointingly slight. Dairy-farms are mentioned in the Thames Valley and there are many mentions of dykes in marshy places. In 1270 the Abbey had assarted 3½ acres in Soberton, which is typical of the late assarting of Hampshire. At Ellingham in Hampshire Robert Tesson about 1248 renounced his right to take marl and cart it across a meadow. Of such small facts is early agrarian history made.

H. E. HALLAM

DOROTHY GALTON, *Survey of a Thousand Years of Beekeeping in Russia*. Bee Research Assn, 1971. Illus. 90 pp. £1.50.

This history of beekeeping in Russia and the Soviet Union, the first in English, will be appreciated not only by students of the Russian economy and agriculture but by anyone with a general interest in this often neglected aspect of agricultural production. The methods used by the medieval beemen to exploit their wild stocks in tree holes in the forests of eastern Europe differed greatly from the mainly skep and hive apiculture of western Europe, and the account offered here of the equipment and practices

of the peasant *bortniks* will thus be novel to those familiar with western methods. Although limited to works and documentary sources accessible in England, Miss Galton presents convincing evidence of the importance of tree beekeeping in the peasant society of the medieval Russian forests. Perhaps as many as 400,000 men gathered honeycomb from a million trees to produce the wax and honey products traded in the twelfth century through Novgorod, the centre of one of the most productive areas. The organization required for the payment of honey (and probably wax) dues to princely landlords seems to have provided a basis for the peasant social structure. Miss Galton's "speculative" suggestions which derive such words as *tysyatsky* (town leader), *verv* (settlement), and *sot* (group of people or geographical "hundred") from the beeman's vocabulary reflect her estimation of the importance of beekeeping in the early period. Several pages on the great medieval wax trade and the manufacture of honey and honey drinks support these opinions by putting beekeeping into its wider economic context.

Despite the great value of bee products, more efficient and productive apiary beekeeping was not adopted rapidly in Russia; the practice of using log hives close to home rather than widely scattered tree hives spread only slowly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By the end of that period total production was nevertheless declining, the result apparently of the replacement of mead by vodka and beer and the razing of forests for corn culture. Not until the nineteenth century did the "rational beekeeping" movement encourage a revival by inventions, research, and popular education, a revival which survived vicissitudes in war and revolution. An outline of the operation of large collective apiaries in the Soviet Union completes the survey.

Miss Galton concludes with the hope that her short survey will inspire further research in journals and unprinted documents available in the Soviet Union; undoubtedly it should. Perhaps it will also inspire a historian of beekeeping in England to trace actual practice and production from local records in a survey to stand with H. M. Fraser's largely bibliographical account.

The book may be obtained from the Bee Research Assn, Hill House, Chalfont St Peter, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 0NR.

BARBARA TODD

CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR, *Fieldwork in Medieval Archaeology*. Batsford, 1974. 176 pp., 62 plates and figs. £4 hardback; £2.50 limp edition.

The first of the two nouns that make up the discipline of Field Archaeology must put it well within the province of agrarian history and, indeed, following Eric Kerridge's useful distinction, within agricultural history also.

The first volume of the review *Medieval Archaeology* appeared in 1957, four years after the foundation of this REVIEW. The executive officers and contributors have been in general quite different sets of people but, although the two subject areas are not often synthesized, the two journals must have a considerable overlap of readership, especially among the increasing number of non-professionals active in the two sub-disciplines—"sub-" only to the unity of History herself, I hasten to add. High among these must rank the tutors and members of adult education classes. It is likely that a non-academic member of such a class will have a better idea of the state of settlement history and the landscape in the Middle Ages than most undergraduates taking courses in economic history; or, for a later period, than the readers of the *Agrarian History, 1500-1640*, where the only elements of the real historical landscape permitted illustration were barns and houses, and the only village map was put there for its houses. Yet William Hoskins had shown how a synthesis might be achieved, a worker without spade or trowel but a true field archaeologist in the spirit of Allcroft and Crawford.

The continuing county series of *Landscape* histories keeps his tradition alive, nowhere better than in the Dorset and Cambridgeshire volumes by Christopher Taylor, a scholar whose microstudy of Whiteparish (Wilts.) may prove to be at least as influential in the long run as Hoskins's Wigston Magna. It has been Mr Taylor's good fortune to work in the field on the county inventories of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, and those who have not seen the recent Dorset and Cambridgeshire volumes of the R.C.H.M. cannot realize how this series has been transformed by a new generation of field workers marrying the traditions of Hoskins and Crawford. Mr Taylor's work for his royal employer has been extensively drawn on for the volume under review here, with excellent plans, ground photographs, and air photographs, a number published for the first time. The text of any well-illustrated book has difficulties in living up to the choice of plates: but Mr Taylor has matched himself. It is rather like having a season ticket to a first-class extramural class—not quite as many slides, perhaps, but with photographs from the summer excursions thrown in.

He takes the reader from site to site, not underestimating difficulties and obscurities, raising hope but not over-confidence, and firmly based on two principles: relating observed objects to documents and maps; and progressing by marrying an observed and documented object with the many more that are observable but undocumented. Its enthusiasm and clarity are exactly those of a good tutor, and its range within only 140 pages of text is astonishing. The quality and quantity of illustrations are to the pub-

lisher's credit. There are full bibliographical references in footnotes, and an appended bibliography follows a useful arrangement: not by author but by fifty types of field object, ending with the encouraging and realistic examples of "unknown" earthworks. It is an enviable book.

M. W. BERESFORD

A. R. H. BAKER and J. B. HARLEY (eds.), *Man Made the Land: Essays in English Historical Geography*. Newton Abbot, David and Charles, 1973. 208 pp. 263 illus. £5.25.

Attempts to define historical geography with precision are rarely successful and inevitably controversial. As a formal division of knowledge historical geography has been variously viewed as: the operation of the geographical factor in history; the evolution of the cultural landscape; the reconstruction of past geographies; the study of geographical change through time. It would be impossible to classify recent studies in historical geography under only one of these headings, for the concepts shade imperceptibly into each other. Prescribed boundaries have been so frequently transgressed that doctrinaire attitudes towards the nature and content of historical geography have been abandoned. The extent and variation in methods of organizing and presenting historical elements in geography are exemplified in this excellent volume. The editors, understandably, opt for emancipation from the restrictions of a methodological framework.

Each of the sixteen contributions appeared as an article in the *Geographical Magazine* between February 1970 and May 1971. The chapters are short and each possesses a valuable bibliography. The text is lucid. The book at once delights the eye with its abundant variety of illustrations. There are numerous maps, plans, and prints—many of them early—together with photographs, charts, and the occasional illuminated manuscript. The contributors, economic historians and a climatologist, as well as geographers, were obviously selected on the basis of their known published research in the specific areas discussed summarily in these essays.

A notable trend in historical geography since the Second World War has been the organized study of settlement, both urban and rural, and the study of field systems. Some ten years ago, C. T. Smith observed that the search for much more profound knowledge of the historical circumstances under which field systems and settlement patterns developed had already become "one of the growing points of geography," and "a mainstay of agrarian history." Some of the fruits of this quest are now made available *widely* for the first time. Each contribution is a brief, highly readable distillation of a subject already researched in depth.

The editors follow a chronological sequence

which traces "some important themes in the historical geography of England from the period of earliest settlement to Victorian times." A discussion of climatic fluctuations covers a long span of historical time. A chapter on early settlement is followed by five contributions which cover the Middle Ages: Domesday Survey; planned villages; field systems; marketing and mobility; town planning, and village desertion. Four topics are set in Early Modern times: dual-economies; early Tudor taxation lists; agricultural progress; town life. Three aspects of the eighteenth century as a whole are discussed: the interdependence of agrarian and industrial interests in regional economies; landscaping; geographical changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution. The remaining two chapters are concerned with agricultural and urban changes in the nineteenth century. Perhaps the most glaring omission is the Roman period which receives only scant attention in the discussion on early settlement. A chapter on Romano-British settlement and land-use would have been welcome. Then again, why stop in 1900? Is the twentieth century not worth a few pages?

A careful topical balance is apparent: a chapter on the agriculture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is paired with an examination of the role of towns in the period; in the nineteenth century, Victorian towns act as a counterpoise to changes in the rural economy.

Altogether, these essays present the latest thinking on a number of controversial and developing fields of study. Much of the material has relevance to the study of agrarian history. But the book also "provides points of entry into some of the many intriguing problems in the historical geography of England" and should therefore find a use in the upper forms of schools and in colleges of education—for instance, in environmental studies—as well as for first-year undergraduates.

D. A. BAKER

K. J. ALLISON (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of York, East Riding, Vol. II, Dickering Wapentake*. O.U.P. for Institute of Historical Research, 1974. xvi + 365 pp. Illus. Maps. £20.

This volume contains the history of thirty parishes in the north-eastern part of the East Riding. The area lies largely upon the chalk hills of the Yorkshire Wolds which meet the sea at Flamborough Head, but the wapentake also extended into the Vale of Pickering and the Plain of Holderness. There is much evidence of prehistoric activity, with numerous embankments and barrows and the famous Rudston monolith, and place-names and archaeological finds show that the district was extensively settled by Anglians and Scandinavians between the fifth and ninth centuries. Agriculture has always been the major industry, and most of the settlements

were small and nucleated. In modern times Bridlington and Filey have grown as seaside resorts.

Of particular interest to agricultural historians are the twelve depopulated sites and the many shrunken settlements, and the evidence of convertible husbandry and early enclosure. Before the later eighteenth century the typical farming arrangement was low-lying pastures, open-fields on the slopes, and sheepwalks on the wold summits; today the whole area is predominantly arable.

This volume maintains the high standards of the *V.C.H.*, and the recent emphasis upon buildings and topography is to be welcomed. But, as usual, the reader does not get any guidance on the major themes. He is presented instead with a work of reference under thirty different parishes, and is expected to obtain an overall view of the agricultural history of the region from the seven pages on the subject in *V.C.H. Yorkshire*, Vol. II, written in 1912. Thus, there is no discussion of the infield-outfield system, for which there is evidence in five parishes, no framework for an understanding of the nine references to ley-farming, and no analysis of crops and livestock, for probate inventories are neglected. To take another example, if one reads through all the parish histories and notes the grants of markets and fairs, the surprising fact emerges that nine of the thirty parishes had grants dated between 1200 and 1304. Furthermore, Flamborough's market is referred to in 1731, and one of the open-fields of Bempton in 1767 was called Market Dale. Many of these markets no doubt withered early, but they are an interesting and important phenomenon that is not discussed. The general volumes are so out of date as to be unusable. The contributors to the present volume are to be congratulated upon their scholarship; they ought to be given the opportunity to draw general conclusions from their work.

DAVID HEY

ERIC KERRIDGE, *The Farmers of Old England*. Allen and Unwin, 1973. 180 pp. 32 plates; 16 figures. £4.35.

This is a popular book which distils the information already presented in Dr Kerridge's *The Agricultural Revolution*. Like the larger work, it relates mainly to the period 1560–1760, but it gives a backward glance at the origins of agriculture and common field farming, and concludes with a new section on standards of material comfort, as illustrated in food, clothing, and housing. It is a relaxed piece of writing, proceeding at a gentle pace, tackling basic questions at a very simple level, and undoubtedly it will help readers who have little first-hand knowledge of the farming business. But they will be the least able to spot the quirkish opinions buried amid more generally acceptable assertions. There lies the snare.

Much of this book is a smooth account of special-

ized farming regions, interlocked and interdependent, and the innovations that promoted yet further specialization. But even the most trusting reader will perhaps see in the end that it is too simple and too smooth. Statements that are only a shade short of the truth leave highly distorted impressions. The realities of harvest failure and of food shortages are altogether screened from sight in a sentence like the following: "There were, of course, many corn-deficient countries, but this was less because they could not grow corn than because the farmers had made them corn-deficient on purpose, in order that they could have a surplus of something else to sell in exchange for corn and other commodities." In the description of enclosure and consequent depopulation, human suffering has been erased from the record, and we see only a rational redeployment of labour, "great economies made in ploughteams and cultivations," and "the turf-huts of the petty tenants profitably spread over the land as manure."

Kerridge's agricultural system works like clockwork, and always keeps perfect time; but it begins to sound like a history of agriculture with the people, or all but the notably successful people, left out. This is not quite just, because the concluding chapter considers not only "opulent farmers," but wage labourers also, but only to assure us that it was better to be a labourer than a miserable smallholder because agricultural labour was *always* in high demand and short supply. Unfortunately, only five books are recommended for further reading, two by the author himself and three others by scholars whose interests lie in industrial and commercial history. Small hope there of salvation for the innocent reader.

JOAN THIRSK

MERVYN JAMES, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society. A Study of Society, Politics and Mentality in the Durham Region 1500-1640*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1974. x + 233 pp. 11 plates; map. £5.

Readers of the journal *Past and Present* will already be acquainted with Mr James's work on the North-East in the sixteenth century. With his article on "The Concept of Order and the Northern Rising of 1569", which appeared in 1973, and his two previously published Borthwick Papers on Thomas First Lord Wharton and Henry Fifth Earl of Northumberland, he has established himself as a leading authority on provincial society and politics in the early modern period. His new book follows on from these earlier studies but is more extensive both in its chronological sweep and in the range of questions it considers. In some ways, it must be admitted, it is *too* ambitious: the coverage is patchy, conclusions frequently outstretch the evidence used to support them, and though short, the book is occasionally disjointed and repetitive. As an attempt to survey the totality of the structure, dynamics, experience,

and mentality of the Durham region in a crucial period of its development it is not entirely successful. None the less, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society* is an important and fascinating study which will repay a close reading by historians of agriculture and rural society.

The author has some interesting things to say about the different farming systems and social organization of the upland and lowland areas, and about the socio-economic conditions which appear to have been conducive to religious dissent. The great industry of this region, of course, was coal-mining, and Mr James presents some revealing information about the relationship with its agrarian setting. For agricultural producers the growth of the coal industry and trade meant an enlarged and increasingly commercialized market. Agricultural and industrial enterprise developed alongside each other, and intermarriage between industrial, mercantile, and gentry families strengthened the association. Lower down the social scale, however, the expansion of coal-mining involved a growing divorce between the industrial and agricultural labour force. "By the 1630's, with nearly 6000 workers dependent on the Tyne coal industry, of whom nearly half worked underground, the size of the colliery community made it difficult to reabsorb such a large labour force back into agriculture during the slack periods." For a minority, with cottages on the waste, small-scale husbandry remained a possibility if the need arose. But for most miners alternative agricultural employment was not available since increasingly they were housed in new-style, overcrowded colliery communities like Whickham, a village whose traditional manorial and agricultural outline had become savagely distorted by the time of the Parliamentary Survey in 1647. There, says Mr James, "the open fields of the traditional agrarian order were already pitted with mine shafts, the arable pasture and meadow criss-crossed with way-leaves from the pits to the river, and the crops spoilt by coal-dust, much to the detriment of the tenants' husbandry."

As the scale, profitability, and specialization of farming increased in this period much enclosure took place. Often the result of communal agreement, enclosure in the Durham region seems to have been largely a peaceful process. There were significant exceptions, however, and it is disappointing that Mr James's evidence did not permit him to analyse the enclosure riots of 1641. The author argues that "practices like engrossing and depopulation . . . were more likely to be found on small and medium sized than large estates. The big landlords were more in the limelight. . ." To Mr James such practices were symptomatic of the general tendency—increasingly common after the collapse of the Northern Rising of 1569 and the changed social

pattern to which this gave rise—to see the landlord-tenant relationship as contractual, a matter of profit. “There was a corresponding resistance on the part of tenants to increased rents, fines, and services, so that new conflicts and new forms of leadership emerged in the Durham countryside.”

Mr James sees changes in agrarian practice and organization as an aspect of what he tries to identify as a fundamental transformation in the region from a “lineage” society centred on great households where horizons were bounded by lordship, family honour, patronage, protection, fidelity, and obedience, to what he terms a “civil” society, a rapidly changing, increasingly competitive world of “possessive individualism,” nuclear families, and of men equal (more or less) in status before the law. The contrast was not an absolute one, and the specific interest of the Durham region in Mr James’s view is that its experience highlights the tensions between the old and the new.

It is a thought-provoking thesis, but agriculture does not rank high as a causal factor in the kind of social transformation which Mr James postulates. Political change after the abortive 1569 rising, the multiplier effects of the growth of the coal industry, the spread of puritanism, the influence of education were all more important in changing the traditional pattern of dominance, allegiance, and habits of thought. In Mr James’s estimate, at any rate, seventeenth-century agriculture in the North-East displayed rather than produced these changed social characteristics.

R. C. RICHARDSON

C. W. CHALKLIN and M. A. HAVINDEN (eds.), *Rural Change and Urban Growth 1500–1800. Essays in English Regional History in honour of W. G. Hoskins*. Longmans, 1974. xxvi + 360 pp. Maps and illustrations. £8.50.

There can hardly be any doubt that the serious study of local history in this country owes more to Professor Hoskins than to anyone else. English local history had far too long been the hunting ground of that ancient bird, the antiquarian. There he was, sniffing at genealogies, nibbling at manors, picking up flint implements, gobbling antique customs, and generally preying upon the past with disordered curiosity. Occasionally some scholar with a sharper eye and a wider vision would penetrate the reserve. But not for long. He tended to see little of promise in the parochial past; and the local antiquarian for his part rarely welcomed professional intruders from the outer world. With Hoskins’s work in the 1930’s and 1940’s, however, new methods and a new set of tools were brought into use: such records as hearth tax returns, subsidy rolls, probate inventories, and port books as well as the more traditional records of local life—manorial surveys or quarter session re-

cords—were subjected to systematic analysis, and made to answer sundry economic and social questions. Hoskins was not the sole ploughman in this field. He himself owed much to R. H. Tawney; and more than one inquiry into economic activities on a county basis was set in motion in pursuit of a Ph.D. by students of Tawney or of F. J. Fisher. But it was Hoskins who, more than any other historian of his generation, pursued and widened these local studies. He has given them academic popularity at one level; and, at another level, by his popularizing books and radio talks, stimulated amongst an interested public a fuller understanding of their town or countryside, the landscape which they themselves know. His interests have not been confined to the countryside; he is equally—well, not quite equally—at home in investigating the population and structure of towns. His limits are, however, clearly definable: not for him the industrialized world or the big city, not the interrelationship of economics and technology; the machine and all its works are out.

The book which Messrs Chalklin and Havinden have edited in Hoskins’s honour achieves a reflection of his range of interests by the division into rural and urban topics. Seven essays come in the first category, five in the second; at one end is an appreciation of the dedicatee, at the other a bibliography of his academic writings. The rural section has Robert Newton on the changing economic scene along the border in Tudor Northumberland; a vignette by Julian Cornwall of a far from rich or rising Lincolnshire squire, who died in 1528; an interesting study of the varying causes of mortality crises in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Staffordshire by David Palliser; an account of the spread of tobacco-growing in the West Country in the seventeenth century by Joan Thirsk; Michael Havinden examines the use of lime in raising agricultural productivity in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Devonshire; Derek Portman documents from an examination of probate inventories the range and type of vernacular building in the area around Oxford between 1500 and 1700; and Alan Everitt provides a portrait of the family and personality of Edward Hasted, the eighteenth-century historian of Kent, as specimens of the class which he has christened “pseudo-gentry.” Roy Millward starts off the second part of the book with a consideration of the growth of towns in Cumbria, 1600–1800; this is followed by a more detailed examination, conducted by Christopher Chalklin, of four specific towns—Whitehaven, Deal, Tunbridge Wells, and Portsea, 1600–1720; Ron Neale’s chapter on the building of Bath, 1700–83, offers a fascinating mix of economic, social, and cultural inquiry; the speculative builder, Richard Paley, is put under the expert microscope of Maurice Beresford in a study of Leeds between 1771 and 1803; and, finally,

Hope Bagenal on "the rationale of traditional building" ranges widely over time and space in looking at various building styles in Britain.

The contributions are not all of equal standing: *Festschriften* rarely achieve that. Some are slight; some ramble; others are very professional pieces, at a high standard. Some have an austere neutrality; in others there breaks out an occasional Hoskinsesque horror at the modern world ("an intolerable crush of tourists" in Cumbria—ugh!). Professor Everitt makes it clear to the reader that he doesn't like lawyers ("like many lawyers, he was a thoroughly odious man"); and that he finds it hard to forgive Edward Hasted who, at the age of 53 and after thirty years of fruitful married life, ran away with a girl bearing the appropriate name of Town. All in all, this book—which is handsomely produced and copiously illustrated—both appropriately contributes to the study of English local history and appropriately commemorates one who has done so much to further its subject-matter.

D. C. COLEMAN

DAVID G. HEY, *An English Rural Community: Myddle under the Tudors & Stuarts*. Leicester, Leicester U.P., 1974. 260 pp. 4 maps, 14 plates. £5.80.

Dr Hey has written a fine history of the parish of Myddle in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the years before this traditional community underwent the destructive change of the agricultural revolution. Myddle was an unremarkable group of townships in north Shropshire, but was distinguished by producing, in 1634, Richard Gough the antiquary, and in being, between 1700 and 1706, the subject of his famous *Antiquities and Memoirs*. Gough's remarkable book, to Professor Hoskins an Aubrey on a lower social plane, inspired Dr Hey's history and forms one of its principal sources. The result is a penetrative account of a historically unfashionable and little-understood part of England.

Hey's work peers behind Gough, testing his guesses on buildings, on farms, and on tenures, and putting sturdy bones to Gough's fleshy family portraits. In so doing he advances our knowledge of the rural society of the west Midlands, and demonstrates clearly that the detailed study of broadly pastoral, dispersed-settlement regions can be as interesting as that of the more familiar nucleated arable village of the south and east. That Myddle failed to experience any fundamental changes in either its economic structure or its social organization in this period adds considerably to the strength of the book. Accident of personality has given the historian the opportunity to delve deeper into this traditional local community and to understand its workings.

This strength may also be the book's principal weakness. It is this dependence on, and inspiration

by, Gough that distinguishes this book from the new totalitarian social history which leaves no documentary stone unturned in its search for scientific answers. While Hey's work is wide-ranging and covers all the basic source materials, nevertheless it is dominated by the powerful figure of Gough and his still more potent material. At once Gough provides unique insights into parish life while denying Hey the freedom from prejudices desirable in the historical social scientist. Personalities are to the fore in this book. While it is delightful to find a Chaloner, through Gough, described as "an untowardly liver, very idle and extravagant, endeavouring to supply his necessities rather by stealing than by honest labour" (p. 149), Dr Hey's conclusions about crime in the community are less sure and less emphatic. Myddle therefore belongs nearer Wigston Magna than Chippenham on the shelf, being the more orthodox of the two community studies of recent years.

This is not to deny its excellence. This is a careful and interesting study of families, their farms, and their lives which will be essential reading for all students of English rural society. Although there are no methodological novelties here, Hey's expertise in the use of probate inventories is made very clear, and those who wish to make the most of this source must read him, even if they must look elsewhere for more critical assessment of their reliability. As a history of a rural society this is an excellent book, made all the more attractive by the quality of its production. As a total history of the community it is less complete, but perhaps goes as far as sources at present allow. It demands the attention of agrarian historians, and will reward all its readers.

J. A. CHARTRES

RONALD WEBBER, *Market Gardening. The History of Commercial Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Growing*. Newton Abbot, David and Charles, 1972. 226 pp. £3.50.

This book does little more than skim the surface of the history of commercial horticulture, being too short to cover all that it purports to. Much is omitted; what is there is not very exciting.

An outline history of market gardening occupies fifty-two pages (including fifteen text illustrations), followed by a similarly scanty outline of nursery gardening in Britain to the present day. In general, the book concerns itself with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; Mr Webber does not appear to know that there is much information, some of it in print, about horticulture before 1750. For example, the chapter entitled "The Spread of Knowledge" ignores all literature on gardening published in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

Mr Webber has researched predominantly in the

secondary material of his subject. On one occasion when he does use a primary source he completely misinterprets it: the Gardeners Company of London in 1633 was trying to incorporate the gardeners of Fulham, Chelsea, and Kensington, possibly to diminish competition from them, not to exclude them in order to maintain standards (p. 32).

One does not expect deep analysis from a work that sets out to be a narrative history, but the lists of facts which constitute the later chapters are not good narrative. 'Technical Development' (chapter 7) is a list of the new techniques in twentieth-century horticulture; the two 'Regional History' chapters chronicle which crops are grown where in Britain; and the final chapter, 'Recent Developments', does little more than outline the state of cultivation of the most common fruits, vegetables, and flowers, crop by crop. The majority of the text illustrations are, one suspects, an attempt by the publishers to make the book look longer than it is: the nine line drawings of varieties of apple and pear, and a full-page figure entitled "The modern cucumber" would disgrace the average seed catalogue.

Far from realizing the hope in the preface that the book will "encourage others to find out more" about market gardening, this "modest attempt to pull together the threads" may put many readers off for good.

MALCOLM THICK

J. C. L. BURNBY, *John Sherwen and Drug Cultivation in Enfield: a Re-examination*. Edmonton Historical Society, Occasional Paper New Series No. 23, 1973. 12 pp. 25p.

This short paper throws interesting light on Dr John Sherwen, "physician and archeologist" (1749-1826), the alleged introducer of rhubarb to Britain. It almost goes without saying that a shy is aimed at that old Aunt Sally of the historian, the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which has John Sherwen on the East India Company's staff in 1769. Dr Burnby says there is no evidence for this in either the India Office's or the East India Company's records. Entry to the medical profession was as closely guarded then as now, and how Sherwen became M.D. is described, as is also his interest in Shakespeare and his belief in the authenticity of the Thomas Rowley poems.

As regards drug cultivation, the author of this paper thinks that Dr Sherwen was *not* the introducer of rhubarb to England, although he did have a few specimens of that then rare plant in his front garden at Enfield. The route this useful plant took from China, the dates of its journeyings, its establishment in Enfield, and the part played by the Royal Society of Arts are described and are most interesting. Opium was another drug cultivated in Enfield, where again, as far as is known, Sherwen played no

part. In 1798 Thomas Jones produced 21 lb. of opium from five acres of poppies.

A large amount of interesting and well-documented information is contained in this paper, but one caution is needed: it is really two papers. The title does not mean that John Sherwen had anything to do with the cultivation of drugs, as a first reading might suggest.

The work is preceded by a fine facsimile of one of Sherwen's letters from Bath, where he lived for some time. The letter (from the Boston, Mass., Public Library) acknowledges the receipt of a folio Shakespeare, and in it Sherwen says this revived his interest in the subject which he thought "had been nearly worn out." He need not have worried. Look how the Shakespeare industry flourishes to this day!

GEORGE ORDISH

PHILIP S. BAGWELL, *The Transport Revolution from 1770*. Batsford, 1974. 460 pp. 21 maps, 33 figs. £2. Although this is, first and foremost, a carefully compiled and well-written textbook, it is much more besides. Professor Bagwell has not only culled the secondary literature on transport with particular thoroughness; he has also worked through a considerable amount of primary source material, not merely the rich and rewarding published parliamentary evidence but also manuscript material at the House of Lords Record Office on railway and harbour bills (which contain much information about coastal and road transport), at the Public Record Office (particularly valuable on the eventful period just after the First World War), at the Post Office (on mail coach services), and, of course, among the British Transport Historical Records themselves. He also quotes from a wide range of newspaper and literary sources. The book is full of apt and revealing examples which bring alive and make more readily intelligible the fundamental economic arguments.

The chapter on coastal shipping, on which the author is an acknowledged authority, provides the best short account available anywhere of the coming of short-distance steam shipping, an important but long-neglected adjunct to inland transport which was responsible, even in the inter-war years, for half as much ton-mileage of freight as was carried by railway. Most of the tonnage brought into London consisted of coal, which has already gained the attention of historians; but second to coal came grain, which has not. And hay became an increasingly important item in this traffic later in the nineteenth century as the coastal grain trade declined. Professor Bagwell draws attention, too, to the traffic in live and dead meat, especially across the Irish Sea, and the later trade in eggs and butter. By securing access to more distant markets, improved rail and water transport brought more competition and

more opportunity to farming; and railways, in particular, provided landowners with attractive compensation for lost acres—and worthwhile directorships.

The time must surely be arriving when historians begin to investigate further, and begin to measure, traffic flows in agricultural produce. A start has already been made with studies of food supplies to growing towns, and Professor Everitt's work on country carriers indicates further lines of enquiry. In this next stage of research this book will serve as a useful background work and guide to sources.

T. C. BARKER

ALAN ARMSTRONG, *Stability and Change in an English County Town: A Study of York, 1801-1851*.

C.U.P., 1974. xii + 254 pp. £5.

This work, which makes detailed use of the census enumerators' books for 1841 and 1851 and relates the results to more familiar sources, including Rowntree's *Poverty*, has come to be acknowledged as one of the outstanding urban histories of recent years. It will certainly influence future writing in this field. Until the 1840's, York's prosperity depended upon the extent to which farming in the area flourished, for it was the market and source of supply for miles around (ninety-one places were linked with it by carrier by the mid-century). Dr Armstrong argues that good grain prices between 1795 and 1830 helped the city to grow; but there was a setback in the 1830's because of lower prices, and by the 1840's other factors, often associated with the coming of the railway, seem to have played a more important role in explaining renewed urban growth. Most of the migrants were still moving into York from the surrounding countryside. Despite rural population pressure, urban employment was in his opinion probably the main regulator of migration.

T. C. BARKER

S. G. and E. O. A. CHECKLAND (eds.), *The Poor Law*

Report of 1834. Penguin Books, 1974. 518 pp. £1.

The issue of a reasonably priced précis of this famous State document, with a long introduction by Sidney and Olive Checkland, is to be welcomed, since students cannot be expected to study the *Report* itself and its accompanying nine volumes of parochial returns. The latter, as Professor Blaug reminded us in the 1960's, had remained largely unused since the mid-1830's. The problem confronting the Commissioners was overwhelmingly one of rural poverty, so that this new edition is of prime interest to agricultural historians, even though 90 per cent of the parishes and townships failed to answer the Royal Commission's questionnaire (there was no compulsion). Even the hard-working Assistant Commissioners were unable to visit more than a fifth of the poor law authorities in their allot-

ted districts. The incompleteness of the survey suggests that many, possibly the majority, of the poor law officials and ratepayers were reasonably content with the state of affairs in 1832. In their introduction the Checklands perform a delicate balancing act between the leftist and sociologically minded historians ("the horrors of Speenhamland and rural war") on the one hand, and those economic historians who stress the beneficial effects of the wartime boom and the accelerating industrial changes, both in town and countryside. Similarly, they tend to stress the old Hammondite-Marxist errors and oversimplifications about the economic and social effects of the enclosure movement, without giving due weight to the new empirical school of thought (and research) led by the late Professor J. D. Chambers. They have a curious blind spot about the effects of the Law of Settlement and Removal of 1662 on labour mobility, ignoring Mrs M. D. George's revisionary article of the 1930's. In this they follow the misleading remarks of Adam Smith, whose knowledge of the inner workings of the English poor law can hardly have been extensive. There is an unjustified tendency to regard the English rural population of the deep south, c. 1815, as "still largely isolated and inward-looking" (p. 18), a statement not borne out by parish registers and such sources as, for example, Irvine Gray's edition of *Cheltenham Settlement Examinations, 1815-1826* (1969).

W. H. CHALONER

R. J. OLNEY, *Lincolnshire Politics, 1832-1885*.

O.U.P., 1973. xii + 284 pp. £4.

This must be the Oxford University Press's first essay in rendering history as blank verse, and let us pray it will be the last. The effect, presumably in an attempt to economize on printing costs while allowing paper costs to soar, is produced by printing the entire work "unjustified", so that the printed pages have no right-hand margins and have the appearance of rather casually typewritten pages. Such is the force of habit that it requires a constant and conscious effort not to regard the whole work as some form of preliminary draft. It is in fact a highly finished piece of work, even if its dense thesis prose scarcely qualifies it for the description of highly polished: his printers and publishers have not enhanced the quality and permanence of the author's contribution.

That contribution is a very thorough and precisely documented account of the way in which politics worked in the Lincolnshire county constituencies between the first and third Reform Acts: Gash and Hanham rolled together, as it were, minutely sectioned, and then magnified forty times. There are no surprises in the broad outlines of the resulting picture, though much to admire in the fine detail brought out by the enlargement. It is a picture of

traditional politics in a quintessentially agricultural and rural county (divided into two constituencies, 1832-68, and three, 1868-85), in which there were only five parliamentary boroughs, themselves of the traditional county-cathedral-market-town types enjoying close commercial and social links with their agricultural hinterlands. Among these boroughs only Lincoln itself and Grimsby experienced anything approaching vigorous industrial growth in this period—in flour milling, agricultural machinery and associated iron founding, and in fish—and reached the point of political independence of the landowner influence of the Sibthorps and Monsons in Lincoln, and the Yarboroughs and Heneages in Grimsby. Even so, the spillover of non-agricultural or suburban elements into the surrounding rural areas, which complicated or sullied the clarity of landed politics in so many other counties, was never more than minimal in Lincolnshire. Hence there is in this book the closest one can hope to get to a study of uncontaminated rural-agricultural politics pursuing their Trollopian course without being jostled by the urban-industrial crowd.

Much of what Olney describes is pure Trollope, with voting following estate boundaries, and election results—and, of equal significance, uncontested elections—following the alliances and rivalries of the county families. It was not pure unbridled aristocratic and gentry influence all the way, however. To start with, Lincolnshire was not well favoured by stately homes, and there were only a couple of the first rank, Brocklesby and Grimsthorpe, the first of these supporting an extremely strong, wealthy, and whig political interest. In Kesteven the greater gentry dominated—above all, in much of this period, Henry Chaplin, the squire of Blankney—while Holland, for all its fertility, was a country of smallish farms and smallish properties with few landed estates and even fewer resident gentry; its politics, the politics of freeholders and farmers without the usual superstructure of social leaders, are strangely underplayed in this account. More important than this, however, is the point which Olney is chiefly concerned to make: the landowners could not, and did not, simply dictate political behaviour to an obedient train of deferential and supine dependants and followers. The “dependants”, the tenantry, were many of them men of substance, prosperous, wealthy, respected, and enjoying a local social consequence which made them very nearly “independent.” In any case tenant farmers had intelligence, opinions, interests, and minds of their own: Olney’s main argument is that, as an electorate, they had to be considered, cultivated, and wooed. It was impossible for a politically minded landowner to take his tenants’ votes for granted, unless he took some pains to ascertain and reflect their views, or at least avoided exciting their hostility,

especially on the great agricultural issues of the day—protection, local taxation, and the malt tax.

Probably this was so; and the chapter and verse of every county election campaign, of the functions of the agricultural societies, of the role of the local press, and of the mode of nursing electoral interests are here to prove it. Nevertheless, there were still the nurses and the nursed. The nurses appear to have come from the landed classes, and not to have numbered a farmer amongst them. So, though the farmers were not sheep, mere booth-fodder, neither were they shepherds; for some reason they were not desirous, or not capable, of becoming leaders. Olney, at the end, is obliged to retreat into mysticism. “The broad but intangible truth is,” he concludes, “that the ‘heavy’ agriculturists of Lincolnshire, and particularly the arable farmers, suffered from Conservatism almost as an occupational disease. They seemed to inhale it from the very furrows that they ploughed.” This is a confession that his methods have failed to provide an explanation; it is the failure of political reason to account for political behaviour. The trouble is that all the facts about political acts are here, but the political acts of a man cannot be understood in isolation from all his other acts. Religion, it is true, has its rightful place in the book, and we see the Anglican Church as the Tory party at prayer. But if we really wish to know where the farmers imbibed their Conservatism we must know about their drinking partners as well as their praying partners; about the process which selected them in the first place and put them into the tenancies which gave command of village communities; about their kinship and friendship networks which gave specific direction to the impulse to conform in voting, as in other acts of social behaviour, with one’s friends; about their relationships with the freeholders and copyholders who, in terms of voting qualifications, were always a more important part of the electorate than the tenant farmers, but many of whom undoubtedly were also tenant farmers themselves. Above all, we need to know why the electorate—not just the farmers, but including them—was content to go on regarding politics as a game which the gentry played, a foible in which they should be humoured provided they did not hurt other people too much while they were playing. In short, Mr Olney has written a careful and meticulous study of the politics of the countryside as they appeared on the public surface; he has provoked questions about what really went on beneath that surface.

F. M. L. THOMPSON

J. P. D. DUNBABIN, *Rural Discontent in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Faber and Faber, 1974. 320 pp. 1 graph, 2 maps. £6.50.

At first glance this is a very odd book. It consists of

twelve essays, flanked by an introduction and a conclusion, on various aspects of rural society in nineteenth-century Britain. With varying degrees of independence, they focus on discontent. Ten of the essays are by Mr Dunbabin, the remaining two are contributed by A. J. Peacock and Dr Pamela Horn.

Dunbabin's objective was to assess the meaning of discontent—from rick-burning and cattle-maiming to combinations and tithe protests—across a wide front. The book therefore touches on a number of regions, from Wales, Scotland, and the north-east to, through Peacock and Horn, East Anglia and Oxfordshire. This extensive approach has its problems, and the book is in consequence rather “bitty,” but it does raise rather more profound questions than the conventional intensive study. Ideas about the nature of and influences upon rural discontent are the core of this book and, to approach the subject as a totality, and to abstract from widespread but incoherent movements, it is perhaps necessary to adopt this approach.

In order to appreciate this book to the full, one needs to read it backwards, since the analytical framework which links the separate studies appears in the later sections. But the case-studies are themselves of much interest. They discuss the growth of trade unionism, showing the achievements of collective action in influencing wage levels in the short run of upswings and the ease with which employer response dissipated the threat in downturns of agricultural cycles. Activity of this kind replaced the barely coherent threats to symbols of property which, Peacock suggests, influenced wage levels marginally in East Anglia before 1850. But the suggested spread of unionism and its political transformation into the “rural question” does not seem as yet a complete answer to the problem of the pacification of the English countryside in the later nineteenth century.

Rather stronger is the discussion of tenant right in relation to crofting in the Highlands, and the tithe question in Wales. Both issues invited the Irish analogy, and Dunbabin rightly introduces this dimension into his discussions. It is striking that such issues barely troubled central government. While the Welsh tithe question, doubly powered by religion and nationalism, raised the spectre of separatism, and led Salisbury's cabinet to mutterings which strike a curiously modern note, the Scottish crofters, as vociferous and disorderly, produced few reverberations in Whitehall. Both were subsumed into the “Land Question” by 1900. Neatly linking religion and discontent is the important chapter on farm servants, which with other sections on the hiring systems of Scotland and Northumberland represents a strong and very original theme in the book.

The major conclusions advanced by Dunbabin are that collective activity, politics, and trade union-

ism, with the spread of public order, transferred threats of labourers' revolt and peasant war into a peaceful political cause by 1900. The credo of the urban Liberal came to embrace the “Land Question” and this was a significant force in the development of late Victorian social order. The theme is both important and tempting, but will need testing more intensively. Other influences, particularly the development of other sectors of employment and the gradual structural change in the industry, may prove as important in the final analysis, but this remains a stimulating and original approach to the problem. This is a book of importance, which, if not altogether cohesive, presents in its case-studies and its broad thesis much to interest the agrarian historian and the general reader.

J. A. CHARTRES

JOHN BOOKER, *Essex and the Industrial Revolution*. Essex C.C., Chelmsford. Essex County Record Office Publications, No. 66, 1974. xii + 244 pp. 2 maps, 8 plates. £3.40.

This book is the outcome of a survey of industrial monuments in the county of Essex undertaken in 1970, the field work being administered by the County Record Office. All major industrial institutions founded before 1920 were surveyed and, clearly, a vast number of minor items as well. It was an admirable piece of initiative and has produced a useful book.

It is a book, however, not easy to categorize. Though it does not ignore past economic realities, it could hardly be called economic history; though there is a good deal about the distribution and nature of industrial sites, there are not detailed or elaborate surveys of particular monuments consistent with the more ambitious types of industrial archaeology, and few plans or photographs, and those not very exciting.

However, Mr Booker's work has other virtues. Essex could hardly enter the current competition for the title of “cradle of the industrial revolution,” but Mr Booker is able to show that even a profoundly rural county (the areas effectively part of Greater London are, understandably, not fully assimilated into the study) was heavily influenced by the Industrial Revolution. He is very good on the remarkable creation of iron foundries to serve agricultural and small town needs in the first half of the nineteenth century, there is interesting material on agricultural machinery and particularly on the use of steam in nineteenth-century agriculture. The established industries of the countryside are looked at, and Essex has the attraction of being an important centre of the silk industry; brewing and milling are well covered and the material made available should have value comparatively for those who make subsequent studies of other counties.

Much of the data on roads and bridges will be primarily of use to the local historian; this reviewer has to confess that the transport antiquarianism of milestones and direction posts does not greatly excite him, and that he was happier with the chapter on water and rail transport which has, among other things, some useful pages on the acquisition of land for transport systems. The importance of the new technology of the Industrial Revolution in making possible a new range of public services in agricultural areas and small towns is well illustrated; there is even a careful treatment of that very epitome of historical parochialism—the parish pump! The last chapter, on the perspective of change, hardly lives up to its title, though it redresses the balance a little as far as the underexamined London end of the county is concerned.

The volume, then, is a little hard to define, and in some danger of falling between several stools. But there is a great amount of information to be gained, and the impression of the impact which industrial developments, largely initiated elsewhere, had at a great number of points in an overwhelmingly agricultural and rural county comes over most strongly, and with a measure of refreshing novelty.

J. R. HARRIS

W. A. MAGUIRE (ed.), *Letters of a Great Irish Landlord: A Selection from the Estate Correspondence of the Third Marquis of Downshire, 1809-1845*. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast, 1974. 189 pp. 22 illus. £1.65.

Revisionism in Irish agrarian history is a recent development. It really began with Professor Barbara Lewis Solow: now, just a few years later, Irish economic historians are buttressing with new evidence, and going beyond, the hypotheses she bravely advanced in 1971. A weakness of her *Irish Land Question* is its over-reliance in parts on ambiguous source material. Solow often takes the antagonists' "own public accounts of their actions" at face value, but Dr Maguire and several others, notably Professor Donnelly and Drs Crawford and Vaughan, have sought to discover from estate records instead "what landowners actually did." The newly worked sources strongly suggest that the prototype landlord of Irish nationalist historiography is mostly caricature.

Thus, Dr Maguire's third Marquis of Downshire did not incessantly raise rents and evict tenants, nor was he an absentee: besides, he showed considerable interest in estate affairs and in landed improvement in general. On the other hand, he expected political loyalty and dumb respect, he was somewhat of a bigot, and he held sturdily anti-democratic views. Maguire's judiciously chosen selection of letters—somewhat less than a third of them from Downshire's own pen—not only provides evidence of this but also contains much on the institutional

and economic background of nineteenth-century Ireland.

Doubtless, further estate record research on landlords will add to the ongoing revision, which is long overdue. However, the stage of diminishing returns to such effort is probably not far off. This is just as well, since Irish preoccupation with the land question has hitherto delayed work on other important aspects of agricultural history: fundamental questions about regional specialization, the trend in output and productivity, and the adoption of new techniques remain uninvestigated.

In one important sense, the case against landlordism is strengthened by the discoveries of Maguire and others. The landlord, it emerges, was no monster, yet he was quite expendable. The social costs of his demise in terms of agricultural output and investment forgone were apparently rather small. In the eighteenth century he was a modernizing influence, but by the post-Famine period he had outlived his social usefulness, and could be replaced without undue disruption.

Dr Maguire's work will be extremely useful to a wide range of readers, including students and textbook writers. Both he and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland are to be commended on its publication.

CORMAC Ó GRÁDA

P. J. PERRY, *British Farming in the Great Depression, 1870-1914: An Historical Geography*. Newton Abbot, David & Charles, 1974. 208 pp. £4.25.

If it should be true, as the publisher—or maybe it is the author—claims, that "this is the first extended study in English of this period," one is bound for the sake of the good name of historical scholarship to come away with the hope that it will not be the last, and that respect for basic standards will correct the curious graph (p. 41) which alleges that wheat prices were about 30s. per quarter in 1812 and about 6s. per quarter in 1894, and the strange statement (p. 45) that fat cattle fetched around 6s. per lb in the mid-1870's, falling to 4s. 3d. twenty years later, with fat sheep at 7s. to 5s. 6d. per lb at similar dates. The fatstock prices are, of course, a simple case of confusing stones with pounds, a pardonable error which careful proof-reading should have picked up. The error in wheat (and other grain) prices is a little more complicated, since the figures which are stated to be in shillings per quarter, taken from the *London Gazette*, are in fact in shillings per hundredweight taken from *A Century of Agricultural Statistics* or one of the other twentieth-century official publications of the Ministry of Agriculture in which the conversion from quarters to hundredweights has been carried out. Since the author then goes on to examine criticism of the *London Gazette* prices by contemporary farmers on the grounds that its

sources were misleading, it is a trifle unfortunate that he has muddled his own source. This scarcely matters to the specialist, who has plenty of other sources of information; but it is rather trying for the first-year student who may be sent to this work as an introductory textbook.

In the main this book is a competent summary of the causes of the late nineteenth-century depression in agriculture, its course, its effects on landowners, farmers, and labourers, and of the twists and turns of adaptations of farming techniques and practices to the changing market situation—well balanced, within the overall short length, between the topics covered, nicely illustrated with a combination of selections from *Punch* and *Akenfield*-type photographs, and remarkably conventional. It is useful to have so much potted Besse made available when Besse's original work, *La crise et l'évolution de l'agriculture en Angleterre de 1875 à nos jours* (Paris, 1910), is somewhat inaccessible, and agreeable to find appreciation of another early French writer on British farming in depression, Dulac (1903). The foundations of the book, however, are provided by old friends like Assistant Commissioners Hunter Pringle and R. H. Rew, and pilgrims A. D. Hall and Rider Haggard. The analysis by T. W. Fletcher is, naturally, noticed; but his lines of analytical thought, and likewise those of Bellerby or Ojala, are scarcely pursued. In short, this is in the main good old-fashioned descriptive agricultural history. It becomes a little difficult to understand why its 208 pages have a better claim to be the first extended study in English of the period than the 146 pages devoted to the same period by Christabel S. Orwin and Edith H. Whetnam in their *History of British Agriculture, 1846-1914*.

The clue, perhaps, lies in the author's commendable enthusiasm for the discipline of historical geography. There is much in this work which is historical, but little outside the first chapter which is obviously geographical save in the non-methodological sense that plenty of place-names are mentioned. It is, for example, good to see that the specialization of the West Riding in rhubarb-forcing is noticed; it is sad that its extreme localization is not brought out and specified, and that its use, legendary or mythical, as an export base stock for cheap French "champagne" is not examined. The neighbouring Pontefract liquorice industry, and its supporting field crop, is overlooked. As a contribution to historical geography it is by the first chapter, on the context of the depression, that the book must be judged. After sketching the pre-1870 high-farming background, this chapter attempts to deploy tools of spatial analysis in order to measure, map, and understand the farmers' experience of depression. A passing reference to the author's own earlier work with a "trend-surface depression model" of Dorset,

without explanation of its nature, is not encouraging for the beginner for whom the remainder of the book seems to be intended.

The meat, however, lies in six maps of agricultural failure, which in effect plot the county distributions of bankruptcies of farmers in 1871-3, 1881-3, and 1891-3 with various combinations of chronological comparisons between the three observations. The trouble here is that the nature and meaning of the data are never discussed. At the geographical level it may be that there was no practical alternative to taking the county as the mapping unit; but in view of the many objections to the relevance of the county as an agricultural unit, which elsewhere in the book the author seems to share, the question at least merits discussion. The absence of any discussion of the underlying data on bankruptcies is more serious, since without being told something about the nature of the information which has been used it is very difficult to know what meaning to attach to the statements which may be read off these maps: to take an example at random, agricultural failures in Northumberland in 1871-3 were between 0.04 and 0.08 per cent of its 1871 farming population, while in 1881-3 they were between 0.1 and 0.2 per cent of its 1881 farming population. The reader is left to his own devices to assume that "agricultural failure" means formal bankruptcy—though it might equally well signify business failure leading to a quitting; and that "farming population" means numbers of persons describing themselves as farmers in the Census—though it might equally well mean numbers of occupiers of agricultural holdings, or numbers of persons, including members of farmers' families, and agricultural workers, actually engaged in farming. Even with problems of definition out of the way, we need to know something about the circumstances in which farmers went formally bankrupt, and whether there is any reason to suppose that the differential between business failure-quitting and formal bankruptcy widened or narrowed over time, before we can be certain just what an increase in the bankruptcy rate is measuring. Nevertheless, the maps which portray movements in bankruptcy rates, rather than in the absolute levels of bankruptcy, are original and arresting: they suggest that the largest increases, of 1891-3 failures over 1871-3 failures, occurred in the north-west, Somerset, and mid-Wales, and that it was in those regions that the experience of depression was the greatest shock to farmers rather than in the classic cereal areas of the east and south-east which were the scenes of the highest absolute numbers of failures, the greatest falls in rentals, and the highest concentrations of abandoned farms and derelict land. This novel conclusion emerges because the "stricken" east and south-east were already accustomed to comparatively high failure rates in the "normal"

years, 1871-3. The paradoxical result, however, immediately raises the question whether it is fair to regard the years 1871-3 as years of normal prosperity, and hence of normal bankruptcy experience for English and Welsh farmers in general and for eastern and south-eastern mixed farmers in particular; for, as the author himself notes elsewhere in the book, some writers have held that the tide of prosperity especially for arable-livestock farmers had turned in 1862. In other words, it would have been helpful to be given some thoughts about the characteristics of the base period on which the author chooses to build his comparisons.

In summary, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that here is a book which has rather gone off at half-cock: the original part of the contribution is suggestive but too brief and too little documented; the descriptive sections are familiar, and sound, but not directly related to the spatial analysis. The bibliography is extensive.

F. M. L. THOMPSON

E. D. STEELE, *Irish Land and British Politics: Tenant-right and Nationality 1865-1870*. C.U.P., 1974. x + 367 pp. Map. £6.40.

A frequently urged, if rarely substantiated, objection to post-Famine Irish landlordism used to be that it hindered fixed investment in agriculture on the part of the tenant. This was a theoretical possibility, given the predominance of yearly tenancies and the low legal costs of eviction. Critics saw in Ulster tenant-right, the subject of Professor Steele's study, a remedy: this peculiar mechanism, the origins of which are still debated, permitted outgoing tenants to sell their interest in a tenancy, and thus realize the capital value of any improvements they had made. As such, tenant-right was an ingenious device.

However, as both tenant and landlord knew, and as Professor Steele explains, the Irish version of tenant-right was only in part—in small part—a means of safeguarding the farmers' investments. Much more important, it was the tenants' way of splitting the economic rent with the legal owner, and a recognition that the landlords' property right in the land was far from absolute. In Professor Steele's words, "tenant right was property." In practice, complained the Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, a Northern magnate, in 1865 "the sums which were paid by the incoming tenant very often had no relation whatever to the real value of . . . improvements"; Steuart Trench, author of a clever book on landlord-tenant relations, similarly admitted that "it seems absurd to say that land is let at its fair value, when men are willing to pay £10 per acre for the good will, and no doubt the rent might be raised so high as to do away with any tenant-right interest whatever." But Trench then stated that "to break

through it roughly and suddenly without full previous notice given, would be both difficult and injudicious." In Ireland, landlords were sometimes shot for attempting less.

Gladstone's Land Act of 1870, which sought to regularize landlord-tenant relations in Ireland, gave legal sanction to the custom of tenant-right where it already existed. But for much of Ireland it was, as Professor Steele says, "a monumental irrelevance." The legislation meant nothing to tenants living in areas where, unlike Ulster, the land market was inactive, and where tenant-right had not developed. There the tenant interest demanded fixity of tenure and judicially controlled rents—demands which, in effect, amounted to a claim that dual ownership, already an economic reality, be given legal status. Yet the Act was seen in some quarters as the thin edge of the wedge, and Steele exhaustively chronicles the fears of the proprietors and much of the media, who regarded the measure as an act of outright confiscation.

Professor Steele's book is essentially a blow-by-blow account of the debate, both inside and outside the cabinet, which led to Gladstone's measure. For insight into cabinet procedure under Gladstone, and into the developing views of Stuart Mill, Bright, and *The Times*, the account is a useful one. However, the debate itself was rather tedious, and Professor Steele's rendering at times makes inevitably for difficult and turgid reading.

The book is motivated by the claim that the 1870 Act was a landmark in British legislative history, since it did away with "the notion that the individual's rights to property were indefeasible." This is an exaggeration: Gladstone's "Irish mouse" (Karl Marx's rather apt description) was largely a recognition of essentially customary rights. Nevertheless, the measure may be contrasted with earlier British legislation on enclosures, which usually rode roughshod over such rights. Politically and economically, subsequent Gladstonian concessions were infinitely more important. The Irish tenants, Lord Dufferin's "thriftless squatters," got what they demanded in the 1880's and 1890's. In the meantime Irish landed proprietors could still cherish the belief that they were economically indispensable, and something more than mere rent-chargers.

CORMAC Ó GRÁDA

PAMELA HORN (ed.), *Agricultural Trade Unionism in Oxfordshire, 1872-81*. Oxfordshire Record Society, Vol. XLVIII, 1974. 144 pp. Map. £2.60 to non-members from the Treasurer, F. P. Redman, Esq., c/o Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Students of late nineteenth-century rural trade unions are already indebted to Pamela Horn for several articles and for an excellent biography of *Joseph Arch* (Kineton, 1971). She has now increased

their debt with her edition of the salient documents relating to agricultural trade unionism in Oxfordshire. This collection consists principally of the minute books of the Oxford District of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union (1872-9) and of the Horspath Branch of that district (1873-4), of whose importance it is sufficient to say that only one other (and less substantial) N.A.L.U. minute book appears to have survived at all. We are also given the Rules of the Oxfordshire and Adjoining Counties Association of Agriculturalists 1872, and the correspondence of George Wallis and Hugh Hamersley in connection with another attempt to organize local farmers against the N.A.L.U. in 1873-4 (which was, however, markedly less successful than the contemporary moves in eastern England). Lastly, Dr Horn prints extracts from incumbents' replies to the Bishop of Oxford's questionnaires of 1875, 1878, and 1881, which shed interesting sidelights on the religious after-effects of the labourers' agitation. All are indexed, and extensively annotated. Dr Horn precedes them with an introductory account of agricultural trade unionism in Oxfordshire, which is, however, briefer than her chapter of that name in J. P. D. Dunbabin, *Rural Discontent in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (1974). Ironically, my only reservation relates to the most notorious (though not inherently the most important) episode in the story, the 1873 Ascott-under-Wychwood strike. For though Dr Horn refers us to the Lord Chancellor's inquiries (*Parliamentary Papers*, 1873, LIX, pp. 27-31), she has not found room to reprint them. Accordingly, the fullest account is that given in M. K. Ashby, *The Changing English Village, 1066-1914* (Kineton, 1974), pp. 332-6.

J. P. D. DUNBABIN

WILHELM ABEL, *Massenarmut und Hungerkrisen im vorindustriellen Europa. Versuch einer Synopsis*. Hamburg and Berlin, Verlag Paul Parey, 1974. 427 pp. 74 figures, 8 tables. DM 85.

Professor W. Abel is well known for his distinguished history of German agriculture from the early Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. His work called *Agrarkrisen und Agrarkonjunktur im Mitteleuropa vom 13. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*, appeared in 1935, second edition 1966. This volume on crisis in agriculture is brought up to date and extended by this study of mass poverty and famine in pre-industrial Europe, that is from the early sixteenth century up to 1850. It claims to provide a general view.

It is tightly packed, full of condensed detail, and illustrated by scores of graphs. These graphs are used to one end, namely to display the changes in food prices (basically of grains and animal products), current changes in wages, and often in the prices of other commodities. He selects a number of spells when food was short and, using a European

canvas, shows how the crisis developed over as wide an area as his figures command. He draws particularly on the Elsas Archives on prices at the University of Göttingen. In addition he provides a continuous narrative linking the crisis years.

In general he is able to be fairly precise about the months in which it became apparent at any one place that the harvest was insufficient and creating a local shortage. He shows how widely the shortage extended, and traces the price rise of the locally most popular grains. He then recounts the ramifications of trade between the Baltic east, the Mediterranean south, and the oceanic west. Delay was great and frustrating in a period of restrictions and of taxes on transit. Meanwhile the local authorities needed to take measures including the public buying of grain, the issuing of tokens for the poor to have bread, the organization of soup kitchens (at a late date serving the Rumford gruel), the forbidding of exports, the cancelling of import taxes, the release of food from military stores, and the combating of hoarding, speculation, and the black market. The same tale is repeated over a long period, being modified on occasions where peace or the improvement of trade facilities made possible a quicker alleviation of suffering. He thus establishes a shifting model of a famine. The admirable detail makes it possible to look into the book at various dates to abstract the facts required. A reader intent on an outline of the model would probably have preferred not a series of chapters in historical sequence but a much shorter statement of the conclusions, and possibly a juxtaposed tabulation of the phenomena of a number of crises. This would have established the facts more economically: but the loss of detail can hardly be forgone.

Abel observes over time the changes in the mode of crises. The early ones were caused by climate, pestilence, and disturbance and, in Abel's view, are just hiatuses in a state of affairs where ordinarily all had sufficient food in adequate variety. Despite the increased intervention of civic and state authorities in famine periods, by the nineteenth century the majority of the population were unable to buy sufficient food in ordinary years, and in times of shortage were unable to face inflated prices. Pauperism was the normal state. This new state of affairs appears to be related to industrialization, but it is here that Abel breaks off, shortly before the era of large-scale world trade in foods, but he reminds us that trade cycles, where food trade was only a fraction of the total trade, had come upon the scene. He is thus concerned with the old style in famine.

Abel demonstrates that, when, in a crisis, the price of grain went up, wages often remained as they were, and the price of animal foods also did not rise. Nevertheless, animal foods were too expensive to be bought by standard wages in sufficient quantities for their food value to be equal to that of grain

bought at inflated prices. Some must have benefited from famine and the high price of grain, and these benefits may have assisted peasants nearby, but more often grain merchants moving supplies from far, and especially estate owners who habitually sold a large surplus. They were thus able to increase the state in which they lived.

Perhaps the book's greatest merit is the width of information culled from most of the countries of Europe. During the whole period dealt with east and west Europe came to one another's aid, but usually when there was a shortage the east provided the west with food. The information focuses upon conditions in the German world, and this is quite proper. Thus information about the state of affairs in Britain are used basically to show interaction with German conditions. But with so wide a canvas it might have been worth while to discuss in some detail the meteorological conditions across Europe. Weather and climate are a continuum, and enough work has been done on the subject to show how, if not why, a pattern of weather, be it of rain, early winter, a spoiled harvest, frost, snow, or hail, will vary from place to place in an integrated way. It would be possible to classify each year of famine under one of a dozen weather patterns. In this way physical causes could have been employed more effectively to confront the human ones.

It is a very important book, very dense in detail, somewhat awkward in expression, requiring at least a passing acquaintance with the territorial geography of Europe or a good historical atlas. It is a deep well of inexhaustible facts. The constant repetition of a pattern ultimately and inexorably drives home that the same events elicit a common pattern of human reaction where famine is concerned.

Two small points: the index lists only authorities quoted and does not handle topics, and twelve long documents concerned with food problems are appended.

D. J. DAVIS

RAY ALLEN BILLINGTON (ed.), *People of the Plains and Mountains: Essays in the History of the West dedicated to Everett Dick*. Greenwood Press, 1973. xi + 227 pp. Plate. £6.90.

Everett Dick, whose long teaching career was devoted to Union College, Lincoln, Nebraska, first made his name as a historian with his *Sod-House Frontier, 1854-1890* (1937), a social history of the settlement of the Northern Plains area where he has spent most of his life. Six other books, dealing with various regions and aspects of the frontier, were the subsequent fruits of his continued enthusiasm for his chosen field; and it is worth remarking that since Dick was never a member of a large institution with research assistance and other resources to draw on, his able contributions were very much the product of his own diligence.

Now, to honour Dick's seventy-fifth birthday, a group of distinguished western scholars, headed by Ray Allen Billington, have joined forces to produce this volume. The late John D. Hicks provides a brief biography of Dick himself, while Thomas D. Clark writes on social and cultural continuity on the frontier; Merrill J. Mattes reconsiders our knowledge of the Oregon trail, and W. Turrentine Jackson compares pioneer life on the plains and in the mines. W. Eugene Hollon takes another look at frontier violence, and Philip D. Jordan offers an interesting account of the policing of western towns; Francis Paul Prucha discusses the connections between Indian policy and American Protestantism, while Paul Wallace Gates, doyen of American agricultural historians, contributes a characteristically thorough account of corporation farming in California. James B. Rhoads rounds off the volume with a discussion of military archives as a source for social history.

Like all collections of this nature the essays vary in interest and importance, and in the main they provide discussions of new sources and recent literature rather than detailed major additions to knowledge. The book, nevertheless, offers some attractive and thought-provoking reading, and makes a worthwhile tribute to the valued work of one of the West's most ardent historians.

G. E. MINGAY

ENID GAULDIE, *Cruel Habitations: A History of Working-Class Housing 1780-1918*. Allen & Unwin, 1974. 363 pp. 11 plates, 10 plans and drawings. Hardback £5.75; paperback £3.

In the 1970's there has been a growing scholarly interest in nineteenth-century housing conditions. In her important contribution to our understanding of the subject Dr Gauldie maintains that attention has hitherto been focused on the urban slums, and that unsavoury conditions of rural housing have been largely overlooked. To redress the balance the four chapters of Part I of her book are devoted to housing in pre-industrial and rural Britain. It is her opinion that "it was as much the lack of accommodation in the village as the attractions of the city that brought many immigrants from rural Britain and Ireland into the overcrowded centres of the Metropolis, Liverpool, Glasgow and the other large towns."

The difference between the slums of the countryside and those of the towns, in Dr Gauldie's view, lay in the differing intentions of their owners. Country cottages were deliberately built without floors or ceilings, with unlined walls, and with inadequate foundations because their builders considered they were used for an "inferior class of being," not requiring the comforts normally required by their betters. By contrast, the slums of the cities had been originally "good middle-class or tradesmen's housing which had been brought into

a state of decay by overcrowding and misuse." However, in chapter seven, Dr Gauldie writes that in the new areas of the industrial towns "the back-to-back houses were shoddily built on insecure foundations of materials not even adequate for keeping out the rain." It would appear, then, that in the cities, as well as in the countryside, the housing requirements of wage-earners were not rated very highly.

This is no purely descriptive account of nineteenth-century housing. Throughout the book there is a sustained attempt to unravel the reasons for the failure of society to provide decent homes for the poor. Credit is given for the good intentions (and achievements) of reformers. The old cottages on the Duke of Bedford's estates were "among the best in Britain." In two chapters devoted to philanthropic housing associations, improvements in standards are noted even though it is recognized that only those workers who were fortunate enough to be in steady employment were able to afford rents—around 2s. a week—which had to be charged to afford some return to the investor.

The effects of changing demand for labour and the burden of the poor rate on rural housing policy are given thoughtful consideration. The rural landlord was often in a dilemma. Should he build a large supply of cottages to enhance his reputation as a philanthropist, increase his political influence, and ensure an abundant supply of labour for periods of peak demand at seed time and at harvest, or should he pull down cottages to escape payment of a burdensome poor rate when little labour was required? If the former policy was followed the village might well be inundated with potential paupers, if the latter, gross overcrowding was likely to occur. No wonder the problem of rural housing proved such an intractable one. Dr Gauldie has performed a valuable service in drawing attention to the multiplicity of economic, social, and political obstacles to housing improvement in both rural and urban areas in the nineteenth century.

PHILIP S. BAGWELL

Etudes Rurales, revue trimestrielle d'histoire, géographie, sociologie et économie des campagnes, No. 49-50, Janvier-Juin 1973. Mouton, Paris and The Hague. 368 pp.

This collection of studies deals with a problem which is central to all modern development: the consequences of the tentacular spread of urban influences into the countryside. It is a problem which has been all too familiar in the Anglo-Saxon countries, where it has gone on virtually unchecked for a long period with often disastrous consequences for the environment. In countries which until comparatively recently conserved a large agrarian sector and a numerous peasantry, there was more resist-

ance to the antagonistic influences of the town. Rapid industrialization in the past few decades, and the desire of both rural and urban people for higher material standards of living, have brought profound changes in the countryside of the developed world. Nowhere has this been more evident than in France, and it is not surprising that it should have evoked the interested concern of exponents of varied disciplines.

Although including contributions from foreign scholars and studies relating to Roumania, Soviet Georgia, and Japan, it is the changes in the French countryside, the "end of the peasantry," which hangs over this volume and has evidently inspired it. The result, it must be said, is a fascinating collection of essays which deserves to be read much more widely than by a few specialists. While the views and ideas expressed vary considerably, it would be invidious in a short review to pick out one or another contribution for special mention from the list of distinguished names and lesser-known scholars.

There is something here for those interested in history, political economy, sociology, geography, and environmental studies generally. Besides the attempts at a theoretical approach there are the detailed studies of problems and places. Whatever "urbanization of the countryside" may be, it covers a wide spectrum of social change, and involves the way of life of large masses of people. In some cases, as for example around Lacq, regions have been transformed by the opening up of natural resources or the implantation of new industries. In others, village life has been profoundly altered by what might also be called the typically French desire for a "secondary residence." In the Rhone valley some villages which might otherwise have disappeared from the map have been taken over by townspeople desiring a place in the country, a tendency which reaches the egregious in the case of the village of Eygalières, with 1,000 inhabitants and twenty private swimming pools.

By way of contrast, in Roumania and Soviet Georgia the state has attempted to diminish the contrasts between village and town by planned development of the rural areas. The studies of these cases are perhaps too slight to be conclusive about this method of dealing with a problem to be found in all modern social systems as opposed to that of the market economy. However, those authors who deal with specific areas in France do suggest the need for more control and more planning.

While warmly recommending this collection, the absence not only of British contributors but even more the lack of any comparative reference to the British case—where "urbanization of the countryside" began earliest and, for better or for worse, has gone farthest—is remarkable.

TOM KEMP

Shorter Notices

CARLO M. CIPOLLA (ed.), *The Fontana Economic History of Europe*, Vol. III, *The Industrial Revolution*. 624 pp. £1.25; Vol. IV, pts 1 and 2, *The Emergence of Industrial Societies*. 368 + 845 pp. Collins/Fontana Books, 1973. 90p and £1 respectively.

Agricultural historians will be disappointed to discover that these three volumes contain only one general chapter of just over fifty pages on agriculture in Europe, by Paul Bairoch (vol. III, 'Agriculture and the Industrial Revolution'). In this the author summarizes and sharpens the arguments he put forward in his pioneering study, *Révolution Industrielle et Sous-Développement* (Paris, 1963), namely, the impossibility of industrial growth without prior, or at least concurrent, developments in agriculture. Professor Bairoch lists the causes of the rise of productivity in European and North American agriculture, beginning with the Low Countries and Britain. The two parts of vol. IV, except for Lennart Jösberg's treatment of Nordic agriculture (pp. 389-406), contain only brief, scattered, and in general inadequate references to the subject in other countries. French agriculture comes off worst: it receives only three page-references in the index, all of which are incorrect. Surely, with over 800 pages at his disposal, the editor could have seen that his contributors achieved a better balance than this?

W. H. CHALONER

ARVO M. SOININEN, *Old Traditional Agriculture in Finland in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Journal of the Scientific Agricultural Society of Finland*, Helsinki, 1974. XLVIII. 459 pp.

Research into agrarian and settlement history in Scandinavia has been pursued energetically during the last twenty years. Finland has had its own group of enthusiasts, central to which has been Eino Jutikkala. His studies of the Finnish *talonpoika* (perhaps best translated as yeoman farmer) and the *Atlas of Finnish Settlement in the 1560's* (Helsinki, 1973) are outstanding examples of scholarship. Among those who have been associated with him is Arvo Soininen, who is best known for his contributions to the colonization of the Finnish lakeland province of Savo in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Now he has published a substantial study of traditional agriculture which reviews crop, stock, and the structure of farming from a period when Finland (catastrophe apart) had a tolerable balance between consumption and production, through the eighteenth century when it was on the edge of overcropping both its cultivated land and burnt-over forest, to a mid-nineteenth century when (given the technology of the day) it was overcropping against a

background of overpopulation. It is a study which explores to the full the documentary material of its time, and which is very much in the spirit of the AGRICULTURAL HISTORY REVIEW. There is an extended summary in English, and all tables and diagrams have English captions.

W. R. MEAD

WALTER LARDEN, *Estancia Life: Agricultural, Economic, and Cultural Aspects of Argentine Farming*. Detroit, U.S.A., Blaine Ethridge Books, 1974. 320 pp. 48 plates. \$17.50. (First published as *Argentine Plains and Andine Glaciers* by T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1911.)

This is a delightful period-piece account of Walter Larden's two visits to his brother's Argentine estancia in 1888-9 and 1908-9. The estancia of Santa Isabel was situated on the flat pampa nearly 200 miles west of Buenos Aires. It had been founded in 1882 by an English land company called Drabble, from a piece of open grassland of about 60 square miles which they had obtained in 1857. Larden records the remarkable advance made by Argentine farming between 1888 and 1909, largely as a result of the settlement of north Italian farmers. The production of wheat, maize, and linseed had increased enormously, as had the exports of beef, mutton, and wool. Larden mourned the decline of the old independent gauchos, but recommended Argentina strongly to energetic young English settlers. One wonders how he would react today. The book is copiously illustrated by Larden's own photographs.

M. A. HAVINDEN

REX C. RUSSELL, *The Logic of Open Field Systems: Fifteen Maps of Groups of Common Fields on the Eve of Enclosure*. Published for the Standing Conference for Local History by the National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Square, London WC1, 1974. 19 pp. 90p.

In this booklet Mr Russell has brought together forty of the Lindsey parish maps which he has made of pre-enclosure field systems. By putting the maps of contiguous parishes side by side he shows how the common-field system was adapted to meet common geographical factors, while making it clear that the universal problem of achieving the best utilization of the land available could be solved in a variety of ways. The patterns of common fields, and particularly those of the old enclosures, also make it evident that while adjoining parishes might have similar field systems each parish was an independent agricultural unit, and the boundaries of a parish generally imposed hard and fast limitations to the land-use pattern which was adopted. The maps,

very clearly drawn and reproduced, are indeed interesting comments on the profound and lasting influence of geographical forces and administrative boundaries, and they merit close study by those interested in the old common-field system and the applied intelligence of those who shaped it and farmed under it.

N. L. LEYLAND and J. E. TROUGHTON, *Glovemaking in West Oxfordshire: the Craft and its History*. Oxford City and County Museum, 1974. 41 pp. Illustrated. Paper 70p.

This attractively illustrated account of the growth of glovemaking contains valuable details of the growth of the craft in the West Oxfordshire area, together with its connections with a number of other industries, particularly the tanning and dressing of leather. Some of the early firms in the industry were listed in nineteenth-century directories as "leather dressers, carriers and china dealers," and also as fellmongers, boot and shoe manufacturers, and butchers. There was a growth of large businesses in which the leather was prepared and cut out in a workshop or factory, and given out to handworkers, almost exclusively women and girls, who did the sewing and decoration. In the later nineteenth century the industry moved more positively into factories but outwork continued, and even now there are some female outworkers still employed. A substantial part of the text is concerned with the craft processes, and has many interesting details of the work involved, from the first selection of the skin to the completion of the gloves. The book throws valuable light on the changing nature of an important rural industry in the course of the nineteenth century.

CHARLOTTE ERICKSON, *Invisible Immigrants: the adaptation of English and Scottish immigrants in Nineteenth-century America*. Leicester U.P. for the London School of Economics, 1975. viii + 531 pp. Maps, 17 plates. £5.50.

The greater part of this substantial volume is taken up by the edited transcripts of series of letters written by English and Scottish immigrants in America to their relations and friends at home. In her valuable introduction Dr Erickson discusses the features of British immigration which appear from the correspondence to have been characteristic. It is shown that the immigrants were not always wise in their choice of land, had various problems in adjusting to their new economic and social environment, and were by no means immune from financial problems and hardship. For some time, at least, their living standards might be inferior in important respects to those which they had left behind. The book will be most valuable to those seeking firsthand evidence on the nature and difficulties of those

spirits bold enough to attempt the opening of a new continent, but it also has relevance for the study of contemporary rural society in the old country.

EDWARD L. SCHAPSMEIER and FREDERICK H. SCHAPSMEIER, *Ezra Taft Benson and the Politics of Agriculture: the Eisenhower Years, 1953-1961*. Danville, Illinois: Interstate, 1975. xviii + 374 pp. \$6.50. Paper.

The Schapsmeier brothers have now followed up their biography of Henry A. Wallace with this account of Ezra Taft Benson's eight years as Secretary of Agriculture in the Eisenhower administration. Though the agricultural labour force in the United States had shrunk in national terms to relatively small proportions, the winning of the farm vote, and hence farm policy itself, were still matters of great political significance. The book (which is printed in the format of a typescript) is concerned not only with Benson himself (a leader in the Mormon Church) and his honesty and integrity in office but also with the internal working of the Eisenhower administration. The President emerges as an astute politician who fought hard for his farm programme but who also knew when to compromise to achieve his ends.

C. F. KOLBERT and T. O'BRIEN, *Land Reform in Ireland: A Legal History of the Irish land problem and its settlement*. Univ. Cambridge Dept. of Land Economy, Occasional Paper No. 3, 1975. 76 pp. £1.20.

This brief survey of tenurial changes in Ireland, rapidly covering the centuries from ancient times to the Land Act of 1965, will be useful to those seeking a concise source for the land legislation, its main provisions, and its general effects. The main emphasis falls on the legal developments involved in the troubles of the nineteenth century, the measures taken prior to Independence, and particularly on the reforms achieved by the series of Irish Land Acts since 1923. There is also an account of recent measures to deal with the remaining problems of overpopulated areas, and of those adopted as a result of Ireland's joining the E.E.C. The interpretation of nineteenth-century developments does not take cognizance of the recent revisions of Irish history, especially those concerning the role of the landlord, and the brief bibliography must therefore be considered inadequate.

ORLANDO W. MILLER, *The Frontier in Alaska and the Matanuska Colony*. Yale U.P., 1975. xi + 329 pp. Map, plate. £7.50.

The frontier in Alaska persisted long after Turner had evaluated the historical role of the vanished frontier in the American West. This book considers the attempts made to colonize Alaska since 1900,

with special emphasis on the effort to establish an agricultural community in the Matanuska valley, north of Anchorage, as part of the public relief measures associated with the New Deal. Rural inhabitants of the depressed cutover region of the Great Lakes formed the original colonists, and the first residents of the tent cities of Matanuska arrived in the spring of 1935. Through years of severe vicissitudes, struggling against a hostile environment, the valley "eventually developed into the only approximation of an agricultural area in Alaska," though one always dependent on government support, and now in decline. In its early days this modern instance of frontier pioneering showed the typical features of optimism and community spirit. The tent city at Palmer rapidly produced a newspaper, community hall, department store, and hotel, and the American gift for enterprise produced advertisements such as the following: "Taxi for hire. John Howard . . . Tent no 17 opposite Hospital, Palmer. Any place . . . Any Time after working hours." This volume provides a detailed record of an interesting if misguided experiment.

P. J. PERRY, *A Geography of 19th Century Britain*. Batsford, 1975. xii + 187 pp. 28 plates; 38 figs. £6.50 hardcover; £2.95 limp.

This brief survey is specifically designed for students of both geography and history, but their mentors may well find some valuable material and references in the author's concise discussion of the growth of industrial Britain. One chapter is devoted to changes in agriculture, and another to the geography of population growth and settlement, including a section on rural depopulation. There is some interesting material, too, in the chapters dealing with the brewing, flour-milling, and leather industries. Some of the photographs are new and striking, although it is a pity that the maps are in general rather small for detailed study. The book will form a useful adjunct to introductory courses on nineteenth-century Britain.

REX C. RUSSELL, *Friendly Societies in the Caistor, Binbrook and Brigg Area in the Nineteenth Century*. W.E.A., Nettleton Branch, 1975. 17 pp.

So little detail is known of village friendly societies that this short study by the well-known Lincolnshire historian must receive a warm welcome. It is based mainly on newspaper notices of society activities, and shows the associations to be active in the area examined from at least the late 1830's. They were evidently bodies of some influence, and their anniversary celebrations, involving a procession with music, a church service, and a dinner, were occasions to be remembered. But, as Mr Russell says, there is much more to be found out about their character, objects, enrolments, and membership. It

would be especially interesting to have a more precise idea of their impact on the vicissitudes of working-class life in the age of the New Poor Law.

N. W. ALCOCK, *Stoneleigh Villagers, 1597-1650*. University of Warwick Open Studies, 1975. viii + 58 pp. Map, 6 plates. Available from Univ. Warwick. Extra Mural Office, Coventry, 70p (+ 20p postage).

This brief but attractively presented study has been composed from the work of students in extra-mural classes. The major part of the volume is taken up by accounts of individual villagers, with a description of their holdings, houses, and goods, taken from surveys, inventories, and wills, and supplemented by physical evidence from surviving buildings. The result is a valuable analysis of the social structure and wealth of a village which lay on the border of the Arden and Felden districts of Warwickshire, having part of its land in closes and part in open fields. The study will be of much interest to classes pursuing similar investigations, as well as to historians, local and national.

R. E. SANDELL, *Abstracts of Wiltshire Tithe Apportionments*. Devizes, Wiltshire Record Society Publ. Vol. xxx, 1975. viii + 164 pp. £5 to non-members (plus postage).

The major part of the volume consists of 290 abstracts from the instruments of tithe apportionment, almost all of which are deposited in the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge. Separate appendices list the valuers, mapmakers, and commissioners who were involved. In his introduction Mr Sandell deals with the commutation of tithes both before the act of 1836 and subsequently. Information provided in the abstracts includes the date of the agreement, the amount of the rent-charge and to whom payable, the division of the acreage by type of cultivation, the names and acreages of owners and occupiers, and a reference to the tithe map.

R. J. OLNEY (ed.), *Labouring Life on the Lincolnshire Wolds: a Study of Binbrook in the Mid-Nineteenth Century*. Society for Lincs. History & Arch., 182 Grimsby Road, Humberston, Grimsby, 1975. 39 pp. Illus. 85p to non-members.

This attractively presented booklet is yet another result of the valuable work done by extra-mural classes in local history, in this instance by one held under the auspices of the University of Nottingham and the Lincolnshire Archives Office. The main object was to investigate the material in the enumerators' returns to the census of 1851 for an open parish in a rather remote part of the Lincolnshire wolds. In addition to interesting material on the occupational structure—it is clear that Binbrook served as centre for village crafts—there are dis-

cussions of migration, the fortunes of church and chapel, social conditions, and the reasons why the village possessed a magnetic attraction for vagrants and criminals. An open village located among a number of close parishes, Binbrook had a surplus of labour which was available for work in the surrounding area. In sum, an interesting and worthwhile little study.

ALFRED F. HAVIGHURST, *Modern England, 1901-1970*. C.U.P., 1976. x + 109 pp. £3.30.

A further contribution to the series of bibliographical handbooks prepared for the Conference on British Studies, this volume contains a selected 2,502 entries relating to published books and articles. However only 145 entries are listed under the title 'Agricultural History'. The handbook is more of value for general reference than for specialized study, and its most useful sections are the lists of bibliographies, catalogues, guides, and hand-

books which provide an avenue leading to a more comprehensive range of sources.

EDITH H. WHETHAM, *Beef Cattle and Sheep, 1910-1940*. Univ. Cambridge Dept. Land Economy, Occasional Paper No. 5, 1976. 56 pp. £1.50.

Miss Whetham's central theme in this brief study is the gradual decline in output of home-killed beef and lamb, and the growing importance in the market of imported meat. Though there were changes in the breeding and feeding of meat animals to meet the demand for leaner and smaller joints, technical limitations on output were not overcome before the 1950's. The author deals with marketing developments, and with the diversity of breeds, cross-breeds, and ages of the animals. Historians will find that her study includes some valuable statistical information on the numbers and prices of cattle and sheep, and the work makes an important contribution to our knowledge of the period.

Books Received

THOMAS F. DE VOE, *The Market Assistant: containing a brief description of every article of human food sold in the public markets of the cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn . . .* First published 1867, reprinted Detroit, Gale Research Co., 1975. 455 pp. \$28.50.

JOHS. EWENS, *Jordfællsskab og Udskiftring paa Færoerne Famién Bygd*. Copenhagen, C.A. Reitzels Boghandel A/S, 1975. 423 pp. Maps and tables in separate case.

JACQUELINE FEARN, *Thatch and Thatching*. Princes Risborough, Shire Publ., 1976. 32 pp. Illus. 45p.

GÜNTHER FRANZ, *Geschichte des Deutschen Bauernstandes vom fruhen Mittelalter bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*. 2nd edn, Stuttgart, Verlag Eugen Ulmar, 1976. 301 pp.

JEAN GUILAINE, *Premiers Bergers et Paysans de l'Occident Méditerranéen*. Paris, Mouton, 1976. 286 pp. 130 Fr.

A. RUPERT HALL and NORMAN SMITH (eds.), *History of Technology: First Annual Volume 1976*. Mansell, 1976. vii + 186 pp. £9.75.

NIGEL HARVEY, *Fields, Hedges and Ditches*. Princes Risborough, Shire Publ., 1976. 32 pp. Illus. 45p.

ROBERT S. LOPEZ, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages 950-1350*. C.U.P., 1976. xi + 180 pp. Hardcover £4.90; paper £1.95.

ALAN MACFARLANE, *Resources and Population: A Study of the Gurungs of Nepal*. Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology, 12. C.U.P., 1976. xviii + 364 pp. £12.50.

CHARLES TRICE MARTIN, *The Record Interpreter: A Collection of Abbreviations, Latin Words and Names used in English Historical Manuscripts and Records*. 2nd edn, 1910, reprinted Dorking, Kohler & Coombes, 1976. xv + 464 pp. £6.

KAREN MARIE OLSEN, *Sokkelund Herreds Tingboger 1636-37*. Copenhagen, Landbohøistorsk Selskab, 1976. 175 pp.

G. F. PETERKEN and R. C. WELCH (eds.), *Bedford Purlieus: its History, Ecology and Management*. Monks Wood Experimental Station Symposium No. 7. Abbots Repton, Huntingdon, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, 1975. 209 pp. Maps and diagrams. £1 (postage 42p).

OLIVER RACKHAM, *Hayley Wood: its History and Ecology*. Cambs. & Isle of Ely Naturalists' Trust, 1 Brookside, Cambridge, 1975. xv + 221 pp. 26 plates. £3.95 (postage 55p).

PETER J. REYNOLDS, *Farming in the Iron Age*. Cambridge Introduction to the History of Mankind Topic Book. C.U.P., 1976. 48 pp. Illus. 95p.

M. E. ROBINSON, *The New South Wales Wheat Frontier, 1851 to 1911*. A.N.U. Canberra Dept. of Human Geography, Research School of Pacific Studies, 1976. xiii + 247 pp. \$8.00 (Australian).

M. E. SEEBOHM, *The Evolution of the English Farm*. 2nd revised edn, reprinted East Ardsley, Wakefield, Yorks., E.P. Publ. Ltd, 1976. 356 pp. £6.25.

JOHN VINCE, *Old British Livestock*. Princes Risborough, Shire Publ., 1976. 32 pp. Illus. 45p.