

## Book Reviews

S. BÖKÖNYI, *History of Domestic Mammals in Central and Eastern Europe*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974. 597 pp. £12.20.

This is an important book for a number of reasons. First, it is the only book on the subject in English, and as such brings together for the first time a great deal of work from the area published in the last thirty years, virtually none of which is in English.

Second, the region covered was one of the first outside the initial area of domestication in the Near East, as well as being on the main route followed by domestic animals entering Europe. In addition, as pointed out by the author, the wild ancestors of cattle and pigs lived in central and eastern Europe, which therefore themselves had important centres of domestication.

Bökönyi uses as his basis the animal remains he has himself studied from nearly 400 archaeological sites in Hungary, but the entire area he covers is bounded by Schleswig-Holstein in the north, the Rhine in the west, and the Alps in the south. The treatment is of particular value to the agricultural historian, since although starting chronologically with the Neolithic period it continues to the end of the Middle Ages, and so a sequence is provided from the initial domestication almost up to the commencement of scientific animal breeding.

The author rightly draws a distinction between bones from settlements that were food remains, and so frequently broken, and those from burials, which often yielded intact skulls, and even complete skeletons, which may, however, not have been typical. He starts with an account of the historical development of animal keeping in Hungary, period by period, and then enlarges this to include the rest of central and eastern Europe.

There then follows a discussion of the factors influencing the development of the domestic fauna, in which such factors as geography, climate, human race, the use of the animals, settlement types, husbandry techniques, and religion are considered. Bökönyi then gives a detailed account of each animal species: cattle, water buffalo, sheep, goats, pigs, the camel, horses, the ass, cat, dog, and rabbit.

There is a particularly valuable 100-page register of sites and the number of each species found, together with location maps and an indication of the present whereabouts of the bones. Following this there is an even longer section of tables giving skeletal measurements from the sites listed. From these it is clear that the conclusions of the book are based on the sound statistical treatment of metrical data, in contrast to Zeuner, who little more than a decade ago gave us a world-wide account based on animal illustrations, with barely a single bone

measurement. Bökönyi does, however, make judicious use of ancient illustrations, as well as frequent use of bone photographs, which add considerably to the value of the text.

The book has a twenty-two-page bibliography and a twelve-page list of further references to papers that were mainly published while the book was going through the press. This illustrates how rapidly this subject is advancing, and provides a sobering thought for the agricultural historian who might be tempted to imagine that a long gestation period will give him the last word.

The reviewer would have welcomed a little more on the skin and coat of livestock, and there is an unfortunate lack of an index, but this is difficult to prepare even in one's own language, and we must be grateful to Dr Bökönyi for providing what is on the whole an excellent and readable account of topics that are little known outside the area concerned.

M. L. RYDER

J. R. MADDICOTT, *The English Peasantry and the Demands of the Crown, 1294-1341*. Past and Present Supplement 1, 1975. 73 pp.

This most important study is the first of a new series intended for works of between 18,000 and 45,000 words. Mr Maddicott introduces a new dimension into the debate about the tendencies in the agrarian economy of England and Wales between 1280 and 1350. His aim is to show that between 1294 and 1341 the king's need to finance war caused his taxation to bite so deeply into the peasant's resources that he was unable to withstand the other difficulties of the period.

The peasant was subject to three main forms of taxation—the levy on movables, purveyance, and the costs of military service. In addition, from time to time he felt the weight of other impositions, such as the maltolts on wool. The author first considers these three taxes down to the mid-1330's, and deals separately with taxation in the last period.

The levy on movables could be a heavy imposition, but much depended upon the honesty of the sub-taxers, the attitudes of the chief taxers, and upon whether extortion balanced under-assessment. The most widespread resistance to the levies was during the famine years of 1315-17. The incidence of the imposition was uncertain but some peasants were ruined by it.

Purveyance was geographically more restricted than the levy on movables. None the less, the nobility and gentry feared that the levying of prises would deprive them of their rents and provoke revolt. It worked in an arbitrary and unjust way, gave abundant opportunities for corruption and extor-

tion, was levied without warning, without assessment, and without regard for the means of the inhabitants, and was often taken again and again from the same part of the country in the space of a few years. The hundred bailiff acquired new scope for profiteering, and the rich often escaped the tax altogether. Though less general than the levy on movables, it did more to make the crown unpopular between 1290 and 1340 than any other single factor.

The system of array could not by itself disable the peasantry. It affected the whole village, but those selected suffered most. Service in the army led to greater familiarity with politics and encouraged the people to play a part in the great events between 1322 and 1327.

Between 1336 and 1341 these exactions reached a new peak of oppressiveness which Mr Maddicott describes fully. He uses literary evidence, such as the 'Song of the Husbandman', c. 1300, and the 'Song against the King's Taxes', to show that new reasons for complaint brought new abilities to articulate complaints. He feels that revolt was imminent, particularly when tax-collectors and purveyors received new power to imprison the recalcitrant. The compromises with popular opinion which Edward III made in 1340-1 forestalled a popular rising and gave some relief from the intolerable burdens of the previous six years.

To measure the scale and extent of the difficulties which heavy taxation brought, and to tell how different sorts of peasants could bear it, the author finds difficult. None the less, he feels that a combination of several exactions, as in 1294-7, 1315-16, and 1336-41, put the peasant's livelihood at risk and made him sell his seed-corn, lose his plough-oxen, or even flee from his holding. These burdens came to an economy in which the colonization movement had ebbed, in which grain yields were possibly declining, and which could offer no new techniques of husbandry. Mr Maddicott reserves judgement on some issues, such as the decline in population and the fall in rents after 1300, and rightly so, but he does point out that dearth and heavy taxation frequently coincided between 1294 and 1341, so that taxation tended to exaggerate economic conditions which were already harsh.

The essay is in many ways a tract for the times in which we live. Too often historians have separated economic, particularly agrarian, history from political history, and the author deserves our warmest thanks for bringing them together again. Viewed from the angle of the political historian, the essay testifies once more to the great ability of Edward III. Bad weather and Malthusian checks did not do most to determine the future of the English peasantry. The environment takes its true, not its false, place in human affairs, and man appears himself the only

agent. Our masters taught us that history has no lessons or power to predict, but we are sorely tempted to read its lessons and speak its prophecies. Edward III was the wise king who lightened the people's burden when they could bear it no longer; Richard II was the foolish king who thrust them further into the mire, so that they turned and bit both him and his advisers. Which sort of king does England have today, I wonder?

H. E. HALLAM

DENNIS CLARKE and ANTHONY STOYEL, *Otford in Kent: A History*. Otford and District Historical Society, 1975. xiv + 297 pp. 19 maps and line drawings. 27 photographs. £5.

The following observation from the pen of a reviewer to *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1774 concerning the state of Kentish local history would possess equal validity today, for "as a laudable thirst for topographical knowledge seems at present to prevail, glad are we to see as laudable a desire of gratifying it no less prevalent especially in the county of Kent." *Otford in Kent: A History* is one of several scholarly local histories of the county, towns, and villages of Kent to appear during the 1970's. Advertised as "the first full-length history of Otford in Kent from pre-historic times to the twentieth century," and dedicated "To all Lovers of Otford Past and Present and To Come," its authors, both of whom have chosen to live in Otford, conclude on an optimistic note by suggesting that

The long and varied history of Otford has enkindled the imagination of many of its sons and daughters in the past. That history may serve to stimulate their resolution confidently to preserve its evidences, continue its traditions and face its problems in the future (pp. 260-1).

This work is a living testimony to the fact that local history societies are not necessarily inactive and moribund. *Otford in Kent* was published in 1975 by the Otford and District Historical Society in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of its foundation. Compiled by two of its members, its progress has been furthered by the assistance of others; by several grants, donations, and loans, and by the financial support of 960 subscribers, including this reviewer.

The authors invite judgement on the fact that "in writing this history we have tried to adhere strictly to the evidence of our sources." Expert historical advice has been forthcoming from Professor F. R. H. Du Boulay, Professor G. E. Mingay, Dr F. Hull, and Miss E. Melling, among others. Chapter references indicate that a wide range of primary historical sources has been consulted including a constant access to church and parish council

records, to national and county archives, not forgetting the reminiscences of events from the late nineteenth century onwards as "provided by Otfordians past and present," whose "contributions have often supplied vivid personal details lacking from contemporary documents."

*Otford in Kent* contains masses of local detail, for which any local historians must be grateful, but also there is much in this work which is of value to the general historian. Because the approach is chronological, so inevitably within each chapter the argument proceeds from one topic or aspect to another. However, several major themes are explored over several centuries, including population movements, settlement, and methods and types of building; agriculture and land tenure; the church, both as a building and as a place of worship; the manor house and later palace of Otford; the village economy as it appeared at different points of time; parish administration; and living standards and poverty. The text is well supported by nineteen maps and line drawings and twenty-seven photographs, including various views of Otford High Street, and a copy of a handbill circulated during Otford's water-supply dispute of the 1880-90's bearing the caption 'The Midnight Billsticker'.

The authors readily admit to certain notable omissions, so that "the history of crime and punishment is hardly touched upon," while "comparisons with other village communities could have been extended had space and time allowed." Despite several references to the farming of the locality, extending from the Domesday Book entry for the manor of Otford (pp. 43-7) through to the interwar years and beyond (pp. 250-1), still "there is a need for the documentation and study of Otford's farms in as much detail as has been given, for example, to ecclesiastical affairs."

By 1085-6 Otford was a complex manor, held by the archbishop as a tenant-in-chief of the king, a vast ecclesiastical estate comprising the settlements of Otford, Dunton, Shoreham, Sevenoaks, Sevenoaks Weald, Halstead, Chevening, Woodlands and Penshurst" (p. 43). In those early days the Darent valley together with the Medway and Great Stour basins, when permanent grasslands were not plentiful, constituted "a region in which . . . riverside hayfields presented an attractive and unusual picture to contemporary eyes" (p. 45). An early instance of the cultivation of legumes occurs in 1273-4 when two gardens were dug and planted with beans (p. 55). The discovery of two jew's-harps of medieval date confirms the recommendation that the ploughman should "sing to their oxen to obtain the best results" (p. 58). "Otford was not untroubled in the turbulent June of 1381 when the Peasants' Revolt broke out" (p. 81); nor did Otford escape the agricultural disturbances of 1830 (p. 191).

General impressions of Otford farming are also provided for the later seventeenth century (pp. 160-2), and for the twentieth century (pp. 242, 250-1).

Considerably more attention is devoted to land-ownership and tenure through the centuries. "As far as can be judged, the men of Otford manor were in 1086 more prosperous and less servile in status than most Englishmen" (p. 44). Although gavelkind operated in theory, it did not "in the long run result in the splitting up of peasant holdings into excessively small parcels" (p. 62). The Polhills (see Appendix D, p. 266) by amassing land in Otford became the dominant landowners of the seventeenth century. During the eighteenth century, when "there were certainly farming opportunities, . . . land frequently changed hands over the years, new men bringing new blood into the community as they took over the old lands," so that "most Otford families did not keep their stake in the village for very long" (p. 178). In 1828 almost 2,000 of Otford's 2,771 acres were in the occupation of seven farmers, who were the tenants of some half-dozen absentee landlords (p. 192), while "in 1844 seven landlords owned about nine-tenths or approximately 2,500 acres of the whole area, which were leased principally to nine farmers" (p. 199).

The first two chapters, 'Prehistoric and Roman' and 'Anglo-Saxon', tell an incomplete and patchy story. Even for the Anglo-Saxon period much later "the period is a dark age for the locality in the sense of one of which we are relatively ignorant and likely to remain so" (p. 41). The long-established tradition whereby local historians feel obliged to tell a complete story from the beginning lives on, despite the very practical advice from Professor W. G. Hoskins that "there is no necessity for local historians to start their studies of places at the beginning."

The four most valuable chapters of *Otford in Kent: A History* describes the economic and social life, achievements, and problems of Otford from Georgian times onwards (chs 8-11, pp. 168-263). Churchwardens' and overseas accounts provide "a lively picture of poor-law administration at parish level." By 1790 pauperism had assumed alarming proportions, while between 1758 and 1801 the population of Otford almost doubled and there developed within the village a housing problem, because "new building in the second half of the eighteenth century was probably quite inadequate to meet the housing shortage in Otford" (pp. 185-7). It is a pity, however, that a gap in the records from 1805 to 1818 means that "it is largely impossible to estimate the local situation in any detail during and immediately after the Napoleonic War" (p. 189). Despite varying industrial activity in the village from time to time, the general picture of the late 1820's "is of a parish in which three out of every four adult males were

poor labourers, many on the brink of destitution" (p. 193).

Otford was almost exclusively an agricultural community through to the First World War, "a traditional community, of which the characteristic personages were farm labourers and craftsmen, farmers and publicans" (p. 215). The authors of this work experienced some hesitation in extending its scope to the years 1973-4, but twentieth-century local history is too often neglected and any attempt to remedy this defect is most praiseworthy. It is the recent years which have seen the greatest population growth within Otford, from 857 inhabitants in 1921 to 3,179 by 1961 (p. 247). Otford has become a commuter village since the 1920's and 1930's, when new housing was encouraged by the introduction of mains water, gas, and electricity during the 1920's, and much accelerated by railway electrification in 1934 (p. 245). While "the chief fault of the uncontrolled inter-war building was the sprawl it gave to the village" (p. 247), there have been compensations in other respects for "although the new inhabitants were by and large townfolk they revitalized the social institutions of the village or introduced new ones" (p. 247).

There is much else that the reviewer would like to mention from this fascinating and well-researched account of Otford's long and varied history. The work exhibits few faults. It is puzzling why the topographer William Henry Ireland is quoted in 1830 as dismissing the parish in its "low damp situation" as being "far from pleasant" and having "a gloomy appearance" (p. 189), when the great Hanoverian county historian of Kent, Edward Hasted, penned the same sentiments in 1797. Hasted indeed provides an excellent summary of the history of Otford in one sentence:

It lies for the greatest part of it in a low damp situation, which makes it far from being pleasant, and gives it a lonely and gloomy appearance, and in all probability it would have been but little known had it not been for the residence of the archbishops at it for such a length of time.

Twenty years ago Dr F. Hull pointed out that Ireland was a "dilettante incapable of producing more than a pastiche of the work of his predecessors," in the sense that "what is of value comes from Hasted, but there is no attempt to enlarge or expand the earlier work and no real evidence either of knowledge of Kent or of original research" (*Archaeologia Cantiana*, LXX, 1956).

JOHN WHYMAN

S. J. WATTS with SUSAN J. WATTS, *From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586-1625*. Leicester U.P., 1975. 288 pp. 3 maps. £8.  
The north-east, frequently ignored or misunder-

stood by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century governments and neglected by later historians concentrating on national events, has now begun to receive considerable and long-overdue scholarly attention. Howell's book on *Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the Puritan Revolution* appeared in 1967, and more recently, in 1975, Robert Newton's essay on 'Tudor Northumberland in Transition' was published in the Hoskins *Festschrift*, *Rural Change and Urban Growth*. Dr Watts's book also follows hard on the heels of Mervyn James's study of the Durham region in the early modern period. This new book on Northumberland is less total in its scope and more old-fashioned in approach than Mr James's Braudel-like treatment of society, politics, and mentality in the adjacent county. The main emphasis in *From Border to Middle Shire* tends to be political, and its author offers a heavily detailed account of the structure and operation of Northumberland politics, the factions involved in it, and of the ways in which local and national affairs interacted before and after the union of the crowns in 1603 and James I's attempt to transform the county into a peaceful, tax-paying "middle shire". In this connection Dr Watts has some interesting things to say about the central government's perception of the northernmost English county, and of the origins of the external "myth" of Northumberland as totally bleak and barbarous. As the author points out (p. 28) "it was often in the interests of courtiers and aggressive Protestant gentlemen in Northumberland to exaggerate the extent of lawlessness in the county."

Although, as its title implies, politics receive most attention in this book, Dr Watts is careful to establish the social and economic context in which this activity took place. So we find here, for example, a careful discussion of the tradition of hostility between the lowland and highland zones of the county, the consequences of Scottish border raiding, and of the existence of border law and other distinctive customs and institutions peculiar to Northumberland. Dr Watts has some interesting and tightly packed pages illustrating his point that "in the absence of a resident aristocracy, men of gentry status were of necessity the leaders of local society." Even the gentry class, however, was small—approximately 1 in 900 of the population compared with about 1 in 400 in Yorkshire. Dr Watts looks at their wealth, their marriage alliances, demographic history, religion, education, and their social ties (which could overcome religious differences—see p. 84). He has some observations on their work as J.P.s, and on their reactions to external political intervention and interference in county affairs.

Agricultural historians will be interested in Dr Watts's discussion of Northumberland land tenures (pp. 69-73, and ch. 8 *passim*)—leasehold gradually replaced customary tenures—and in what he has to

say about landed income, field systems, and enclosures. Agriculturally, the changed political situation after 1603 had fewer results than often supposed. With or without the raids of Scottish terrorists it was unlikely that the marginal physical resources of the uplands could be made to yield greater profits. Further south, although it was a help that landlords were freed from the burdens of providing local defence, there was no subsequent headlong rush into enclosure; other local conditions and questions of land use determined its feasibility. Dr Watts finds that twenty-four of his villages still retained their common fields in 1625; depopulation was rare.

Beautifully produced by Leicester University Press (which is becoming famous for its high standards of publishing), this admittedly is a useful and informative rather than a stimulating book. Disappointingly, Dr Watts has relatively little to say about the great mass of the population below the ranks of the gentry, but this is largely because the economic and social history in the book has been limited by its preoccupation with county politics; this is history "from above". But it would be wrong to belittle the book's achievements. Dr Watts has put late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Northumberland firmly on the map, and historians will be grateful for that valuable service.

R. C. RICHARDSON

K. T. ROWLAND, *Eighteenth Century Inventions*. Newton Abbot, David & Charles, 1974. 166 pp. £4.95.

There can be little doubt that, whether in terms of immediately useful new methods of exploiting or measuring the material world, or whether in terms of ideas which were to have a great future technological impact, even if not immediately exploitable, the eighteenth century was more fruitful than any of its predecessors. However, between the forbidding massiveness of the major histories of technology and the high degree of specialization of the many monographs and their often necessarily blinkered views, it is often difficult for the general reader or the student to get a view of the general progress of invention at this period. It is also difficult, without exploring rather unwieldy encyclopaedic works, to obtain the illustrations which will show the ordinary reader what the original device or equipment looked like, or was expected to look like by its inventor, even when it was not in fact operated. Mr Rowland's book will be a very useful introduction to the subject, ranging as it does very widely, and producing an illustration for each invention. The astonishing fertility of men's minds at this era emerges clearly as we range from micrometers to spinning-mills, from pile-driving to the hydrogen balloon. The economic historian is particularly liable to forget the intensiveness of the historical inventivity of the period as

he concentrates on the immediately adoptable technology, to ignore that, contemporaneously with the development of the puddling furnace or the power loom, men were developing electrical equipment which served to advance knowledge towards the triumphs of the next century without producing anything that was presently useful—apart from the lightning-conductor. Though giving instances of unpatented inventions, Mr Rowland's book gives rise to the reflection that the patent was heavily resorted to for the more significant inventions of the eighteenth century, and can, for Britain, be used as a fair guide to most kinds of technological inventiveness. Not to all, of course; agriculture naturally comes badly out of this kind of survey, not only is the newness of practices difficult to establish, however original they may have been to the mind of the particular practitioner, but methods of stock breeding, for instance, are hardly susceptible to patent. Mr Rowlands has done what he could, however, and made good use of Fussell's *The Farmers' Tools*.

No selection of the kind will please everybody. One would rightly expect from previous work that Mr Rowland would give us a good section on marine development, though copper sheathing is forgotten. The iron and steel section omits the blowing cylinder and curiously puts puddling and rolling under iron *smelting* while referring the reader to no later specialist work than Ashton's, though Gale's marvellously lucid book is advertised on his own book's dust-wrapper. There are a number of foreign inventions included, mainly French, and this is welcome. But the suggestion that the main cause of the failure of the intellectual genius of that nation to give rise to implemented technology was the "machinations and procrastinations of the petite bureaucratie" is simplistic in the extreme. Mining does not even find a place in the index; though difficult to deal with, it tends here as so often to get lost under the heading of steam power, obscuring the fact that in both pumping and winding the employment of steam power is overwhelmingly a part of the techniques of mining for the century being considered. Finally it might have been better to have searched more sources for illustrations rather than rely so very heavily on Rees's *Cyclopaedia* of the early nineteenth century, valuable though it is. Nevertheless, Mr Rowland's book with its careful text, good illustrations, and wide range will be a source of interest and stimulus to many, and lead them on to more specialized books.

J. R. HARRIS

R. A. C. PARKER, *Coke of Norfolk: A Financial and Agricultural Study, 1707-1842*. Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, 1975. xiii + 222 pp. Plate. 5 maps. £7.50.

It is through a detailed study of surviving estate

records that the generalizations made by historians of English agriculture and the myths created by contemporary writers and landlords can be tested. Thomas William Coke of Holkham, "Coke of Norfolk," the largest landowner in the county, was the most famous of the improving landlords, and one of the greatest propagandists for agricultural change in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England. Dr Parker has done a great service to financial and agricultural history by his excellent analysis of the Coke estate, based upon surviving records, accounts, and correspondence preserved at Holkham.

During the 135 years of this study the estates were under the control of the guardians of Thomas Coke for eleven years, and were then in his hands from 1718 to 1759. His widow Margaret managed them from 1759 to 1775, and their ownership then passed to Thomas William Coke, who held them for sixty-six years, 1776-1842. During this period a general estate policy developed: the welfare of the Norfolk estate must be paramount, it should be enlarged and consolidated, and no financial stringency should lead to skimping on its improvement. Without this policy and the careful management by devoted and able stewards, especially Ralph Cauldwell and Francis Blaikie, the debts amassed by Thomas Coke from South Sea Bubble losses, the costs of building Holkham Hall, and the vast debts of the nineteenth century could not have been paid. The family was fortunate in having, after 1730, the revenue from the crown lease on Dungeness Lighthouse, which produced by the 1760's about £2,000, and by the 1820's about £6,500 per annum.

Except for two chapters dealing with the general financial condition of the estate, Dr Parker keeps his focus clearly on agriculture and closely related matters. However, the financial situation of the estate was frequently perilous, and money flowed constantly into it through sales of outlying portions and through borrowing. In 1776 the debt was £97,000 but by 1822 it was £230,000. Least satisfactory is the explanation of where the money went, but the sources evidently do not permit more than careful speculation: grand life style and personal expenses, great political expenditures in Norfolk, portions, interest payments, the purchase of Norfolk lands, and improvements. Yet by economy, great land sales, and very careful management, particularly by Blaikie following the crisis for the estate in 1822, the debt was reduced to £8,000 at Coke's death in 1842.

Parker demonstrates that all the factors were present in the county in the early eighteenth century which would make up the Norfolk system: marling, turnips, clover, and artificial grasses. These with wheat and barley made possible the famous four-

course rotation. Yet a six-course was normal in the late eighteenth century, and the four-course was not common on Coke's estates until the early nineteenth century, the beliefs of Arthur Young and Lord Ernle notwithstanding. Coke did not intervene in the tenanted portions of his estate but encouraged good husbandry by example: Park Farm and the famous sheep-shearings, twenty-one-year leases carefully covenanted, and economically reasonable rents. A prosperous and happy tenant was the best security for the landlord's interests. Coke's own Park Farm of 2,000 acres at Holkham was actually an uneconomic agricultural unit but the fame of its practices and policies had great social and political, as well as agricultural, compensation for its owner.

The careful study of this estate leads to some valuable conclusions. First, it confirms that the heroic interpretation of the English agricultural revolution as a rapid development encouraged by the example of a few great men is unsound. Next, Coke's impact was less important than claimed, and the pace of agricultural change was slow and far from revolutionary. Finally, Coke failed to grasp the possible significance for future income of industrial, mining, or urban developments, perhaps because of his single-minded focus on agriculture. Appendices containing valuable information on national and Norfolk grain prices, on household expenditures, and on the management of the Dungeness Lighthouse complete this excellent study.

RAY A. KELCH

G. E. MINGAY (ed.), *Arthur Young and his Times*. Macmillan, 1975. 265 pp. 3 maps. £10.

With this book Professor Mingay gives yet another immense service to students of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century English agricultural history. It provides double benefits: an epitome of Young's life and works together with lucid and concise statements of Mingay's views on topics raised by Young. Selections from Young's writings are drawn from thirteen of his books together with numerous extracts from the *Annals of Agriculture*. The extracts cover nearly the whole of Young's half-century of writing, but they are arranged by themes—the primary purpose is to illuminate agricultural history, rather than to rewrite the life of Young. Although the editor provides a succinct and revealing introductory study of Young as a man, a writer, and a farmer, he makes no attempt to rival Gazley's painstaking and lengthy biography.

The topical headings are grouped under 'Farming Issues', 'The Agricultural Revolution', 'Enclosure and Rural Poverty', 'Industry and Transport', and 'Abroad', each with various sub-headings for the extracts from Young and comments by the editor. The result is about thirty-five small studies from Mingay, of the highest quality, accompanying lively

extracts from Young. The combination is excellent. The cheerful, dogmatic, and occasionally irresponsible rhetoric of Arthur Young is made safe for the reader by the sober, judicious, and profound scholarship of Gordon Mingay. The editing is sympathetic. Young and Mingay, indeed, share the view that the rational pursuit of self-interest tends to promote the general good. This view is associated in both with confidence in the social beneficence of great English landowners. Mingay is even more confident than Young, and, for example, unlike the latter sees no advantage for tenants in farm leases as against tenancies at will. The editor raises the problem of the extent of Young's influence but does not solve it. Young himself complained in 1791 that the regular sale of the *Annals* was only 350. Probably his influence worked down from the top, through the effect of great landlords on their tenants, and through them in turn on farming regions. This was another cause for Young's approval of the English structure of landownership.

The editor writes with secure authority on English themes. On 'Abroad' he is more tentative. The extracts from the *Travels*, where Young is at his most entertaining, are subjected to little criticism. The book is completed by a useful list of Young's writings. To English agricultural history in the period of the 'Agricultural Revolution' this book provides an excellent introduction. The book is attractively produced and is a good bargain for agricultural historians even at its rather high price.

R. A. C. PARKER

E. L. JONES, *Agriculture and the Industrial Revolution*, with a foreword by R. M. Hartwell. Oxford, Blackwell, 1974. xiii + 233 pp. £5.50.

Though the publisher's blurbs on the dust-wrapper nowhere make it clear, this book consists of reprints of articles from a range of learned journals. The title, no doubt chosen with a view to imparting a kind of over-all homogeneity and purpose to the collection, is over-ambitious and, on that account, a little misleading. The time-span covered by the articles—1660–1873—far exceeds the limits of the Industrial Revolution, and only three of the ten essays reproduced here are explicitly devoted to the links between agricultural change and economic growth (though another illustrates the agricultural exploits of an industrialist, and some of the others refer obliquely to economic linkages). The essays were first published over the period 1960–8 and so take no effective account of work over the last seven or eight years. This may not matter seriously much of the time, but it does matter considerably in respect of one recent major work—Eric Kerridge's *The Agricultural Revolution* of 1967.

Though Professor Jones's contributions to the interpretation of English agricultural history are

well known and by now well integrated into current teaching and textbook writing, this volume provides a welcome opportunity for a reconsideration of them. Some of his most valuable contributions are to be found in the "research" articles in this collection that are most exclusively agricultural in content and least concerned with economic growth—local studies of farming in Hampshire and Herefordshire, and surveys of the agricultural labour market in the century up to 1872, of wheat yields between 1815 and 1873, and of the farming trends of the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Since some of these articles are in journals less easily accessible to historians, it is useful to have them reprinted here.

But Professor Jones himself probably considers his essays analysing the links between agricultural developments and economic growth in the period 1660–1815 to be more interesting and important, a belief confirmed by his choice of title and the emphasis in his introduction. In this area he pursues two main themes. First, his belief that the modernization of English agriculture—signified by innovations in cropping, particularly fodder cropping, the practice of "floating" meadows, and the creation of a grain surplus—may be dated fairly precisely from the mid-seventeenth century; and, second, his view that these gains in agricultural productivity made an important, if not a key, contribution to the initiation of the subsequent growth in the industrial sector that we call the Industrial Revolution.

It is in respect of the first of these arguments that Professor Jones is most injured by his failure, or inability, to take account of Dr Kerridge's views. Whatever view one takes of Dr Kerridge's controversial work, it cannot be ignored; and by reprinting here unchanged work written mainly between ten and fifteen years ago, Professor Jones weakens his own case by failing to make some acknowledgement of the changed circumstances of the post-Kerridge world. The whole drift of Dr Kerridge's massively documented study is to push back almost a century the beginnings of many of the developments that are central to Professor Jones's thesis. It matters little that Dr Kerridge was weakest where it was most important for him to be strong—on the need to show how general was the adoption of the various new techniques—or that he put an unnecessarily gratuitous gloss on his interpretation by appropriating the misleading title "agricultural revolution" to his earlier period: what does matter is that in the mid-1970's it is no longer possible to insist that everything that mattered to the modernization of farming started in 1660. It is surely possible to reconcile the interpretations of both Professor Jones and Dr Kerridge, and, given the passage of time, it seems a pity that Professor Jones has not attempted this here: neither his introduction nor Dr Hartwell's

foreword, the only new writing in this volume, makes any reference to Dr Kerridge's work.

Without doubt, one of Professor Jones's major contributions to English economic history has been his analysis of the interaction between agricultural developments and economic growth in the century leading up to the Industrial Revolution. Here his emphasis has been on agricultural productivity and prices, on the labour supply, and, most interestingly, on the impact of the rising productivity of the light-soil areas on farming trends and labour demand in the heavy-soil areas. That he succeeds in demonstrating some causal linkage between these developments and growth in other sectors of the economy is undoubted. What he does not perhaps emphasize sufficiently is that many of these linkages were merely permissive: the Industrial Revolution, to cite a single example, needed a more positive stimulus than simply a supply of cheap labour released by productivity gains in agriculture. We need some assessment of the relative importance of this and other agricultural stimuli to economic growth. The question of agricultural price trends is a rather more vexed one. A rereading of Professor Jones's analysis still fails to remove the feeling that the evidence will not stand the weight of the superstructure imposed on it. Professor Jones remains uncertain as to whether the period 1660-1760 was one of generally *falling* grain prices, or of generally *low* prices, or whether low prices were a feature merely of the 1730's and 1740's. The evidence is, of course, much stronger for the last of these, though what still needs to be determined here is whether the trough was sufficiently low to sustain the consequences attributed to it. There is a danger, which Professor Jones does not entirely avoid, of making a mountain out of a molehill here.

Professor Jones, however, loves to throw out ideas, and these essays make stimulating reading because they are so obviously the product of a lively mind. We are too short of historians willing to attempt the answers to the bigger questions in agricultural and economic history to cavil at the occasional over-confident generalization. Though Professor Jones's essays do not add up to a rigorous analysis of the role of agriculture in the Industrial Revolution, they do nevertheless constitute a very substantial and important contribution to English agricultural history.

M. W. FLINN

SIR FRANCIS HILL, *Victorian Lincoln*. C.U.P., 1974.  
x + 341 pp. 8 plates. 4 maps. £9.50.

This book is the successor to *Medieval Lincoln*, *Tudor and Stuart Lincoln*, and *Georgian Lincoln*, and completes Sir Francis Hill's history of his native city. Readers anticipating the same qualities of elegance, perception, and urbanity will not be dis-

appointed, and though traditional in approach, his latest volume is a welcome addition to the literature on nineteenth-century towns. His story is one of the partial metamorphosis of a classic county town whose sevenfold increase in population between 1801 and 1911 exceeded by a very large margin those of Shrewsbury, Exeter, and Chester, and which moved from a well-recognized dependence on local agriculture (on which the author, unlike some urban historians, is very well informed) to reliance on world-wide markets for engineering products such as steam and oil engines, boilers and threshing machines, road rollers, wagons, and trailers. However, most emphasis is given to the evolution of local politics and administration which account directly for four chapters, whilst others, such as those on transport developments, education, and public health, are written from a similar standpoint. An important subsidiary theme, very ably handled, is church life and the activities of the denizens of "uphill" Lincoln, the capital of the county and diocese, to which three chapters and a lengthy statistical appendix on church attendance are devoted. Sir Francis makes excellent use of diverse local sources, especially of manuscript diaries from the Lincoln Archives Office, and as a consequence his pages are thronged with individual figures, from Sibthorpe and Chaplin to clerics both worldly and saintly, and gritty, dissenting manufacturers. Abundant colour is given by evocative passages referring, for example, to peg-tops and whipcord, marble-playing and hoop-trundling, and old Mrs Mimmack the Post Office messenger whose skirts were "so short as to scarcely reach her ankles."

On the other hand, it would seem that limitations of opportunity or interest have inhibited the author from fully exploiting the sources available outside Lincoln, or from making comparisons with cities of a like character in such a way as to distinguish what was unique about Lincoln from what was characteristic of the type. This is not to say that the book is written without reference to national trends, but nevertheless it is significant that no reference is made to, for instance, the *Victoria County History: City of York* (1961), R. Newton's *Victorian Exeter* (1968), or R. Church's *Victorian Nottingham* (1966). In consequence Sir Francis accepts (or at least, allows to pass without critical comment) various questionable contemporary assertions such as that Lincoln was not a county centre like York (p. 79), that no town of its size had such a high proportion of owner-occupiers (p. 276), or that in 1900 school attendance was worse than in any town of equal size (p. 276). Reference to the M.O.H. series of Poor Law Records might have enabled him to test whether in fact, as he assumes on p. 130, the numbers of poor were increasing proportionately, which does not accord with another impression (p. 290)

that Lincoln had gained from not being much affected by "the first uncontrolled movement of population in the industrial age and was therefore better off than towns in the south, west and north of the country." The Registrar-General's reports could have clarified a confusing picture of the level and trend of death-rates (pp. 159, 166, 232, 234) which arises out of relying in preference on such secondary sources as Precentor Venables and Dr Garnham's press-cutting book, along with other assertions made by those anxious to make a case for or against sanitary reform. The analysis of population growth does not distinguish between growth by natural increase and by immigration, nor is any reference made to long-run fertility trends, and whilst it is indeed striking that 69 per cent of the adult population of 1851 were born outside Lincoln, this was by no means uncommon at that period. Similarly, if dissenting congregations exceeded those of the Established Church in Lincoln in 1851, the same was true at York, Colchester, Norwich, and King's Lynn.

On the whole, the approach taken here is not much influenced by the recent preoccupations of social historians, and may be said to fall into the Trevelyan mould, which means that Victorian Lincoln is far from being an exhausted subject. For all that, it must be emphasized that few aspects of urban and social history fall outside the purview of this very readable and attractive book, and it goes without saying that although the author's professed intention is mainly to give interest and pleasure to his fellow-citizens, like its predecessors *Victorian Lincoln* is of very considerable value to scholars concerned with similar or wider themes.

W. A. ARMSTRONG

JOAN VARLEY, *The Parts of Kesteven: Studies in Law and Local Government*. Kesteven County Council, 1974. viii + 156 pp. £1.50.

Lacking as it does a university town, the great area of Lincolnshire, stretching from the Humber to the Wash, has perhaps received less attention from scholars than more favourably situated counties. Research too has concentrated largely on the landed estates of the shire, on the voluminous diocesan archives of Lincoln Cathedral, and, geographically, on the fenland parts of the county.

*The Parts of Kesteven* is a testimony to Kesteven County Council by whom it was published on the eve of the county's amalgamation with Holland and Lindsey. While she makes much use of diocesan and estate papers, Mrs Varley, by drawing on her many years of experience as archivist to the Lincolnshire Archives Committee, has been able to make a study of Kesteven which has tapped much hitherto little-used material. Such sources as the Hundred Rolls, the records of the Kesteven Quarter Sessions, and

the Minutes of Kesteven County Council have been studied to advantage.

This slim volume, attractively printed and priced, does not pretend to be a history of Kesteven. However, by concentrating on aspects of law and local government from Domesday to reorganization in 1974, Mrs Varley has compiled a concise study showing the relationships through history of parish, wapentake or hundred, and county. Of particular interest is the continued reference to the part played at the county level by leading local families. The varied geography of Kesteven, with its fen, heath, and wold land, allows the author to discuss questions, such as land drainage, which are common to Lincolnshire as a whole. This book, then, will prove to be essential background reading for all those interested in local history in Kesteven. It has a wider appeal for those interested in Lincolnshire or local government in general.

DAVID I. A. STEEL

FRANÇOIS SIGAUT, *L'Agriculture et le Feu: rôle et place du feu dans les techniques de préparation du champ de l'ancienne agriculture Européenne*. Paris, 1975. 320 pp. 38 Fr.

Since the choice of agricultural practices is so much influenced by social and environmental forces there is ample justification for the broad geographical study of a single technique. Such a study must be based on a firm understanding of the practical details of the technique itself and its adaptation to various situations. It is in this respect that M. Sigaut's survey of the historical role of fire in tillage is so helpful. While providing detailed descriptions of the different ways in which fire has been used to prepare ground for cultivation, he raises many interesting questions for further study, including the relation of slash and burn to the evolution of the plough and harrow, and the processes whereby techniques were introduced and transmitted between separate areas.

The author initially attempts to dispel the myths surrounding technical terms including *essartage* (slash and burn), *écobuage* (paring and burning, burn-beating, etc.), and *déchaumage* (stubble-burning). He does so by enlisting the aid of medieval and early modern texts together with archaeological evidence and museum collections to describe individual procedures as well as the tools and implements which were brought into play. The history of the different techniques and their geographical location at different periods are outlined, although the dearth of firm evidence from neolithic to medieval times means that developments of this era remain obscure.

Relative efficiencies in terms of production per man-hour of the different techniques are also examined in individual case-studies, which suggest

high returns to effort of slash and burn, particularly in nineteenth-century North America, and the relative inefficiency of paring and burning turf in eighteenth-century Europe. Turf is, indeed, by its very nature, a more serious barrier to cultivation than forest cover, and it required the arrival of iron before the exploitation of grassland became feasible. The slash and burn technique, meanwhile, had arrived in Europe, and spread rapidly by 4500 B.C.; and even when the margins of the forests had receded the early agriculturists preferred pastoral farming to the removal of natural grass cover for cereal culture. In general, however, very real advantages are claimed for burning vegetation. It not only enhances soil fertility by raising the pH factor and increasing the supply of potash but also improves soil structure and aids pest control. Interestingly, earlier agriculturalists, even without recourse to soil scientists, were aware that burning would have pernicious effects on sands where it encouraged leaching of scarce nutrients, and the technique was confined in the main to acid or heavy mediums. The resurgence of turf-burning in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe in association with the move on to marginal land for corn production is also seen as a factor influencing cropping patterns. The growth in the cultivation of turnips and oil-seed rape, for example, is directly linked to the increased use of fire in agriculture.

This wide-ranging and detailed investigation of techniques involving fire is an important contribution to an understanding not only of the techniques, but more important, perhaps, of how they were related to the particular problems, posed by different environments. Notwithstanding the omission of any reference to Alan Gailey and Alexander Fenton's collection of articles on *The Spade in Northern and Atlantic Europe* (Belfast, 1970), it will be basic text for those wishing to carry the study further.

RAINE MORGAN

P. A. JEWELL, C. MILNER, and J. MORTON BOYD (eds.), *Island Survivors: The Ecology of the Soay Sheep of St Kilda*. Athlone Press, 1974. xii + 386 pp. Illus. £8.

This book is an account of the environment and the biology of a relic population of the European domestic sheep. The Soay sheep are thought to have come to St Kilda and the neighbouring island of Soay (in the Atlantic, both about 80 km west of the Outer Hebrides) about A.D. 300–400. These sheep are interesting, not only because they represent a link between the modern breeds of domesticated sheep and their wild ancestors, but also because they survive in a relatively harsh environment which is limited both in area and in terms of available nutrients, and because since 1930, when the human

population was evacuated at its own request from St Kilda, they survive without competition from humans.

The book's fourteen chapters and an appendix cover a range of topics including the climate, soils, and vegetation of St Kilda and the surrounding islands, the colour, conformation, fleece, blood groups, social organization, diseases and parasites, skeletal and dental condition, behaviour, and reproduction of the Soay sheep. I found the most interesting chapter to be one which tries to relate in quantitative terms the availability of nutrients to the nutritional requirements of the sheep throughout the year. The appendix, which is unnecessarily brief, contains a description of a computer model which is being developed to study the dynamics of the Soay sheep population.

The St Kilda islands are now a national nature reserve which contain not only the Soay sheep but also important sea-bird colonies and plant communities. One synthesizing chapter, at the end of the book, points out that the studies on St Kilda are a valuable set of observations on which constructive decisions about the conservation of the Soay sheep can be made. However, it is disappointing that there is so little description of the type of decisions and conclusions about nature-reserve management which have been made as a result of the studies. The important and ever-recurring question about the degree of human interference required in nature-reserve management in order to conserve all important fauna and flora in the reserve is barely discussed.

The book is written by a combination of sixteen authors, three of whom have acted as editors. It is not surprising that this method of preparation has resulted in considerable unevenness of style and presentation. The material could have been reduced in length with considerable gain in clarity. In particular, the presentation of data in both table and histogram form, and the inclusion of longish sections of incomplete review material on various aspects of sheep biology, could have been avoided. The introduction is largely a repetition of material in the early pages of the following chapter, and it is disconcerting at the beginning of a book to find discrepancies between authors on some of the essential facts: for instance, the introduction states that St Kilda (Hirta) extends to 637 ha, rises to 419 m, and has a rainfall over 2,000 mm p.a., whilst chapter 2 states that it extends to 638 ha, rises to 426 m, and has a precipitation of 1,143–1,270 mm. The figure (Fig. 1.1) in the introduction which relates the number of sheep on the island to the year is also curious in that the linear regression (the legend under the figure states regression "curve") appears to have been calculated by coding the years (1932 = 0 and 1972 = 40), a fact that is not mentioned in the text.

Apart from these criticisms, this is a most useful book, well presented and illustrated (with map, photographs, and diagrams), containing a wealth of information presented in a logical sequence. The difficulties of collecting the information from such an inhospitable environment can be appreciated from the text. There are many questions to be answered about these sheep, and it will be interesting to see in future years whether and when the increasing number of sheep which survive on the island reaches an asymptote, and what happens to the rest of the environment in consequence. I look forward to the book's sequel.

J. C. ROWMAN

J. S. DONNELLY, Jr, *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question* (Studies in Irish History, second series, ix). Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975. xiv + 440 pp. Maps. £9.95.

In *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork* Dr Donnelly has attempted something new—an examination of the two central subjects of Irish social and economic history in the last century as they affected one county—and has succeeded brilliantly. Cork is the largest of the thirty-two counties of Ireland: it covers almost one-tenth of the country's total area, and in 1841 had slightly more than one-tenth of the population. According to the census of that year, over 70 per cent of Cork families were employed in agriculture, which makes the county a good choice for a study of the rural economy and the land question. Within its boundaries the differences between east and west Cork, and the presence of Cork city with its great agricultural mart (the butter market was famous) and its two newspapers (whose files the author has used extensively and to good effect), provide a variety of evidence for the historian. One may doubt the usefulness of claiming any one county as "a microcosm of the entire country," however. The decision to confine the treatment of the subject to one county is in most respects an arbitrary one, and is less easily justified in the later sections of the book, where nationally directed campaigns of agitation have to be considered. Local manifestations of national movements are interesting in themselves, of course, and on the whole the territorial limitations the author has imposed on himself do not hamper his analysis.

The outstanding feature of Dr Donnelly's book, however, is the extent to which he has discovered and made use of estate records, "after exhaustive searches in public and private archives in England and Ireland as well as in attics, cellars, stables, and barns throughout County Cork. . ." Until recently very little use was made by historians of this mine of information, partly because it was not so easily accessible as the mound of official records, partly

because even when accessible it often proved to be fragmentary and difficult to use. Despite the neglect and destruction they have suffered, estate papers have survived in remarkable quantity, and some of them—especially those which include correspondence—are of crucial importance in illuminating what actually happened. Throughout this book Dr Donnelly supports and illustrates his argument by detailed reference to particular estates, as well as to official records and local newspapers. The range and thoroughness of the research, the lucid analysis, and the impartial tone of the writing make his work a model of its kind.

The first chapter, on the rural economy between 1815 and 1845, stresses the importance of middlemen in Cork before the Famine, as a factor encouraging subdivision and subletting (and thus assisting the growth of population), and inhibiting improvement by either head-landlords above them or under-tenants below. Clearly the existence of large numbers of long leases gave landowners little chance to influence the course of events during the 1820's and 1830's, but as leases expired the administration of many estates became more active and efficient. Wherever possible the middlemen were eliminated, holdings were consolidated, and improvements were undertaken (an Act of 1837, not mentioned here, gave tenants-for-life powers to charge the inheritance with moneys spent in this way). Elsewhere in the country middlemen were less important (as early as 1730 the Hill family was getting rid of them in County Down) or more tenacious (Trinity College never undertook the direct management of its property); while the financially desperate Lord Donegall in the 1820's actually sold perpetually renewable leases of nearly 150,000 acres of his property in Antrim and Donegal. The first chapter also contains a useful analysis of the plight of the agricultural labours, the worst victims of population increase and hard times, whose position deteriorated even while agricultural production increased. Far from being a period of unrelieved approach to disaster, these years saw the introduction of far-reaching improvements in farming practices and in breeds of livestock. In sheep-farming the Leicester cross, it seems, "affected a minor revolution, for it reduced the time required to bring sheep to maturity from often nearly four years at the beginning of the century to only two years by the early 1830's."

The second chapter traces in some detail the effects of the Famine—"in many ways a watershed in the economic and social history of Cork. . ."—and "the real beginning of a fundamental change in the class structure of the population." The observation that under the legislation to facilitate the sale of encumbered estates the place of bankrupt landowners was taken most often by others of gentry stock

tallies with the findings of recent research into the identity of buyers in other areas, contrary to long-accepted notions.

The next three chapters—on agriculture 1851–91, the land question and estate management 1850–80, and living standards 1951–91—lay the groundwork for Dr Donnelly's main thesis that the land-war of the 1880's was "a product not merely of agriculture crisis, but also of a revolution of rising expectations." Up to 1876, and especially during the years 1865–76 when Irish dairy products were increasingly in demand in Britain and fetched high prices, Cork farmers benefited enormously. Their real living standards, and also those of the agricultural labourers who worked for them (and who were scarcer than before the Famine), rose considerably because on the whole the landlords did not raise rents in proportion to the higher agricultural prices. This last argument is not entirely new—Barbara Solow, in her *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870–1903* (1971), adduced impressive evidence from income-tax assessments in support of it, as Dr Donnelly acknowledges—but here it is supported by new evidence from estate papers (and very recent research into relations between landlords and tenants on estates elsewhere in Ireland has reached the same conclusion).

The chapter on estate management is of interest for its pages on the business of land agency and the increasing professionalism of Irish land agents, who were generally from a much higher social class than their English counterparts. (Conversely, the job might confer higher social status on its holder: in Somerville and Ross's novel *The Real*

*Charlotte* it is remarked of Roderick Lambert, "The Dysart agency had always been considered to confer brevet rank as a country gentleman upon its owner, apart even from the intimacy with the Dysarts which it implied . . ."; and having the agency of an estate with a rental of £6,000 or more was one way of qualifying for appointment as a magistrate.)

The agricultural crisis of the late 1870's, by its exceptionally severe and prolonged nature, transformed the whole situation. "The larger farmers joined the agrarian agitation," writes Dr Donnelly, "in an attempt to preserve their accreted gains at a time when their incomes were reduced and when landlords were slow to make adjustments in their rents." Small farmers and cottiers, who had benefited less from the years of prosperity, joined the Land League from fear of eviction. Townsfolk dependent for their increased prosperity on the continued prosperity of the farmers also supported the League and provided much of its local leadership and organization. In his last two, very substantial chapters (125 pages) Dr Donnelly charts the course of the land-war in County Cork from 1879 to 1892 (when the plan of campaign collapsed) with great assurance and a wealth of detailed illustration. His handling of this complicated and difficult theme is a fitting climax to an exceptionally important contribution to Irish historical writing.

The book is expensive but well produced, with a very full bibliography and a good index. The editors of the series are to be congratulated on adding this volume to their list.

W. A. MAGUIRE

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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Dr Michael Turner is currently engaged in the study of pre-1914 business history at Ealing Technical College. His edition of W. E. Tate, *A Domesday of English Enclosure Acts and Awards*, is shortly to be published by the Reading University Press.

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