

Book Reviews

D A CROWLEY, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: A History of Wiltshire*, XIV, OUP for the Institute of Historical Research, 1991. xx+267 pp. Maps; illus. £60.

The successive volumes of the *Victoria History of Wiltshire* appear with commendable regularity, and Volume XIV maintains the high standard established by its predecessors. This volume traces the history of the town of Malmesbury and twenty rural parishes in the north-west of Wiltshire, an area of flat, well-drained land, partly in the light soils of the Wiltshire Cotswolds and partly in the vale of the Bristol Avon. The ancient Benedictine abbey of Malmesbury dominated the whole area throughout the Middle Ages, while the break-up of its 23,000 acre landholding in these parishes at the Dissolution provided the foundation for the gentry estates which remain a major feature of the district. The most notable newcomers were the Howards, Earls of Suffolk and of Berkshire, whose mansion at Charlton Park is one of the grandest in Wiltshire.

Malmesbury abbey was founded in the mid-seventh century, but for the long history of this wealthy establishment and the story of its massive buildings the reader is referred to Volume III which was published in 1956. This latest volume, however, provides a detailed and well-documented study of the walled town and borough of Malmesbury, on its steep promontory between the two branches of the river Avon, and with its medieval castle built by Roger bishop of Salisbury, in c. 1130. By the time of the Domesday Survey Malmesbury was already well developed as a borough, with a mint, markets, burgesses, and active local government, and the town remained important as a cloth-manufacturing centre, but its market declined in face of competition from Chippenham, Tetbury, and Cirencester, while the suppression of the abbey, the constricted site, the absence of major routes and the late arrival of a railway meant that it remained small and commercially undeveloped. As a result the plan and street pattern of the town has changed little since the thirteenth century.

A feature of this volume is the well-chosen illustrations, including numerous examples from the Buckler collection and other early paintings in Devizes Museum, among them several houses and churches which have been demolished. There are also clearly-drawn maps of most of the parishes,

including useful depictions of the topography of Malmesbury. The volume provides a mass of detailed information and valuable references which will be an invaluable source for future local historians.

J H BETTEY

MARTIN INGRAM, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640*, 1990. xiii+412 pp. 2 maps. £14.95 (pbk).

Martin Ingram undertakes four tasks in this authoritative study of the church courts before the Civil War. He provides a fine description of the practice of the courts, placing his central study of the diocese of Salisbury in the context of existing work on other dioceses and his own comparative examination of the jurisdictions of Ely, Leicester and Chichester. At the same time he defends the courts against charges of incompetence, weakness, and corruption levelled by contemporaries and historians. Third, by focusing on cases on sex and marriage, he seeks not only to measure the courts' effectiveness but also to delineate changing attitudes on these issues. And finally, by setting his study carefully in the economic and social geography of Wiltshire (he excludes the largely independent archdeaconry of Berkshire), Ingram undertakes the commendable project of testing the effectiveness of ecclesiastical justice in different economic and social settings, contrasting the south-east chalklands (manorialized, conservative) with the north-west dairy and cloth villages (more open and unstable).

Ingram almost brings off all of this ambitious programme. Yet one feels not quite convinced. In part this results from the cautious presentation of contradictory evidence and counter-interpretation which sometimes leaves the reader wondering if opposite conclusions might not be equally valid. More problematically, given that the terminal event of his study is the abolition of the courts by the Long Parliament, Ingram's revisionist apology for the courts is neither entirely convincing nor does it help to explain the events of 1640. He argues that the fundamentally effective courts were undermined only by a few minor flaws, exacerbated by unfair Puritan criticisms and a coincidental slight decline in standards of administration in the 1630s. An appearance rate 65 to 75 percent of those summoned was 'respectable', and anyway the courts' effectiveness lay as much in the persist-

ent raising of issues of morality and the like as in reaching a conclusion in a given case. Over all the problems were no worse than was true of the legal system in general, and 'the wonder is, that it was done at all'. But when a quarter to a third of society will not even respond to the summons of a court, to argue that this was little better than any other court of the time seems to suggest a picture of endemic disorder hardly supportive of Ingram's underlying theme of fundamental stability.

Ingram's use of the carefully delineated social and economic context is also unconvincing. His interpretation of the evidence on sexuality and marriage would have been enhanced by more than passing attention to the gender of the persons involved. Economic context also seems to play a surprisingly small role in his interpretation. Little sign of the differences between the chalk uplands and the dairy and clothing regions emerges either in terms of attitudes toward sexuality or in the effectiveness of the courts. We learn that traditional marriage practices persisted longer in the conservative chalkland villages; and that, not unexpectedly, illegitimacy rates were higher in crowded cloth-making areas. Yet overall there is little to choose between chalk and cheese.

Ingram's revisionistic purpose of apology seems to blunt his sensitivity to social and economic contexts. The courts, he argues, were effective primarily with the respectable, stable 'honest householders'. But these middling folk were also almost by definition less likely to be affected by economic change in, say, the cloth industry, or to fall on hard times in agrarian crisis. Ingram's thesis thus leads him to neglect the very members of society who were most sensitive to economic circumstance – the young, the poor, the migrant. He highlights instead the chalky-cheese homogeneity of stability.

Doubtless the church courts were better than their critics believed. Perhaps, too, English society in the first decades of the seventeenth century really was fundamentally respectable and conformable. Perhaps economic context did have little effect. Yet this careful defence of the church courts in such a society leaves one wondering even more about the events of 1640. A revisionist's diet of cautious continuity and coincidence may be a healthy regimen, but like chalky cheese, it leaves the reader hungry for something more.

BARBARA J TODD

SUSANNA WADE MARTINS, *Historic Farm Buildings*, Batsford, 1991, 256 pp, 133 illustrations, £25;
SUSANNA WADE MARTINS, ed, *Old Farm Buildings in a New Countryside*, The Historic Farm Build-

ings Group, 1991. 48pp. illus, £5 + £1.50 p + p from the editor, Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ.

Long and short-term change – mechanization, farm amalgamation, the European market – have in recent decades made thousands of British farm buildings redundant. Their predicament is now a cause of concern for many interests, and these publications focus attention on their historical importance.

Historic Farm Buildings is of direct interest to members of this Society since it seeks to contribute to the debate about the process of agricultural change. In purely architectural terms it covers much of the ground dealt with by other published national surveys, but its new feature is the depth of understanding given by a detailed regional base with buildings and documentary evidence meshed to provide a rounded picture of development. The book is divided into three parts. The first gives a national overview of the development of British agriculture and farm buildings. Being buildings-based, it inevitably concentrates on the post-1750 period, since only from that period do large numbers of farm buildings survive. Evidence from across Britain is used where available, but there is a particular emphasis on Norfolk, the area of the author's own research.

The second part is a detailed study of nine blocks of land in Norfolk, selected to cover a variety of natural conditions and tenurial types. The author is concerned to study the issues of regional variation and of improved agriculture, attempting to get behind the propaganda of agricultural commentators and large estates. Buildings therefore potentially become a primary historical source and can show who first introduced new methods, how widespread they became, and how quickly they were adopted. The author is fully aware of the complex reasons for the pattern of surviving buildings. She shows that early surviving buildings can represent later poverty rather than early wealth and that estate building depended on individual landowners and on whether they also derived income from non-agricultural sources. In addressing these questions, clearly documents play a large part. The discussion is a little marred by the difficulties in picking out the principal conclusions from a mass of detail, and a more thematic treatment instead of the strictly geographical and therefore repetitive one adopted might have presented the historical issues more coherently.

The last part of the book discusses different building types and farm layout. It also summarizes the evidence for landlord involvement in farm building, showing important differences over time, and develops the question of regional variation.

This goes part of the way towards answering the earlier criticism about the approach to these major issues. In summary, the book takes the study of farm buildings considerably forward by showing how architectural and documentary evidence need to be combined and how when given a firm regional base they can contribute to current historical debate. When the author's plea for more detailed regional studies – perhaps on the Norfolk model – has been answered, new light on the development of farming across the country will be provided.

The second book is a collection of papers given at a recent conference. This drew together all sides involved in the issue of farm buildings management – landowners, working farmers, central and local government agencies, architectural historians and others. Its intention was to highlight the historical value of farm buildings and to further the process of developing strategies to deal with the crisis which they face. Papers covered a broad range, presenting the full ramifications – economic, social, environmental – of the present problem. There are, of course, no easy solutions, but this book outlines some hopeful initiatives on the part of individuals, planning authorities, and governmental agencies. It was a thoroughly worthwhile venture and will help to further the process of education crucial to the survival of farm buildings.

COLUM GILES

ELENA PAPAGNA, *Grano e mercanti nella Puglia del Seicento*, Edipuglia, Bari, 1990, xvi + 159 pp. 8 tables; 4 graphs; appendix, L. 24,000.

When Osbert Sitwell visited Apulia in the late 1920s, he remarked that an extraordinary ignorance prevailed about these southern Adriatic provinces, seldom visited by English travellers, with a history clouded in obscurity. And indeed to this day, most English historians are much better informed about the commercial and industrial history of northern Italy than they are about the rural history of the south and the Mezzogiorno.

In the seventeenth century, the region specialized in the monoculture of grain (wheat and barley) and was traversed by a dense network of commercial relations. Landownership was oriented towards individual private property and the regional economy depended substantially on the stimulus of extra-provincial demand. This monograph attempts to reconstruct these developments which define the distinctive characteristics of the modern Mezzogiorno, and in particular to examine the impact of the crisis of the seventeenth century on the market for cereals produced in northern and central Apulia.

The analysis centres mainly on grain exports

from the port of Barletta during the years 1639–1688, for which a remarkable register has survived indicating anchorage and customs duties payable on vessels using the port. It is possible from this material to reconstruct both the changing course of grain exports and the pattern of commercial organization, including the identity of specialist merchants and commission agents. Few Dutch surnames appear yet the majority of the larger vessels employed in the trade are described as 'Flemish' indicating the substantial involvement of Dutch and Flemish merchants who presumably used local commission agents. Northern European domination of the trade petered out during the second half of the seventeenth century as the level of exports declined from its mid-century peak, and Italian merchants reasserted control of a much-reduced volume of trade, principally those of Genoa, Ragusa and to a smaller extent, Venice. Interestingly, the collapse in the region's cereal exports coincides almost exactly with the decline in the Baltic grain trade.

Useful information is also provided on changing regional price levels and seasonality. In common with other Italian centres, the collapse of cereal prices at Barletta in the 1660s was quite marked compared with many Northern European centres. This, together with the contraction of overseas markets induced a severe recession throughout all parts of the region dependent on cereal monoculture. For the farmers of Apulia, the seventeenth-century crisis spelt disaster.

DAVID ORMROD

PAT HUDSON, ed, *Regions and industries: a perspective on the industrial revolution in Britain*, CUP, 1989. xiii + 277 pp. £30.

Although this volume of essays had its ultimate origins in a CORAL conference, it is no mere collection of conference papers. Pat Hudson and her fellow contributors have created a wide-ranging and challenging series of original perspectives on the long-term nature of industrialization in the British Isles – not the 'Britain' of the title – and the social and economic contexts from which it emerged. The result is a book which raises questions about proto-industrialization, the determinants of continuing or truncated industrial development, and the regional experience of deindustrialization.

Its case studies cover the textile districts of Lancashire and the West Riding, by John K Walton and Pat Hudson respectively; the West Midlands (Marie Rowlands); Cumbria (John Marshall); the Kent and Sussex Weald (Brian Short); Scotland (Ian Whyte); and Ulster (Leslie Clarkson). Two other studies examine the themes of the book in

rather different ways: Adrian Randall explores the role of regional culture and custom in explaining the failure of the West of England woollen industry more fully to mechanize; and Neil Evans employs the comparative approach to highlight the critical differences between the great coal-producing regions of NE England and South Wales. The book evidently covers an impressive spatial and temporal range with great economy, and is prefaced by the editor's valuable general survey of the perspectives on development derived from the regional approach.

The quality of these essays is inevitably variable. Some, such as Pat Hudson's study of the West Riding, are effectively surveying areas which have been subjected to intensive modern research, and represent the distillation of its findings; Walton's study of Lancashire, produces the comforting confirmation of the work of earlier historians, primarily Wadsworth and Mann, but within a new conceptual framework; and others, such as the surveys by Short and Whyte, themselves distinguished agrarian historians, penetrate deeply into the interactions of agriculture and industry over several centuries to throw up new agendas for research. Certainly, the simplistic association of industry with upland, pastoral, and sub-marginal farming, which serves well enough in the Pennines, demands wholesale reassessment for Scotland and Ulster, and refinement elsewhere.

Overall, *Regions and industries* may not lead students of the eighteenth century wholly to reject the macroeconomic modelling which has established the new orthodoxy of gradual industrialization, but it does make a powerful case for the study of process over long periods. In that, the specific experiences of regions and localities are critical, and the complex relationships between farming and other sectors of the regional economy correspondingly highlighted. Agrarian historians looking to future research agendas will find much to ponder in this stimulating volume.

J A CHARTRES

ADRIAN RANDALL, *Before the Luddites. Custom, community, and machinery in the English woollen industry 1776-1809*. CUP, 1991. xvii + 318pp. £32.50

E P Thompson regarded the Luddites as 'a manifestation of a working-class culture' or as an industrial workers' sanction against unrestrained capitalism breaking down their community culture, and put the Luddites in a central place in the formative process of class consciousness. Though its impact was big, we have had very few systematic studies on the Luddites including regional differences in community culture.

Comparing the West of England with the West Riding of Yorkshire in the woollen industry, A Randall's work is outstanding in researching the important problems for the study of the Luddites; how the workers' community culture peculiar to a region was made, what characteristics it gave to their reactions against machinery, and why the alienation of workers from industrial capitalism and the state did not necessarily cause clear class consciousness before the Luddites. Chapter I reveals convincingly that differences in industrial organization caused the peculiar community culture to the West of England and to the West Riding. It was due to the *Verlagsystem* with social polarization in the former and to the *Kaufsystem* with social mobility in the latter. The different community culture made the different reactions against the introduction of machinery. In the West of England, the workers' strong resistance led to the delay of the diffusion of machinery and the continuance of the moral economy, while in the West Riding, the early acceptance of machinery led to the polarization of the community in 1802-6 and the violent machine breaking by the radical small producers affected by Jacobinism. Randall proves, however, that such resistance and their constitutional battle against the repeal of the old industrial laws, which was eventually defeated in 1809, did not lead to the making of the new class consciousness, since they held old values and attitudes and 'did not necessarily point in the same direction'. This work also contains valuable analyses of the extent of displacement of workers by machinery, and of the relationship between violent action and trade unionism. Readers may find the interpretation of the moral economy stimulating, while they might wish for a more detailed explanation of the paternalism or the reciprocity between the JPs and workers in the two regions. We need the local sources within parishes to understand workers' communities, but can hardly find them. Randall's arguments are solidly based on the British Parliamentary Papers, the Home Office Papers, and newspapers, and it makes the contrast of the two regions clear and his research successful.

KIYOSHI SAKAMAKI

J E ARCHER, *'By a Flash and a Scare': Arson, Animal Maiming, and Poaching in East Anglia 1815-1870*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990. xii + 282 pp. 2 maps. £35.

Any sense of idyllic rural life is shattered by John Archer's detailed investigation of arson, animal maiming, and poaching in East Anglia between 1815 and 1870. Protest and social crime were not confined to the occasional dramatic, but atypical

outburst of collective unrest. Throughout the period the landed classes were under constant threat from covert, individual crimes motivated by anger at perceived injustices or desire for revenge. The dissimilar acts of arson, poaching, and animal maiming provide a good gauge to measure chronological and spacial change in the incidence of socially motivated crime. They also demonstrate the wide variety of those participating in what was considered by many in authority to be serious criminal behaviour. These ranged from the disaffected labourer getting revenge by firing his employer's barn to the vagrant wandering through the countryside, from the starving father poaching to feed his family to the professional gang selling illicit game to the rich, from the inadequate cowman exerting power over a creature weaker than himself, to the overenthusiastic horseman accidentally poisoning his animal with beauty creams.

Motivation is intrinsically difficult to assess. However, by using a wide variety of primary sources including court records, Home Office papers, Poor Law union records, estate papers, Parliamentary Papers, newspapers, and broadsheets, John Archer has teased out an impressive array of information. This is considered both thematically and chronologically. The survey of incendiarism through first the post-Napoleonic agricultural crisis, then the period of the Swing Riots, and finally the time of general agricultural recovery and High Farming makes it apparent that the focus of the crime changes from grievances on a local level between labourers and farmers to a less personal attack on property in general. From 1851 40 per cent of those convicted were either children or vagrants and tramps who received little benefit from the improvements in conditions and wages. The thematic sections cover the more predictable points such as labourers' wages and the changes in poor law regulations. Also included is a useful discussion of the concept of the altering definition of illegal behaviour and the problems of using terms such as 'social' or 'protest' to discuss actions which were at the time simply seen as offenses against property. The book looks directly at the myth of rural criminal behaviour in order to dispel the idea of a tranquil agrarian counterpart to the violence of the industrial town.

While the emphasis of the book is on exposing the myth of a serene countryside, it helps to perpetuate another. It associates the three crimes too closely with protest behaviour of the labouring classes. Other causes and motives receive only cursory consideration. England today has a comparable problem of unemployment and recession. However, few would generally assume that animal

maiming was symptomatic of protest rather than an indication of psychological inadequacy or the activities of some black cult. Although incendiarism after 1830 was most prevalent during periods of low wheat prices and increased insurance cover, the possibility that a number of fires might have been started in an attempt by farmers to defraud insurance companies receives only one page of discussion. To place too much emphasis on the less advantaged sections of the community is to do them a disservice. It is important to compensate for bias that is inherent both in society as a whole and in the source material produced by that society. This apart, the study is an important contribution to the understanding of rural criminal behaviour motivated by socio-economic conditions.

BETHANIE AFTON

W H CHALONER, ed D A FARNIE and W O HENDERSON, *Industry and Innovation: Selected Essays by W H Chaloner*, Frank Cass, 1990. xiii + 318 pp. £28. Specializing in economic and social history in the History department of Manchester University in the early 1960s, one could not fail to absorb two strands of a perceived common culture: first, the fundamental contribution of 'the Manchester School' to the fashioning of economic and social history as a discipline by such giants as Unwin, Ashton, and Redford; secondly a characteristic methodology which concentrated on people and historical contexts as the proper focus of study. The summation of a series of classic texts in the 1920s and 1930s were two works of synthesis by T S Ashton, one on the Industrial Revolution, the other concerned with eighteenth century England. The preface to the latter volume, in which Ashton recounts his disapproval of economic history derived from 'ism's', serves well as an apologia for the School.

However unfashionable Ashton's views appear today, there is little doubt that Bill Chaloner sat comfortably with such forebears at Manchester, where he spent his entire academic career. So much is made plain in the opening lines of the introduction to the first collection of his essays, *People and Industries*, and underlined, in words redolent of Ashton, in its two concluding paragraphs, reprinted here as a keynote theme. For Chaloner, as for the Manchester School and others such as Toynbee and Mantoux, the human agent was the key to economic change, not the interaction of impersonal market forces.

Chaloner's historical interests were spread wide, and so were his published articles. Many were seminal pieces, for example his essays on the early industrial growth of Manchester – still a strangely neglected subject – and warranted collecting

together from their original scattered publication outlets. The selection of essays contained in this volume well complements those appearing in *People and Industries*. Whereas the former were directed more to a 'popular' audience, typically readers of *History Today*, the items selected here display Chaloner's original researches and erudition. They comprise much of his best and characteristic work, including his studies of John Wilkinson and other engineering innovators, his work on the industrial history of Manchester, and his concern with the social dimensions of industrial change, notably his classic articles on 'The skilled artisans during the Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850', and 'The hungry forties'.

It is fitting that one of the two editors of this volume is Otto Henderson. 'Chaloner and Henderson' were one of the most well-known and enduring 'duos' of British historical writing in the 1950s, typified by their notable, not to say notorious edition of Engels' *Condition of the Working Class*, as well as their translations of Schlöte and Hoffmann. Scholars of quite different, quantitative tradition have good reason to be grateful for their work.

If by the early 1960s the giants of the Manchester School of economic history had, perhaps, passed on, they were followed in the likes of Willan, Chaloner, Henderson, Musson, Farnie by worthy successors. Time tempts one to nostalgia, as does acquaintance with the 'Chaloner memorabilia' emanating from his long association with the British Agricultural History Society. However, reading these familiar essays once again they come across, although inevitably a little dated now, as a valuable contribution to the development of the discipline.

GERARD L TURNBULL

G V DYKE, *John Bennett Lawes: The Record of his Genius*, Research Studies Press Ltd, Taunton, and John Wiley & Sons Inc, New York, 1991. xiv + 482 pp. £69.50.

If the respect of professional historians of science for the publications of retired scientists has in the past twenty years sunk to an all-time low, here is a book that deserves to expose prejudice and reverse opinion. Social and cultural histories, impressive, fascinating and indispensable as they undoubtedly are, not uncommonly minimize the importance of 'internal' developments which, for many scientists, remain the most important and most intriguing elements of the story.

George Dyke has done no more than compile an annotated list of the publications of a redoubtable Victorian man of science. But this has the salutary effect – in the absence, as yet, of the full

biography he first set out to write – of bringing to us, with authoritative informality, the gems to be mined amid the intimidating detail of a vast, and sometimes vastly tedious, life's work. Lawes is accessible at last; for this gift to the historian of agricultural science (or, at any rate, to his library) the author will surely inherit the gratitude of a generation.

The early contributions to the British Association meetings; the bold beginnings of the famous controversy with Liebig and the great series of papers that developed it; the commercial side of the work with artificial fertilizers; the systematizing influence of Gilbert in that extraordinary partnership of more than fifty years; the heroic failure to resolve the problem of legumes; the less well known work in animal chemistry and nutrition; the Woburn experiments; cattle disease, livestock markets, the value of silage, sugar beet, basic slag, thistles, sewage and the agricultural depression; all these, and more, were among Lawes's expert interests and all were contemplated by his tireless pen.

It is a remarkable record of energy and total commitment by a man who hardly reaches the peak of his career till his early 70s. And, at the turn of the century, the octogenarian is still to be found relentlessly at work. And on what? Nothing else of course than, 'Wheat grown year after year on the same land, at Rothamsted ...'. Lawes's enthusiasm never died. This timely commentary will ensure that our own is much enlivened.

STEWART RICHARDS

ROBERT S DUPLESSIS, *Lille and the Dutch Revolt: Urban Stability in an Era of Revolution, 1500-1582*, CUP, 1991. xv + 372 pp. 2 maps: 4 plates. £32.50.

This is an old-fashioned city case study which will be of limited interest to urban historians and minimal value to readers of this journal. Prof. DuPlessis is concerned with answering the question why Lille, one of the major new drapery towns of the Southern Netherlands, failed, unlike many other urban centres, to get swept up in the Protestant revolt against Spain in the late sixteenth century. To account for this Du Plessis looks first at the structural factors determining Lille's outlook and then at the swirl of religious and political events which affected the city from the 1560s. He argues that crucial factors in maintaining political and religious stability in the city included the conservatism of the dominant mercantile élite, the cohesion of the civic magistracy, and the interventionist policy of the authorities, who sought to help the small textile producers and prevent large-scale poverty, particularly among the light-

cloth artisans. The magistracy not only succeeded in maintaining political stability but held the line against Protestant activists, persecuting and harassing them. In essence Duplessis claims that by ameliorating economic and social conditions, city leaders managed to set up a cordon sanitaire against resistance and reform. The detailed chronology of the Revolt reveals episodes of tension and conflict with the Spanish regime, as Lille fought hard to preserve its rights and privileges against Brussels' religious and financial policies. But Lille remained the exception to the iconoclasm and rebellion which enveloped much of the country.

It is all too mechanistic. One would have liked to know more on why the magistracy remained so united against the reform movement. Comparisons here with some of the conservative cities of Northern France might have helped. We also need to hear more about relations with the adjoining countryside where there was much more support for Protestantism and where rural industry was engaged in fierce competition with Lille. How far was the city's Catholicism a response to the latter? Generally indeed very little is said about the city and its hinterland: there is nothing on patterns of migration and almost nothing on agriculture. Where, for instance, did Lille buy the corn for its civic granaries which protected the city from scarcity? Overall the study is curiously untouched by the exciting new work currently being undertaken by Belgian scholars on the cities and towns of the southern Netherlands. A rather strange book only for aficionados of the Dutch Revolt.

PETER CLARK

FLORIN AFTALION, *The French Revolution. An Economic Interpretation*, CUP/Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1990. xviii + 226 pp. £25 (hbk); £8.95 (pbk).

This is not an economic history of the French Revolution, but rather an attempt to explain its political radicalization, and more specifically the Jacobin terror, as the product of economic factors. In its approach and its conclusions it forms part of the growing revisionist literature on the revolution, for Aftalion clearly rejects the interpretations of the terror offered by the Marxist and republican schools of French history, which see it as the result of internal division and foreign war. Instead he argues that it was the result of bad financial management and builds his case around the economic theories of von Hayek and the school of 'public choice'. Moreover, this is not just a theory confined to revolutionary France, for he believes that the cycle of political crisis, inflation, price controls, nationalization, centralization, and terror to have been the root cause of totalitarian

regimes in our own century too. This is a book with a message.

Aftalion's central argument is that the failure of the National Assembly in the latter months of 1789 to face up to the crucial problem of government debt, which had crippled royal government and precipitated the collapse of authority during the summer months, set the revolution onto the slippery slope to anarchy. It decided to pay off state debts by confiscating and selling church lands, and the value of these, added to the value of land subsequently confiscated from *émigrés* and political suspects, would probably have been sufficient to restore solvency, had the terms of sale not been so generous to the purchasers, allowing them to stage their payments over a twelve-year period. The result, according to Aftalion's calculations, was that up to three-quarters of the potential revenue from land sales was lost to the state, while the purchasers of *biens nationaux* – at least until 1797 – did very well indeed. Inflation was the key to their success, for church lands were to act as the initial guarantor for the issue of paper currency, or *assignats*, which could be used for land purchases and destroyed as they were paid in. However, to tide over the short term budgetary problems, *assignats* were issued in ever increasing amounts and they rapidly devalued. Bad money chased out good, currency became scarce, peasants withheld surpluses from the market rather than accept payment in dwindling paper money, and the market in manufactured goods collapsed. The resultant economic crisis provoked an authoritarian response, which led inexorably to the terror. The only alternative, in Aftalion's analysis, would have been for successive revolutionary assemblies to have controlled their expenditure, and enforced a rational taxation system. Certainly the latter was badly needed, for the tax returns for 1790 and 1791 were more than 50 per cent below target, because inadequate data existed for the proper assessment of land and property, and the vast majority of municipalities were ill-equipped to tackle the complexities involved.

Agrarian historians will find little of specific interest to them in this book, for although Aftalion deal briefly with land sales, and assesses the impact of the revolution on the rural economy in a brief concluding chapter, his main concern is with financial and political matters. In his analysis of these he is both original and provocative. On the question of *assignats*, land sales, and the drift towards a controlled economy, he provides an excellent analysis of the financial problems that the revolution created for itself. There is no clearer account currently available in English, and he fills a gap in the available literature. Yet his claim that

financial problems alone 'can provide a perfectly satisfactory explanation as to why the French Revolution ... degenerated into looting, Terror and dictatorship' clearly stretches his case too far. Revolutionary legislators may have been poor economists, and they often dodged difficult decisions by throwing up a smokescreen of patriotic rhetoric, denouncing non-existent plots and imaginary enemies of the people. Mistaken economic policies clearly played an important part in the radicalization of the revolution between 1790 and 1793. Yet they were far from being the only factors at work. Political divisions, social conflict, ideology and the strains imposed by war, all played an important role too, and it makes little sense to write them off as subsidiary factors, subordinate to the economic. Aftalion has therefore written a stimulating book, but one which gains much of its clarity from reliance on a monocausal argument. Much like the more hard-line Marxist school of history which he criticizes for its reliance on the theory of class conflict, Aftalion squeezes reality into too simple a mould and tells only part of the story.

HUGH GOUGH

GEORGE R BOYER, *An Economic History of the Poor Law, 1750-1850*, CUP, 1990. xiii + 297 pp. £27.50.

This quantitative study is a very useful addition to a field that has too often been dominated by administrative studies of a qualitative nature. It is welcome too for taking a period that covers both the Old and the New Poor Laws, and focusing on the strategic question of the balance of continuities, as against changes, made by the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834.

The historiography of the poor law may be divided into a traditional or contemporary critique of the Old Poor Law (which concentrated on its economic impact), a neo-traditional analysis (of the causes as well as results of the allowance system), and a recent revisionist 'school' consisting of Blaug, Baugh, and Digby among others (who questioned the nature of the relationship between the poor law and the rural economy). This reviewer must therefore declare an interest in this volume since some hypotheses which George Boyer tests were among those advanced in my own work on the basis of work on archival sources. Boyer provides a substantive contribution to revisionist analysis with his econometric testing of key elements in the discussion. Overall his results support revisionist thinking.

What conclusions are reached which either extend or modify current debate? Boyer aimed to analyse the central economic reasons both for the

adoption of the outdoor allowance system before 1834, and for its persistence after it. His analysis of the reasons for the adoption of outdoor relief rather than of any other is important. Using a model based on a theory of implicit labour contracts, Boyer tested, and found in favour of the hypothesis that contracts containing seasonal lay-offs and outdoor relief minimized costs for agricultural employers in grain-producing, southern areas, where demand for labour was markedly uneven during the farming year. Another question of general interest from the 1830s to the present day has been the economic impact of the New Poor Law on rural labourers. Boyer provides a further impetus to this controversy by disagreeing with the recent work of Keith Snell and others. Boyer concluded that farmworkers' living standards were not adversely affected by the New Poor Law to any great extent - mainly on the grounds that rural labour was more mobile. Poor relief is thus seen as having had much less impact in slowing labour mobility than is often assumed.

These and other arguments are set out in a clear, cogent, and persuasive analysis. The author has also attempted to make his work accessible to the less numerate reader by helpfully stating, 'Non-quantitative historians might want to skip this section and go directly to section ... which summarizes the results obtained from this model'.

When taken together with other recent work on poor relief (particularly that relating to support in old age), this thought-provoking volume will place the poor law squarely on the main agenda of the agrarian, and the economic, historian.

ANNE DIGBY

ALUN HOWKINS, *Reshaping Rural England: A Social History 1850-1925*, Harper Collins Academic, 1991. xiii + 305 pp. £35 (hbk); £11.95 (pbk).

This book arose out of an undergraduate course given by the author. For the 'Reshaping' of the book read 'Remaking' of the lecture course. It must have been rewarding for the students because the variety of experiences of rural life in the period under review are brought vividly to life. This is a well-researched book unspoiled by the rhetoric and exaggerated political stances of so much social history writing. The politics and social theory may be present but they are not worn on the sleeve, and neither is there much time for a romantic appeal to a world we have lost. Let us rid ourselves of the one quibble first. For 'Reshaping Rural England', an active image, perhaps 'Rural England Reshaped', a more passive, matter-of-fact, passing of time image would have been better. This betrays this reviewer's belief that by the late nineteenth century, certainly with free trade in place, the

British economy, especially its agricultural sector, was fashioned less by internal forces and more by externalities. We do not deny that 'men make their own history' (p 222); they do shape or reshape the personal and mainly local collective conditions under which they live to a degree, but the superstructure is surely outside their control. Dr Howkins might counter that his book is more about the bricks than the foundations and the frame.

The long period under review is sub-divided into neat shorter ones. They are mostly, or even entirely, created by economic forces, and less by social change. The first is 1850-75, the period of 'High Farming', though this precise economic description had equally precise rural regional, and technically agricultural, emphasise. Nevertheless, aristocratic, absentee-landlord England was resplendent if insecure. The second period is the partially overlapping years 1872-95. This was 'The Great Depression', and the exposure of class relations in the countryside. The resulting adjustments to agricultural practices, to the blend of factors of production, led to crisis for landlords, tenants and labourers alike in many places. We see in this period an obvious expression of the reshaping of rural England in the form of accelerating rural depopulation. The third and last period is 1895-1925. This embraced the slimmed-down survival of the fit and the rise out of depression into what Dr Howkins calls a 'New Rural England', followed by the relative boom of the Great War, and then the betrayal of agriculture when the Corn Production Act (1918) was repealed in 1921 with the ending of guaranteed prices. The cumulative effects of landed indebtedness and pre-War adjustments in death duties, and other factors, led to the triumph of the farmers over the landed interest in one respect at least. Citing Professor Thompson we learn that 25 per cent of the agricultural land of England was transferred to the farmers (by sale). Ironically they came into their inheritance by a social and economic revolution not of their making or necessarily of their desired timing, and they inherited the crisis of a World glutted by food.

This reviewer describes the chronology in economic terms. Dr Howkins appreciates the forces of economic change but overwrites them with the consequences for social change. This he does skilfully showing that the change was not cataclysmic but attritional. It is the idea of society in a wider sense which is one of the keys to this study, as is the specific and relatively neglected role of women. The new interpretative thread which runs through it is a sense of community. Dr Howkins discovers this sense and in so doing he also discovers the

chronological and spatial variety of rural social relations, and the ways they changed in response to mainly economic forces. It is a study which can be readily recommended.

MICHAEL TURNER

G K NELSON, *To be a Farmer's Boy*, Alan Sutton, Stroud, 1991. xxi + 177 pp. Illus. £14.99.

An appeal through newspapers for autobiographical information from elderly country people brought over 400 written and taped replies to Mr Nelson. This selection aims to 'present a comprehensive picture of farming and country life during the first half of the century from the point of view of farmworkers'. Where the extracts are long enough to give a sense of the contributor, they do give insight: the skill involved in even an everyday operation like using a draw well is revealed as far beyond the obvious flinging down of a bucket and winding it up, for instance. Farm mechanization, a fear of ill-health and concern with education, or a lack of it, are recurring themes. The author's grandfather, for instance, became the steward of a thousand-acre farm though he was illiterate. His wife handled his accounts and letters, a perpetuation of the typical pre-industrial partnership. The photographs are original and worthwhile.

Since contributions were accepted as sent, however, nothing is followed up and expanded, so the book cannot fulfil its intentions. The shorter extracts seem only to be predictable generalizations about life, and enough reminiscences have been published to make these superfluous. It is not belittling contributors to draw out of their reminiscences patterns that they themselves are not aware of, as long as the integrity of the original is respected, or to set their memories in a context for a reader. The introduction and conclusion do not do this: they are more the author's own contribution about his origins in a tied cottage in Norfolk in the 1920s than history. I found most worthwhile the extracts from areas I already knew about, but I was always aware that they could actively mislead others lacking such knowledge, which shows the limitations of this approach.

It is enjoyable if taken for what it really is, a collection of thirteen fragments from rural areas across the country. Three more books are promised, giving the views of women, farmers and children, but if it is preserved in an accessible form the archive Mr Nelson has created would interest academic historians more.

STEPHEN CAUNCE

PAMELA HORN, *Victorian Countrywomen*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1991, viii + 281 pp. 30 plates, £35.

With the recent wide interest in women's history, *Victorian Countrywomen* will be welcomed by both academics and general readers as providing a useful addition to the growing body of publications on the subject. Pamela Horn, in ranging widely through aspects of family life and activities of all classes of countrywomen, provides a wealth of information on the topic. Through the breadth of her examination Dr Horn enables the reader to gain a sense of the disadvantaged existence which the Victorian countrywomen endured. The examples used demonstrate that boredom for the intelligent farmer's wife or the minor gentry woman was, relatively, just as destructive as the drudgery and overwork experienced by the female struggling at subsistence level. The book abounds with many snippets of information which contribute to the vast store of knowledge on Victorian country life. The events portrayed in the narrative implicitly confirm that economic strength was the key to the acquisition of equality or status and that, throughout most of the period, society and the legal system ensured that men retained that strength. A further implicit theme of the book is that of isolation. Given the size of rural communities, women of any class were isolated if they did not conform to the pattern of the majority.

A weakness of the book is that although countless snapshot images of countrywomen are presented, these are not developed and analysed in a manner that would further the present debate on the role and exploitation (or otherwise) of Victorian countrywomen. The widespread use of examples, often in the form of quotations, tends to result in the text being anecdotal rather than analytical and the lack of a coherent analysis of the material leaves the reader feeling somewhat frustrated. Several interesting appendices are included but again their presentation does not enable comparisons to be made, and disappointingly, no meaningful analysis of the data is included in the text.

As is usual with Dr Horn's work, the book is meticulous in its detailed collection of material and in drawing from a wide range of sources both in terms of type and of geographical area. *Victorian*

Countrywomen will take its place as a useful reference book providing a mass of interesting information about this topic.

CHRISTINE HALLAS

DAVID G ADAMS, *Bothy Nights and Days: Farm Bothy Life in Angus and the Mearns*, John Donald, Edinburgh, 1991. x + 90 pp. 20 plates. £7.50.

This fascinating account of life in Scottish farm bothies clears up many misconceptions about them, such as the erroneous linkage with 'bothy' ballads. The heart of it is a composite oral history, with a wealth of detail from men and boys who lived in them. A short introductory essay explains the origins and spread of this distinctive adaptation of the hiring of farm servants and it is aptly illustrated with photographs. Some of these are not only records but a part of bothy culture, consciously parodying the rough conditions with ritualistic set-pieces: axes ready to cut a cheese and oatmeal shovelled into a pot to be stirred with an old stick. Bothy 'chiels' ate oatmeal three times on most days, though Sunday breakfast made a change, with sausages bought the night before from 'mid-nicht' butchers who stayed open specially to serve lads returning to farms after a night out. What a life.

The shame is that the book is not longer and that the context and history of the system is not more thoroughly explored, for what there is whets the appetite for more. That an aggressively horse-oriented system could survive the tractor and persist into the 1970s, shows the tenacity of traditional arrangements when the socio-economic environment is favourable, even though the tradition itself was not ancient, but was created by the increasing use of horse-power from the late eighteenth century. It seems to have been the loneliness of the bothies that finally killed them, once the old comradely groups were not needed by modern farmers. The Scots spellings like 'Eftir the auld neep dreels were ploo'ed and harra'ed ...' seem overdone, however, especially when the author admits they make it harder for the contributors to read their own words, and when the dialect is so strong that no one would mistake the text for standard English.

STEPHEN CAUNCE

Shorter Notices

PETER EDWARDS, *Farming Sources for Local Historians*, Batsford, 1991. 226 pp. Illus. £17.95.

The recent decline in the number of postgraduate students researching agricultural history has been partly offset by increased amateur interest in the subject and by the rising number of those who are studying on a part-time basis. This book will serve very well as a useful introduction to those newcomers who want to look beyond a specialist interest to see what might be done on other topics and for other periods and to form a rounded view of the subject from the Middle Ages to the present day. It gives the amateur a sense of the current concerns of the members of this Society and helps to fill the gap between academic perceptions of the subject and the persistently old-fashioned views of agricultural history that are still widely prevalent.

Above all, it shows the amateur local historian what might be attempted in the sections of a local study that should be devoted to farming. Dr Edwards has bravely included a lot of material on medieval agriculture that will not be immediately accessible to the amateur because of the difficulty of reading, let alone understanding, the records. He faces this and other problems squarely while maintaining a tone of encouragement. His own strength is in the early-modern period and this enables him to convey a feeling of continuity, not only in the ways that people farmed but in the methods employed by historians to study the subject over the centuries.

The text is inevitably compressed, but the references and bibliography point the way to further reading. We should applaud the fact that an active member of this Society has written such a sound and informative guide that will encourage amateurs to make their own contributions to the subject.

DAVID HEY

PAS POOL, *The Field Names of West Penwith*, Treeve House, Connor Downs, Hayle, Cornwall, 1990. 102 pp. 1 map. £5.

West Penwith or Land's End peninsula is the part of Cornwall where the Cornish language survived longest, affecting settlement and field names until its final demise as a living language. The author is well-known for his research on the history of the area, and in an interesting introduction he

gives a brief sketch of the character of the region, and of the slow death of the Cornish language.

Unlike farm names which are recorded in West Penwith from the thirteenth century, not many field names survive from before 1500, and few provide evidence for agricultural history. Many refer to the shape, size, character or situation of the field, and only a few are named after crops. There are several *pillas* referring to the naked oat once extensively grown in Cornwall, and some refer to wheat, clover, flax or rye. Other names are an ironic reflection on the labour required for profitable cultivation especially on the granite uplands, with fields called 'Park Poor', 'Sorry Bargain', 'Hard Struggle', or 'World of Rocks'.

The main part of the book consists of a glossary which records, interprets and comments on the field names of the fourteen parishes of West Penwith. This is an important contribution to the history of the district and will be a useful source for all who are interested in the history of this attractive part of Cornwall.

J H BETTEY

IAN W ARCHER, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London*, CUP, 1991. xvi + 307 pp. £30.

Apart from some brief discussion of the regulation of markets and attempts to ensure the maintenance of food supplies during the difficult years of the 1590s there is little here to attract an agrarian specialist, narrowly defined. But no one with a broader interest in the economic and social change of early-modern England can afford to ignore this richly textured study. The central issue – how late sixteenth-century London managed to avoid a social conflagration despite the existence of great tensions – has never been handled more adroitly. The crucial factors turn out to have been the cohesion of the élite and its responsiveness to popular grievances, the absence of a substantial and co-ordinated opposition, and the complex 'matrix of overlapping communities' to which citizens owed allegiance. In arriving at his conclusions Ian Archer has a great deal to say about the nature of local government in the metropolis – from grass-roots parish level to the upper reaches of the city council – about neighbourhood and local society, about standards of living and poor relief, and about criminality. The achievement is magnificent and this book will long command a

prominent place among the literature of Elizabethan England.

DONALD WOODWARD

DAVID EVELEIGH, *The Victorian Farmer*, Shire Publications, Princes Risborough, 1991. 32 pp. Illus. £1.95.

Substantial historical studies of Victorian farmers are few, so it is a brave author who seeks to cover such uncharted territory in a mere 6000 words and 50 illustrations. This particular foray comes off well. There are three main sections to the text: the farmer at work, the farmer at home, and the farmer's wife.

There are deficiencies, inevitably. Differences between regions and different types of farmer, while not ignored, are not conveyed to the full. This is essentially a descriptive and static picture. The period covered, to all intents and purposes ends at about 1875. This is most apparent, perhaps, in the section on the farmer's wife. After describing the making of butter, cheese and bread, the curing of hams, mention that such self-sufficient habits might have been declining in industrializing Britain appears as a tail-end piece.

Shire albums cannot pretend to be more than introductions to a subject. Accept this one as such, at bargain price, and it is not at all to be sniffed at.

JONATHAN BROWN

G E MINGAY, ed, *The Unquiet Countryside*, Routledge, 1989. viii + 136 pp. £30.

The Unquiet Countryside is a collection of eight articles, five of which were newly commissioned for the book together with three which appeared in *The Victorian Countryside* (1981). They create a broad study of unrest and criminal behaviour in agrarian England from the beginning of the seventeenth century through the Victorian Age. A wide variety of activities are explored. These include collective activities such as food and wage riots and machine breaking, the gang crimes like poaching, ship-wrecking and smuggling, and individual, often covert, acts like arson, animal maiming, and assault. Equally important for the balance of the book are the sections on related subjects, including the changing attitudes towards law enforcement and punishment, the formation of labour organizations, and the influence of the aristocracy through positive activities in the fields of education, religion, and housing, and negative ones like shooting and hunting.

While much of this collection is useful, it is difficult to understand why it has been published in this format. Articles in edited volumes are

notoriously difficult for researchers to locate. The overall quality is marred by the reliance on out-of-date secondary sources by several authors. Finally the price is high for only eighty pages of material which has not previously been published.

BETHANIE AFTON

P BOOMGAARD AND J L VAN ZANDEN, *Changing Economy in Indonesia: A Selection of Statistical Source Material from the Early 19th century up to 1940*, volume 10, 'Food Crops and Arable Lands, Java, 1815-1942', Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, 1990. 144 pp. 1 graph; 2 maps. Dfl 48.

The series *Changing Economy in Indonesia* is made up of statistical studies of various aspects of the economy of the Dutch East Indies, and is invaluable for anyone working on that country, or interested in Asian development. Peter Boomgaard was the general editor of this volume on food crops and arable lands, and it maintains the high standards of earlier publications in the series such as volume 4 on rice prices. Particularly valuable are the comments on the work of previous researchers, and Boomgaard points out (p 24) that Clifford Geertz in his famous book *Agricultural Involution: The Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia*, (Berkeley, 1963), makes a fundamental error in calculating the area of land which could be inundated for rice in 1833. This leads him to believe the area was 1,270,000 hectares, when it was actually about half that, 642,000 hectares. As Geertz then says the 1833 figure was about a third of the 1957 figure, when it actually must have been a sixth, it follows that much of what he has to say about agricultural development in the Dutch East Indies is jeopardized. If the base year figure is halved the growth must have been far higher than he implies!

A J H LATHAM

GERALD D NASH, *Victorian School-days in Wales*, University of Wales Press and the Museum of Wales, 1991. 34 pp. Illus. £3.95.

Without knowledge of the provenance of this little illustrated booklet it might be wondered why it was published at all: it is almost entirely derivative, based, apart from material from the Royal Commission on Welsh education of 1847 and some school records (particularly those of the village school of Maestir, Dyfed), on a limited number of secondary works. It is, however, written by an assistant keeper at the Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff, where Maestir school has been re-erected and the Victorian schoolroom restored. Here modern schoolchildren may take part in a re-enactment of a Victorian school day and become

acquainted with the artefacts of the past. The booklet in fact represents an informative introduction to the history of Welsh education suitable for younger secondary pupils and the general public.

For historians of education it says nothing new, while agricultural historians seeking detailed background data on schooling and educational standards in the varied rural communities, and the relationship between education and the economic, demographic and cultural structure of such communities, will need to look further than this.

W B STEPHENS

SUSAN NEAVE, *Medieval Parks of East Yorkshire*, Centre for Regional and Local History, University of Hull, and Hutton Press, Cherry Burton, 1991. 59 pp. Illus. £4.95.

In this useful and attractive booklet Dr Neave has presented the documentary evidence for about fifty medieval parks in the East Riding. The earliest references date from the twelfth century, the bulk are from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and a handful are later. The geographical spread supports the view that the location of medieval parks corresponds closely with the areas of woodland that were recorded in Domesday Book. A large number of the best-documented parks appear to have been created without the approval of a royal licence, prompting the suggestion that a licence was sought only where a proposed park lay close to or within a royal forest.

The evidence is taken from estate papers, supplemented by the printed calendars of material held in the Public Record Office, the volumes of various record societies, and royal surveys of the sixteenth century in the PRO. As many parks were converted to other uses in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the difficulties of providing a complete catalogue are formidable. Dr Neave suspects that many more parks were created than the surviving documentation allows. She appends a selective list of 20 places where field or farm names incorporate the words 'park' or 'lawn'.

The first park of the booklet contains introductory comments on management and economy, on emparking and the local community, and on the permanent effects on the landscape. (There is little or no evidence that emparking led to depopulation.) This section is followed by a gazetteer, which gives documentary references and plots the larger parks on first-edition six-inch ordnance survey maps. A number of colour illustrations enhance the appeal of a publication that should attract good local sales and the attention of medieval agrarian historians in other parts of the country.

DAVID HEY

M W THOMPSON, *The Rise of the Castle*, CUP, 1991. ix + 205 pp. 115 illus. £19.95.

The medieval castle survives as a potent symbol of aristocratic control in Britain. In 1988 Dr Thompson examined *The Decline of the Castle* between 1400 and 1650; now he has published a handsome 'prequel' concentrating on the period 1050 to 1400, principally in England and Wales. The main theme of his enquiry is the tension between comfort and defence or between the hall/palace and the defensive enclosure. By comparing the situation in Norman England with contemporary developments in France and Germany, he stresses the castle's role as primarily domestic and administrative, relegating military requirements to a secondary concern. He traces the changing balance in emphasis over the next two centuries. The fourteenth-century developments are interpreted as uncomplicated desires to express status in the 'cult castle.'

The author has provided a well-illustrated and well-researched account, drawing upon recent discoveries and making effective use of medieval literary sources. However some plans are reproduced at too small a scale or include extraneous information. The index needs greater attention to detail. Some readers may be disappointed that this survey is more concerned with surviving buildings than with the people who lived in them or constructed them. The chapters on the castles as midwives of monasteries and of towns tend to focus on impersonal structures rather than on vibrant and fluid personal economic forces. There is deliberately little about the mechanics of building or the minutiae of warfare. Yet within his self-imposed constraints Dr Thompson has provided an attractive and readable account.

LAWRENCE BUTLER

F G EMMISON, *Elizabethan Life: Home, Work, and Land*, new impression, Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, 1991. x + 364 pp. £9.95.

This reissue will serve to remind some and introduce others to this most useful but peculiar work. In its own words, its object is 'to present to the economic and social historian, as well as the local historian, a substantial corpus of new evidence' (p viii). This it does, its three sections drawing respectively on wills, quarter session records, and manor court rolls. There is interesting material throughout; that on the regulation of trade in the 1590s might be especially noticed. The book concludes with the best available discussion of the work and jurisdiction of manorial courts in their Indian summer. But at worst the book is a mere compilation from the records and the whole is untroubled by statistics, any sense of chronological change, or

the world outside Essex. It is both a vintage work and period piece, dating from an age when archivists retained historical pretensions. There is no attempt at updating, not even a supplementary bibliography. A book to plunder, rarely to ponder.

R W HOYLE

DON COLE, *Farming, Farmers and Farms in a Yorkshire Parish: Adel, Cookridge, Eccup, Arthington, Breary, 1540-1940*, The Author, 20 Cookridge Avenue, Leeds, LS16 7LZ, 1991. 64 pp. Illus. £3.50 (+ £0.34 p & p).

The parish of Adel, the subject of Don Cole's well-illustrated pamphlet, is an interesting case-study in farming, a zone of relatively recent specialization on the northern fringe of a major industrial city, Leeds, but historically an area of extensive, near-marginal, pastoral agriculture. This pamphlet is intended for general readership, being written for popular sale with the profits dedicated to charity (Action and Research into Multiple Sclerosis), and inevitably there are elements which the specialist rural historian will find unsatisfactory. However, here is an enthusiastic recording of farmsteads, boundaries, and locations, detailing the families and collecting much basic information from the older inhabitants of an area which, from the 1920s, has been rapidly engulfed by sprawling suburbia. Don Cole's interesting compilation perhaps indicates the need for professional, long-term,

studies of farming in the urban fringe. For those with an interest in the area, and its residents, including this reviewer, this pamphlet proved an enjoyable stimulus to further thinking.

J A CHARTRES

NICK LYONS, ed, with maps by Rex C Russell, *Enclosure in Context in North-West Lincolnshire, Commentary and Documents*, Scunthorpe Borough Museum, Scunthorpe, 1988. 130 pp. Illus. £5 (+ £1.50 p and p).

Largely as a result of the painstaking work of Rex Russell and his colleagues a good deal is now known about the individual enclosures of north Lincolnshire. In this volume Nick Lyons attempts to provide an overview of the process, and to place it in a geographical and historical context. It offers a comprehensive review of the literature on the agricultural development of north-west Lincolnshire, and it performs a valuable role in stressing the importance of non-Parliamentary enclosure in the area. The geographical context is rather more scanty, and is not very closely linked to the enclosure material itself. The documents which make up the second half of the volume are an interesting selection, but it seems curious, in view of the title and the avowed aim of providing background for schools, that there is no abstract from an enclosure award or act.

JOHN CHAPMAN