

Book Reviews

Britain and Ireland

IAN ARMITT, EILEEN MURPHY, EIMÉAR NELLIS and DEREK SIMPSON (eds), *Neolithic settlement in Ireland and western Britain* (Oxbow Books, 2003). ix + 222 pp. 13 tables; 4 plates; 104 figs. £35.

Once upon a time, the start of the neolithic stood uncomplicatedly for the beginning of agriculture and settled existence, in the case of Britain and Ireland from around 4000 BC as the chronology is currently understood. Farmers farm, and do so in one place, agriculture and settled existence reinforcing one another. In this older model, farmers also tend to breed farmers, and so the beginnings of the neolithic were mostly ascribed to colonizers from abroad rather than to indigenous populations. Over the last twenty to thirty years of research, much more complicated possibilities have begun to emerge. The process by which agriculture was established may have been much more drawn out, it was suggested, with the keeping of animals perhaps more important initially than the cultivation of cereals. In some regions at least, the neolithic seems to be characterized by settlement other than permanent and long-lasting, one of several possible indications of some kind of continuity from earlier populations of foragers. The model of acculturation has not been universally accepted, especially in Ireland, and other recent research based on isotopic studies of protein in the diet has suggested the possibility once again of quite rapid transformations at the start of the neolithic; and those studies are themselves in turn the subject of current critical review. Meanwhile, improved dating begins to allow us to separate phenomena which have often been lumped together, as noted by Bradley in his concluding paper here, such that samples for isotopic studies have come so far largely from monuments perhaps two to three or three to four centuries after the start of the neolithic.

This very welcome volume therefore offers invaluable reports from these shifting front lines. It mainly does what it says on the tin, and discusses settlement, but the issues of diet, identity and beginnings are never far away, rumbling in the background. Beginnings are discussed

by Sheridan, Tresset and Woodman and McCarthy, the first two tending strongly to a more traditional view of colonizations from the continent, but the latter duo raising the important possibility of connections between central-west France and Ireland. There are other studies in the first part of the volume of individual sites or individual regions. Some of the authors reassert the older picture of neolithic people as permanently settled farmers, but others, such as prominently Cooney, Armit, Darvill, Barclay, Gibson, and Bradley, are more concerned to explore the many diversities evident within and between regions. Indeed, one of the major questions upon which we need to reflect much further is the scale of networks. What does it mean now to talk of lowland Scotland, or even parts of Ireland? As Alex Gibson perceptively notes, there seems to be a tension between the perhaps more local scale of day-to-day dwelling, and wider patterns of shared cultural affiliation manifested in artifact and monument styles.

One of the most striking changes to the archaeological record of this period in recent years has been the discovery of example after example in Ireland of timber-framed structures. The second part of the volume presents a series of important reports, brought together in this kind of detail for the first time, on what has been dubbed elsewhere (and repeated in the contents pages here but not in the text itself) the 'Irish house boom'. Over the same period of research, far fewer examples have turned up in southern Britain, and the cases of Balbridie on Deeside and Claish Farm in Stirlingshire might point to a further structured difference between south on the one hand and north and west on the other. Ballyharry, Cloghery, and Thornhill, to cite the most complex of the structures here, join others already known of this important data set. The individual reports are quite brief and it mostly falls to Cooney, earlier in the volume, to reflect on the now evident diversities, and to Cross, as an endpiece, to discuss how we should label them. She challenges the prevailing notion of 'house' and its connotations of residential sedentism, preferring the label of 'hall', with connotations of feasting for restricted lineages. The jury is out on this one, since as Cross notes (p.199) final faunal and other reports are

not yet available. Hints of abundant cattle bone, burnt cereal depositions and numerous finds of fine serving pottery vessels are suggestive, but we need more detail.

This volume will be widely used and quoted. Watch out for a complementary forthcoming volume from the same publishers on monumentality in the neolithic of western Britain, edited by Chris Fowler and Vicki Cummings. That will add further reflections on the domains of dealing with the dead, the past, the landscape and community to this already complicated scene.

ALASDAIR WHITTLE
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R. E. HARDSTAFF, *Norman Southwell. Food, fuel and farming, 1086 AD* (Southwell and District Local History Society, 2003). 74 pp. Illus. No price given.

Bob Hardstaff spent a lifetime in farming before bringing his practical knowledge to bear on issues which desk-bound historians take for granted. 'As a farmer', he writes, 'I have always wondered what had happened in the past to the land that I relied on for my living ...' (p. 1). What, in particular, he asked, was going on around Southwell at the time of Domesday Book? Taking the relevant data, and in defiance of 'some established academic circles' from whom 'I did not receive much encouragement' (p. 3), Hardstaff set about asking how efficient, effective and productive – even sustainable – farming was in this central Nottinghamshire parish at the time of Domesday Book. As he freely admits he simply did not believe some of the comments he read about inaccurate data and poverty-stricken farmers.

The result of Mr Hardstaff's scepticism is a provocative account of Southwell around the time of Domesday based on the 1086 data and his use of modern derived estimates for the human and animal populations of the area, and the cultivated land. Using modern data to calculate food production, including the results of experiments undertaken at Rothamsted, he comes to the conclusion that we underestimate eleventh-century farmers at our peril, and that they did a more than passable job of providing an adequate diet for the local population. Inevitably much of his work involves speculation, and some nifty footwork with the data. Academic historians will find gaps in his bibliography – notably the work of Bruce Campbell – and will doubtless raise questions about his methodology and his statistics, but the book is still well worth pondering because here is someone who knows farms, farmers and particularly the area he is studying. He is not prepared to accept bland platitudes about the past, and he has raised some interesting questions to which he has offered tentative answers. 'Many of the problems', he

concludes, 'that faced the farmers and workers of the Domesday period are familiar ones today although there are solutions available now which were not dreamed of in 1086' (p. 55). It is a lesson well worth remembering.

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DAVID HEY, *Medieval South Yorkshire* (Ashbourne: Landmark Publishing, 2003). 192 pp. Illus. £19.95.

This book is a substantially-revised version of David Hey's *The making of South Yorkshire*, published in 1979, which takes account of research undertaken in the intervening generation. Hey's original purpose was to produce a general survey to update interested amateurs and general readers that took account of new approaches and findings, and showed that 'South Yorkshire's history was as long and as interesting as that of other parts of England' and that 'local history could be studied in many different ways' (p. 6). Assessed in these terms, Hey has achieved his objectives.

Chapter 1 explores 'The Roman and British Legacy', including Roman forts, roads, industries and villas, Iron Age and Roman management of land and forests and occupation of farmsteads, the changes in land management and farming when Roman power ended, British place-names and kingdoms, the impact of the Anglian conquests, and defensive frontier earthworks. This is followed by a chapter exploring the origins, date and meaning of different forms of place-names, and the light cast by place-names on the Anglian and Viking conquests and settlements. Chapter 3 addresses 'Estates, villages and churches', including tenth- and eleventh-century changes in a period 'when most of our villages assumed their present shapes and farmers began to practise common-field agriculture' (p. 39). The disintegration of 'shires', establishment of new parishes and parish churches, nature of ancient districts and wapentakes, pre-Conquest importance of Conisbrough, Anglo-Scandinavian crosses, churches with Anglo-Scandinavian architecture, and preservation and alteration of village and estate structures are among the subjects covered. The book moves on to discuss the impact of the Normans, including the 'Harrying of the North'. The honours, families and religious patronage of Domesday tenants-in-chief are surveyed, as are post-1086 seigniorial and tenurial transformations (though this is pursued in only a limited way beyond 1135) and the region's castles and their remains. Chapter 5 examines knightly families and their moated sites, chapels, manors houses and deer parks, some of which can still be seen. Religious houses and their possessions and remains provide the focus of the next chapter, which gives special attention to Roche abbey. The discussion

also features Rotherham's College of Jesus, founded by Thomas Rotherham (1423–1500), Archbishop of York and Chancellor of England. Chapter 7 examines parish churches and influences on their location, Norman and Gothic architectural survivals, church interiors, stone crosses, and the impact of the Reformation. The region's six medieval towns are then discussed in turn.

In Chapters 9 and 10 the book considers subjects which are, perhaps, of greatest relevance to the readers of this journal: 'Villages, fields and farmhouses', and 'Lords and peasants'. Here Hey emphasizes the importance of village markets and the damaging effects on them of late medieval economic decline. He explores the distribution of and reasons for deserted medieval villages, the colonization of waste land, land reclamation, communal farming, establishment of new farms, types of farming and farming systems, rhythm of agricultural life, importance of cattle and sheep farming and turf digging, drainage projects, and surviving timber-framed buildings. These chapters also examine tenurial and economic relations between lords and their tenants, the terms on which land was held, estate incomes and management, peasant restrictions and opportunities, types of crops grown, specialized cattle and sheep farms, the rearing or keeping of other animals, other resources exploited by lords (including mills, minerals, and woodland), transport routes, family names, and peasant mobility.

The extensive range of subjects covered will doubtless provide general readers with a variety of interesting and appetising tasters, but in a number of places these are too thin and fast-changing to be properly enjoyed, as the discussion skips rapidly and somewhat disjointedly from topic to topic. But there is far more in Hey's book to admire than to quibble with. It brings its subject to life, not least through the many black-and-white photographs, maps and illustrations with which it is adorned. These are accompanied by a readable and entertaining text which benefits from the author's own extensive fieldwork and substantial knowledge of various types of evidence, including documents, aerial photography, archaeology, place-names, architecture and geology. One of the book's greatest merits is the way in which Hey weaves this material together into an informative and engaging discussion. It does much to illustrate and convey the richness of its subject, and not only to its intended audience of amateurs and general readers. The book will also be of value to specialists and students; including those interested in agricultural history, which features prominently in a number of sections. And to anyone interested in local medieval history, whether that of South Yorkshire or elsewhere, Hey's work will serve as an important and rewarding reminder that such

history is far less distant, obscure and document-based than we might think; that it is all around us, manifest in many and often surprising ways in the landscape that we inhabit.

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JOHN HUNTER, *Field systems in Essex* (Essex Society for Archaeology and History, Occasional Papers, New Ser. 1, 2003). 41 pp. 25 figs. £5.95 incl. p & p from Dr Chris Thornton, 75 Victoria Road, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5HE.

Although it is a county that features heavily in the social, economic and agrarian history of England, particularly during the early modern period, very little has been published on the field systems of Essex. As the preface to this work notes, students of the subject may well have been deterred by the injunction in H. L. Gray's seminal work that few counties' systems were 'so difficult to describe' as those of Essex. The reason is the sheer diversity of such systems, and the way that they crowd in upon one another in this densely settled county.

John Hunter's short book provides a welcome attempt to impose some order on these systems, tease out a chronology of development, and to map the results. His study begins with a brief review of general trends in field systems in the county from prehistory, through Roman, Saxon, medieval, Tudor and Stuart, to Georgian and the nineteenth-century. He then moves on to consider a series of four case studies, drawn mainly from central and southern Essex. These demonstrate the ebb and flow of field boundaries and subdivisions, even if they illustrate examples of the best surviving sources rather than a typology of common field systems in the county. Hunter points out with some irony that the post World War II grubbing up of hedges and the expansion of field sizes in parishes such as Cressing Temple and Broxted has led to the recreation of fields the size and shape of those of demesne farming before the Black Death. The intervening centuries saw the morcelization of these fields and their subdivision by hedgerows under ever-encroaching farming in severalty. Tusser, a native of the county, rhymed in praise of such agrarian organization. Hunter also maps the areas of common field and heath enclosed in the nineteenth century. Such maps emphasize the acreage of the rough heath and wasteland in the county before Williamson and Wade Martins' 'light soils revolution'.

Hunter's maps suggest an explanation for the curious, contiguous, oblong parish/manors of Little Warley, Childerditch, West and East Horndon that lie parallel to each other across a long ridge in the south of the county. He hypothesizes that *circa* 900 AD these manors formed

links between the wooded commons of the ridge, and the summer grazing of the coastal marshes. Their corridor-like plan answers their original function as conduits from summer to winter pastures.

The variety of settlement patterns, parish boundaries and field systems means that these could be dealt with exhaustively only in a massive volume. Hunter's study is a splendid illustration of the possibilities and the potential worth of this type of research. It also shows how much can be gleaned from fieldwork and from the numerous estate maps and surveys within the county's extensive and well-ordered archives. It is to be hoped that he continues his researches, and that this work will inspire a larger, systematic study.

H. R. FRENCH
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N. W. ALCOCK, *Documenting the history of houses* (British Records Association, 2003). x + 110 pp. 8 tables; 31 figs. £9.50.

I know from experience that tracing the history of a house is not a straightforward task. The person who finds a good run of records is fortunate indeed. More often, there are maddening gaps in the archives. Yet tracing the history of the house that you live in and finding out as much as you can about previous occupiers has become an enthusiasm shared by all sorts of interested amateurs. This guide is undoubtedly their best starting point.

Dr Alcock is a leading authority on vernacular architecture who combines surveying skills with an expertise in the study of relevant documents. His *Old title deeds* is the standard guide and his study of the houses and people of Stoneleigh is exemplary. He does all this in his spare time as a professor of chemistry at Warwick University.

Here he starts by identifying the key questions and emphasizing that knowing the type of house being studied is an essential pre-requisite to deciding what sort of documents may be significant. The search then begins with maps: Ordnance Survey, tithe and enclosure, estate, 1910 Valuation, 1940–43 National Farm Survey etc, followed by documentary sources including land tax and rate assessments, directories, electoral registers, estate rentals and hearth tax returns. The next chapter provides a succinct account of title deeds and miscellaneous individual documents. The emphasis then turns to understanding the social context and lifestyles of the occupants who have been identified, using wills and inventories, parish registers etc, though, surprisingly, census returns are mentioned only in passing. A chapter on the history of housing that places individual buildings in a wider context is followed by the most useful

chapter in the book which deals with several case studies, showing how to do it. Footnotes and a guide to further reading and resources complete the text.

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R. W. HOYLE, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the politics of the 1530s* (OUP, 2001, pb edition, 2003). xvi + 487 pp. £17.99.

At the height of the Pilgrimage of Grace, Henry VIII's government lost control of 'virtually the whole of the North from the rivers Don in Yorkshire and Ribble in Lancashire to the borders of Scotland'. At the end of October 1536, 40,000 rebel troops faced a royal army of less than a quarter of that size. As such it was the largest of popular rebellion in Tudor England, but one that leaves many puzzles for historians. As the name 'Pilgrimage of Grace', coined by rebel leader Robert Aske suggests, the rebellion was in part motivated by religious grievances: opposition to the closure of smaller monasteries, and rumours that church goods were to be confiscated from the parishes. However, the exact reasons for the widespread popular support of this revolt remain difficult to discern. The rebellion consisted not of a single movement but a series of rebellions co-ordinated to varying degrees: the Lincolnshire revolt that collapsed just as Yorkshire rose, the rebellion of east and lowland Yorkshire under the leadership of Aske, and the Captain Poverty revolts of upland Yorkshire and the north-west. Hoyle provides an account of these dramatic events that is comprehensive, scholarly and readable. This book replaces the pioneering work of the Dodds, which has long needed updating, and complements the more detailed account of events in October 1536 provided by Bush's recent volume. It is certain to become the standard text on the rebellion, for students, researchers and other interested readers. Hoyle not only describes the three main movements, but tops and tails this with an account of events before and after the revolt. A chapter on '1536: The Year of Three Queens' demonstrates the unprecedented degree of political instability in the run-up to the revolt, as the populace saw two fundamental aspects of life, religion and marriage, undermined by the government. This helps to make sense of the role of rumour in the outbreak of revolt: not so much the product of ordinary people's ignorance, but of fear as to where these changes, about which they were well informed, might lead. A full account of the end of the rebellion sheds light on an important question in the organisation of the revolt: the role of the gentry. Did they lead the revolt willingly or were they threatened into leadership by the rebellious commons? Gentry leaders ensured that the revolt was ended by negotiation and

concessions, rather than battle. Subsequent actions do suggest significant splits within the rebel ranks. Many gentlemen hurried down to London to profess their innocence and loyalty to the crown. Aske also went to court, but more out of the misguided belief that he was now a man who could wield political influence. Meanwhile in northern England, the commons were restless and increasingly convinced they had been betrayed. Stilted attempts at renewed rebellion in early 1537 provided an excuse for violent retribution by the Crown: the execution of Aske and other ringleaders, as well as rank and file rebels in the north, many on trumped up charges.

Hoyle's approach throughout is to keep close to the sources and not to speculate or theorize any more than is necessary to provide a coherent account, although he does provide analysis, for instance of the social background of the rebels and their means of organization, as well as a narrative account. Occasionally the level of detail makes the train of disparate but simultaneous events difficult to follow. However the advantages of this approach greatly outweigh any disadvantages. Hoyle treads a delicate path through a rebellion that was made up of bluffs and double-bluffs, and thus full of contradictions. The rebels argued they were loyal to the king, but against his advisers, particularly Cromwell and his policies, while the king knew that the policies which they attacked were his own. Did they simply profess loyalty in order to avoid being accused of treason? Gentlemen claimed to have been coerced into leading the rebels, but much of the evidence comes from confessions written after the rebellion to try and save their heads. Besides, whether or not they were coerced, the involvement of gentlemen led to a better organized and more focused movement that stood some chance of achieving its aims – although it is not clear whether the demands sent to the king represented the original aims of the rebellion that caused the commons to rise. Perhaps it is fitting then, that Aske and others were executed on charges known to be largely untrue, despite the fact their involvement in the original rebellion was irrefutable. The Pilgrimage of Grace remains open to multiple interpretations, but Hoyle has done us a great service by providing a wide-ranging and accessible account based on meticulous study of the original documents from which our own judgements can be made.

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DAVID EDWARDS, *The Ormond lordship in County Kilkenny, 1515–1642. The rise and fall of Butler feudal power* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003). pp. xiv + 388 pp. 14 tables; 1 illus; 10 plates; 1 map. €45.00.

This marvellous book makes a considerable contribution to our understanding of early modern Irish history. The Butler earls of Ormond were the major landowning family in County Kilkenny and, of the Irish noble families of the early sixteenth-century, after the earls of Kildare they were the most English in their culture, political allegiance and alliances and County Kilkenny the most English of the Irish counties outside the Pale. From the middle of the sixteenth century anglicized legal structures were adopted in the county. One of the reasons for this affinity to England was the education of successive earls at the English court. The tenth earl (Thomas, the Black Earl, d. 1614) moved freely between Ireland and the Elizabethan court, and through his access to the Queen, was able to act as a counterweight to successive lord deputies. His house at Carrick-on-Suir, built in 1565, would not look out of place in an English county and we can assume that this was deliberately so. James Butler, twelfth earl, was brought up an English Protestant in the household of archbishop Abbott. Their familiarity with English conditions and desire to advance the anglicization of their estates led both into difficulties, the tenth earl with a revolt in 1569–70 which was largely sponsored by his siblings, and the twelfth earl in the collapse of his authority in 1641.

Despite its title, Edwards has written a book (or perhaps two parallel books) which are overwhelmingly political in their concerns and orientation. The subtitle is a better guide to his concerns than the main title. The first two chapters contain an overview of County Kilkenny and the Ormond inheritance and it is probably here that social and economic historians will find most to interest them. There is good material on the farming economy of the estates and on the establishment of new markets (and the town of Castlecomber). It is established that the Kilkenny lowlands were a productive grain-growing agrarian society. Trade through Kilkenny and Waterford also contributed to the Englishness of the estates: in 1597 the earl is found exporting local cloth to Plymouth.

Edwards shows how the lands of the earldom were strengthened by grants of monastic lands in mid-century (a process which can be paralleled in England). In other respects the tenth earl's cordial relationship with Elizabeth led the earldom to acquire a standing and authority which her successors were eager to trim, especially after the end of Gaelic Ireland as a political force in 1603. Whilst the tenth earl substantially altered the character of his power in the 1560s with the abolition of coign and

livery (an arbitrary tax to support private armies), it was the twelfth earl who really began the modernization of the estates in the 1630s, driven by the unmanageable levels of debt that he inherited.

The second part of book is an extended interpretative account of the family and their role in Ireland which ends with the rising of 1641. There are some very good sections here: a challenging reinterpretation of the revival of Butler power under the ninth earl (the Red Earl, d. 1539); the origins of the rising of 1569, born out of the alienation of the tenth earl's younger brothers from his modernizing mission; of the inheritance disputes which followed the death of the tenth earl in 1614 and the descent into rebellion in 1641, with its account of the establishment of the Wandesford plantation in Idough. Seventeenth-century historians whose interest in British history ends at Holyhead and Fishguard (or Chester and Monmouth) should read at least the account of the inheritance dispute, in which James I arbitrated in the most partial fashion between the heir male, Walter Butler, eleventh earl (d. 1633) and Elizabeth countess of Desmond (d. 1628), the daughter of the tenth earl who married one of Buckingham's creatures, Sir Richard Preston. The earl's refusal to accept the royal arbitration of 1618 resulted in his imprisonment in the Tower until he submitted in 1625. This whole episode was, as Edwards says, characterized by the exercise of arbitrary justice. Edwards might have noted parallels with other contemporary royal interventions in English peerage disputes such as that between Lady Anne Clifford and her uncle, the fourth earl of Cumberland. (See B. Coward, 'Disputed inheritances. Some difficulties of the nobility in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries', *Bull. Institute of Historical Research* 44 (1971), pp. 194–215 and R. T. Spence, *Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, Dorset and Montgomery, 1590–1676* (1997), esp. ch. 3.) Equally dubious was the creation of the Idough plantation, where the twelfth earl sold Sir Christopher Wandesford land which was not his and whose possessors, the O'Brennans and others, were then dispossessed by law backed by military force. Wandesford was Irish Master of the Rolls: it is shown that he paid Wentworth a bribe of £1,000 for his co-operation. As contemporaries realized, the whole episode was corrupt in the extreme and is interesting to speculate how the scandal might have developed had Ulster not risen in revolt in October 1641.

This is a very notable contribution early modern Irish history. The Butler earls of Ormond were unique not only in their standing in Ireland but in the survival of their archives. After a reading of Edwards' book, one is left wondering whether it would be possible to write an economic account of the estates. Edwards mentions

potentially useful materials which it is not his purpose to exploit but which others might wish to look at in the future. One thing is clear: over large parts of the estate, intermittent private and state violence against people and property must have been responsible for creating the very economic malaise which the English colonial interest claimed to cure through the establishment of property rights to land on the English model.

I am sure though that I am not the only reader whose ease of understanding would have been aided by a genealogy of the family and more maps.

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STEVEN HOBBS (ed.), *Wiltshire glebe terriers, 1588–1827* (Wiltshire Record Society, 56, 2003). xxiv + 554 pp. £20.

Glebe terriers contain valuable information on parochial and agricultural history, and their publication provides an admirable project for local record societies. This useful volume presents in condensed form material from terriers for 250 Wiltshire parishes between 1588 and 1827, with at least three terriers compiled at different times for most parishes. The terriers describe in detail the property belonging to the incumbent of each parish, including glebe land, the parsonage house, tithes, offerings, endowments and all other sources of income. They list parish charities, rents from cottages, tithes on mills, fees for marriage and burial, payments for occasional sermons or prayers, and often give details of churches and churchyards. The descriptions of parsonage houses illustrate the rising prosperity of incumbents and chronicle the change from small timber-framed, thatched houses to larger brick-built premises with tiled roofs. Above all, the terriers are a fruitful source for agricultural history. The glebe lands were often intermixed with those of parishioners, the parson sharing common rights with his neighbours, and the terriers illustrate the complexity of common field organization. For example, at Sutton Mandeville in 1609 in addition to 'all manner of tithes', the parson had 16½ acres of arable land in more than 20 plots in the three fields. At Yatton Keynell in 1671 the wealthy incumbent possessed extensive meadow, pasture and 'New Inclosures' and had 30 acres of arable in the common fields; by 1783 most of this arable land had been inclosed. The terriers contain much information on the management of the fields and meadows, grazing rights, the progress of inclosures, and the regulation and folding of common sheep flocks.

Naturally, the principal emphasis is on tithes, methods of payment and the collection of perishable produce such as milk, eggs and fruit. Often described in detail is the 'modus' or complex agreement made in each parish

for tithes on livestock and their offspring which could seldom be conveniently divided into tenths. Some of the local tithe customs were extremely complex, and incumbents evidently had a difficult choice between diminishing their income and that of their successors, or alienating members of their flock by insisting on their rights or invoking the powers of the ecclesiastical courts. Some incumbents accepted money payments, others refused or reverted to taking tithes in kind, as at Lydiard Tregoze in 1783 where the rector objected to a previous agreement. Other problems arose because of a change in land use from pasture to arable, since tithes on livestock were often payable to the vicar, whereas tithe on corn might be claimed by a lay rector. The possibilities for conflict were especially numerous in the low-lying pasture lands of north Wiltshire. Here livestock was overwintered or was fattened for short periods before being driven to distant markets. For these beasts incumbents were entitled to receive 'agistment' money, but it was almost impossible for them to keep track of livestock movements. The work of drovers is evident, for example, at Stratton St Margaret in 1705 where 'Welch beasts' are specifically mentioned.

As well as the tithes on corn and livestock there are numerous references to fruit, garden crops, herbs, poultry and eggs. Tithes were paid on conies at Aldbourne, on swans, pigeons and bees at Fisherton Delamere, on bees and honey at Tisbury, on geese, turkeys, and 'nurseries of fruit' at Trowbridge, on fish caught in the Avon at Britford and on eels at Great Wishford. At Ludgershall in 1786 tithes on roots, potatoes, and turnips are mentioned. In several terriers there are references to flax, hemp, nuts, apples, pears, plums and venison. In addition, there is much information on many aspects of parish life, ranging from the status and income of the clergy to church architecture and furnishings, and from parochial charities to customs, rogationtide processions and mills. Future researchers will find much of interest and value in this informative volume.

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ANGUS J. L. WINCHESTER (ed.), *Thomas Denton, A perambulation of Cumberland, 1687-1688, including descriptions of Westmorland, the Isle of Man and Ireland* (Surtees Society, 207, 2003). 606 pp. £50.

Thomas Denton's manuscript perambulation of Cumberland was prepared in the 1680s to a commission from Sir John Lowther of Lowther, and has been in the family muniments ever since. It was transferred to Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle with the rest of the archive in 1962, and has now been transcribed for publication. Angus Winchester's introduction sets the document in

its context, and provides a pen portrait of Denton himself. Lowther almost certainly sought contemporary information, but Denton provided him with much more, including historical material and his own assessment of places well beyond his original Cumberland remit. Denton had previously prepared for Lowther an account of the Honour of Penrith and Forest of Inglewood, and he had a local lawyer's grasp of the problems of tenant right in the area, so Lowther knew his man and his skills. Denton was also fully cognizant with issues the Cumbrian aristocrat would want investigating, including the boundaries of parishes, townships and estates, income from rents, the value of mills and mines, church livings and impropriated tithes, together with details of customary tenure in the area. Although the manuscript included extensive borrowings from other writers, which this edition highlights in order to avoid confusion, Denton added a good deal of his own material to provide a wealth of contemporary information about the area.

Denton was typical of a genre, a topographer/historian with a legal background, and a good working knowledge of more or less anything. He shows a keen eye for detail, to provide a useful account of his own society, although his agricultural comments tend to be rather more general than we might prefer. In Distington he noted 'the soyle here is very good for corn', (p. 109), while at Workington 'the demesne (being a good soyle for pasturage, as well as corn & hay) breeds the largest cattle & sheep in all the countrey' (p. 113). Not much corn was sold from Keswick 'by reason that the town is so environ'd with mountains & hills that little or no corne growes within many miles of this place'. Thus, Denton continued, warming to a theme he perhaps found more interesting, 'the tythe wool & lamb is doubly more valuable to the minister of the parish then the tythes of both corn & hay' (p. 137). There is much more in a similar vein, but the impression is that for Denton the farming was secondary to his preoccupation with the relationship of landlord and tenant, hence his long discussions of tenure. In any case he clearly wanted to describe the community and its local economy, including industry, trade, fairs, and other forms of commerce, although perhaps surprisingly he had little to say about country houses and there are few descriptions of churches. Fortunately Denton had a sense of humour, hence his recounting of the story of the new parish clerk imposed upon the vicar of Ribton. The man was clearly not up to the task: he could sing the appropriate tune only for Psalm 4. Forced to try to bluff, he tried to sing Psalm 25 to the same tune, 'but finding the tune was longer by two semibreifs, he was forced to conclude, I lift

my heart to thee, with Hay! Hay!', which provoked the congregation 'to a loud laughter' (p. 152). We can only hope that Sir John Lowther enjoyed such vignettes among the discussions of economic and tenuous matters which otherwise fill the pages of Denton's perambulation.

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ANNE ORDE (ed.), *Matthew and George Culley. Travel journals and letters, 1765–1798* (OUP for the British Academy, 2002). x + 272 pp. 4 maps. £35.

The surviving papers of the Culley family of County Durham and north Northumberland are deposited in the Northumberland Record Office. The publication of selections from these papers is a welcome addition to the British Academy's series on records of social and economic history. The journals describe tours made between 1765 and 1798 to many areas in the Midlands and to most of Scotland. The letters of 1784–5 cover a journey by George Culley to visit Robert Bakewell at Dishley, followed by a joint tour around central England. The subjects covered by the book include agriculture, social history, economics, topography, dialect, material culture and, remarkably, a fascinating section on the Scottish piping traditions and the piping schools associated with Highland music.

Much agricultural writing and journalism has been produced by people who struggled to have any success in the challenging world of practical farming. It is good to have published some of the Culley papers for they were very successful as both farmers and businessmen. The Culley brothers were originally based at the 200-acre Denton farm near Darlington in County Durham. Following visits by two of the brothers in 1762 and 1763 to Robert Bakewell in Leicestershire, the farm of Fenton in north Northumberland was rented and became the basis of a growing farming empire. By the 1790s their stock had grown to 550 cattle and 4440 sheep on some 4000 acres of improved land, much of which was in arable cultivation. In 1801 they were paying over £4000 in rent and tithes and returning a profit of £9000 per year. Their stock, much of which had been developed from Bakewell's own or utilizing his systems, was accepted as among the best in Britain. Many agricultural experts of the time consulted the Culleys, whose publications were lauded even by the ascerbic Yorkshireman William Marshall. The Culleys were close friends of Robert Bakewell and knew more than most agriculturalists of the work of this key figure in the improvement of cattle, sheep, horses and pigs.

How do the Culleys, whose financial successes were founded on practical wisdom, perform as commentators?

The publication of the journals and letters does not disappoint. This volume is a must for any agricultural historian interested in the period. It is packed full of detailed comments and quotable passages with insights into farmers and breeders visited. With the exception of one of the Scottish tour journals, which was smartened up for potential publication, the words are the Culleys' own and survive as private family records, containing the kind of comments which would not appear in any print publication of the period. The tours seem to have been undertaken for the purpose of information-gathering and self-improvement. George Culley remarks during his 1765 visit to Bakewell: 'I must be dull and stupid indeed if I do not improve'. Material on the Culleys' dealings with Robert Bakewell is scattered throughout the book, reflecting their involvement with him from 1762 right up to his death in 1795. It is apparent that both brothers had enormous respect for Bakewell and his stock, though there are some disagreements and misgivings about his work: 'rather to be admired than imitated' George remarks during a visit to Dishley in 1771. The publication of these papers gives greater access to new information on Bakewell and the volume is worth its £35 for this alone.

But there is much more here than descriptions of visits to Dishley. The Culleys recorded a great deal of information wherever they went, and this material deserves the attention of historians of diverse interests. Their comments on Wiltshire harness and horse bells would make a fine addition to any book on horse brasses, the 34 black horses counted in the Duke of Hamilton's park is a must for any history of Clydesdale horses, and students of the scandalous sons of George III might note the judgement of Culley's stockman on the Duke of Cumberland: 'goes badly on his legs; perhaps Lady Grosvenor thinks differently'.

The editor of the volume has done an excellent job with what must have been difficult writing to transcribe. There are errors: for example on page 247 'Mr Nasson' is likely to be Mr Mason, the famous breeder of Chilton. But these seem to be few. I found the maps a little sparse and would have liked the tours to have been marked in detail on maps to locate farms to which particular comments relate. The volume is well indexed and contains a sound introduction, a bibliography of published and unpublished sources, a page on the non-standard weights and measures used by the Culleys and a glossary of less familiar words from the manuscript.

This book is a real treasure. I hope the publishers have printed enough to go around all the historians who will want it on their shelves.

JOHN GALL
Beamish Museum

J. E. C. PETERS, *Discovering traditional farm buildings* (Shire Publications, 1981, Reprinted and updated 2003). 80 pp. 38 figs; 31 photographs. £4.99; JOHN MCCANN, *Clay and cob buildings* (Shire Publications, Third edition 2004). 48 pp. 76 colour and 18 black and white illus. £4.99.

It is good to see these two basic texts up-dated and republished. J. E. C. Peters' book *The development of farm buildings in west lowland Staffordshire up to 1880* was published in 1969 and is regarded as one of the founding texts in farm building studies. *Discovering traditional farm buildings* draws both on Peters' Staffordshire work and his continued studies in the field. As with all Shire Publications the text is clear and straightforward and the book well-illustrated with both black and white photographs and informative architectural drawings. The main differences between this edition and the earlier one is in the revised 'Places to visit' and bibliography. Its format, length and price make it an ideal book to recommend to extra-mural students and those embarking on fieldwork for the first time.

John McCann's book was first published in 1983 and has now been re-issued with an updated bibliography and colour photographs which makes for an attractive format. The subject of clay and cob buildings is considered historically and the various techniques and regional differences are also clearly described. The main reasons for the use of clay were its cheapness as a raw material in areas where stone was not available, and the lack of bricklaying or masonry skills needed by the builder. This meant it was much favoured for cottages and farm buildings from the late-eighteenth century, especially outside closed or estate villages, where such cottage building as landowners permitted was most likely, at least in the clay area, to use bricks produced in estate brick kilns. In open villages, speculators looking for the cheapest way to build often used one of a number of building techniques based on clay, like clay lump (building blocks made of sun-dried clay with straw mixed in). But there were exceptions, as McCann points out. The Duke of Bedford and his agent were enthusiastic builders in *pisé* (dry clay heavily rammed down within shuttering so that it consolidated to form, in effect, artificial rock), while Copinger Hill in Suffolk wrote on the use of cob (mud walls, built up gradually and allowed to dry at each stage before the next layer was added). There is certainly room for further research in this field.

This book is mainly concerned with surviving examples of these techniques and their continuing use. Although the fact that the use of unfired earth was known in the ancient world is acknowledged, there is only a passing reference to its use in medieval Britain. It

is likely that as wood became scarcer, the use of clay with less and less in the way of timber support increased considerably. However these buildings would have been the humblest cottages and evidence for them is usually confined to excavations and it was not until the eighteenth century that any reference to them is to be found in print. A fascinating mid-eighteenth-century drawing from Essex Record Office showing a 'Cottage built for the Smallest Quantity of money as possible ... Done with Clay wall' (p. 15) is included and may be the earliest documentary evidence of the technique.

As a factual guide and basis for further work this is a useful book well up to the standards we have come to expect from Shire Publications.

SUSANNA WADE MARTINS
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E. A. WRIGLEY, *Poverty, progress and population* (CUP, 2004). xiv + 463 pp. 49 tables; 17 figs. £55 (hb); £19.99 (pb).

This important volume is made up of fifteen essays, thirteen published between 1986 and 2003, and two more previously unpublished. The unpublished essays are of special interest in that they serve as markers to Sir Tony Wrigley's distinguished career as the premier economic and demographic historian of pre-industrial England. 'Demographic retrospective' (Chapter 15) defends the methodology and findings of a famous research project that took three decades, while 'The occupational structure of the English labour force in the mid-nineteenth century' (Chapter 5) is a prologue to a new project on occupational structure in earlier decades and centuries. That new project, also hinted at in the introduction (p. 6), is the latest phase in a distinguished career stretching back over four decades.

Part I is about 'the wellsprings of growth'. Wrigley highlights how the gradual nature of economic growth before 1850 – just enough to sustain population growth and keep living standards from falling – implies that England was already 'different' in 1700. Its economy must already have been much more productive than those of its continental neighbours. Angus Maddison (in *The World Economy: a millennial perspective*, 2001, p. 90) corroborates: English GDP per head was half again as high as France's in 1700, and nearly double that of Spain and Portugal – though only two-thirds that of the Netherlands. The key to England's success lay in institutions that allowed it to marshal land and labour efficiently, and in its coal. By the early nineteenth century England's occupational structure was not that of an economy that had undergone an 'industrial revolution': but neither was it that of a 'pre-industrial economy'. This was reflected in the major roles of

traditional manufacturing occupations (carpenters, tailors, butchers) and the size of the tertiary or service sector.

Wrigley's long-standing interest in Malthusian economic demography culminated in an elegant seven-volume edition of *Works of Thomas Robert Malthus* (which he co-edited with David Souden) in 1986. Here that interest is reflected in Chapters 6 to 8. Two of these chapters are concerned with the issue of poverty and the prospects of the working class, while the third addresses the connection between the 'high cost of provisions' and famine. In his second publication, Malthus did not deny the connection but noted that in 1799 western Sweden suffered much more than England, although the price of its staple food (rye) rose much less than that of corn in England. The observation feeds into the emphasis on entitlements stressed by another close reader of Malthus, Amartya Sen.

One of Wrigley's earliest papers was his 1967 classic on London's role in the English economy c. 1650–1750 (in *Past & Present*, no. 37). Part II of the present collection is devoted to the role of towns and cities. Themes covered here include Adam Smith on the positive feedback effects resulting from trade between country and town; the connection between pre-industrial urbanization and occupational distribution; and the impact of demand on the regional and occupational patterning of the population.

Historical demography is addressed in Part III (Chapters 12 to 15). This section promises to be Wrigley's last word on a project that was his core research interest for three decades. Wrigley engages in particular with the critiques of Stephen Ruggles and Peter Razzell; he is more impressed by the former's worries that reconstituted families are subject to selection bias than by the latter's feisty insistence that the underreporting of deaths in parish registers led the Cambridge Group to underestimate the role of mortality in English population change. Wrigley takes both critiques seriously, however, and his formidable defence of the Cambridge Group's project surely succeeds in its aim of shifting the balance away from 'those who remain in doubt'. The rebuttals apply simulations, counterfactual calculations, clever comparisons with Scandinavian data, and *reductiones ad absurdum*.

It is a sobering fact that Sir Tony Wrigley managed to produce these papers over a period that also saw the publication of the multi-authored *English population history from family reconstitution 1580–1837* (1997) and his tenure as president of the British Academy. *Labor continuat*.

CORMAC Ó GRÁDA
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TIMOTHY SHAKESHEFF, *Rural conflict, crime and protest. Herefordshire, 1800–1860* (Boydell Press, 2003). viii + 230 pp. 1 table; 22 figs; 2 maps. £55.

This volume contributes to a now firmly established debate on the nature of rural conflict in the nineteenth-century English countryside, and the familiar principal elements of what historians have categorized as social protest. Most forms remained firmly outside the law rendering the perpetrators open to prosecution for crimes including capital ones, prior to the latter's incremental removal from the 1820s. In historiographical terms, the book is to be welcomed on two main counts. First, in the choice of Herefordshire, Shakesheff has focused on a western borderland county, in stark contrast to the existing concentrations on East Anglia and southern England, though he perhaps exaggerates that geographical feature. One important factor here is the failure of the Swing quasi-insurrection to penetrate Herefordshire, and with it the county escaped the most fearsome expression of overt rural protest – much of it demonstrably imitative – as it swept westwards from Kent, before swirling round into the South Midlands and into East Anglia. Thus Herefordshire's historian is denied this expression of the serious socio-economic – and in places political – tensions exposed by Swing mobilizations elsewhere. There were, however, three incendiary attacks in the county between 1829 and January 1831. This difference symbolizes the second contrast because almost all of Shakesheff's evidence involves covert action; indeed, one can detect this feature in the famine years of 1799–1801. Then Herefordshire escaped the intense food-rioting – though not what the local press identified as 'disposition to riot' and which the principal study of these years categorizes as actual disturbances – which recurrently engulfed much of England, though two arson cases were reported from the county.

With a small number of exceptional and minor mobilizations, including one against encroachers where locals 'acting in the character of commoners' demolished fences, this then is a study of technically-criminal acts committed covertly, ranging from endemic poaching, the petty theft of wood and crops (corn, fruit and root vegetables) growing in the fields and orchards, to the more serious acts of sheep-stealing, animal-maiming and incendiarism. And here we enter into problematic territory which hinges on how perpetrators perceived and legitimated their actions, and ultimately on their motives, especially those of animal maimers and arsonists. In the case of Herefordshire, this operation is rendered much more difficult by the available evidence. It appears that those responsible for the records of the Assize abandoned their eighteenth-century practice of

preserving the depositions, namely the statements of witnesses, including those of victims and even some perpetrators; the same documentary loss was presided over by county Clerks of the Peace with respect to cases heard by Quarter Sessions. Shakesheff is primarily dependent on the two county newspapers, both published in the city of Hereford. Although the quality and volume of local newspaper reportage expanded exponentially across this period, detailed coverage of the trials of most offenders – ranging from poachers to sheep-stealers – is rare, largely restricted to major offenders, notably arsonists and not even all of them. In the main, offences which went undetected, received little coverage with the partial exceptions of the most serious.

To degrees, Shakesheff makes good use of the sources consulted, including those categories of Quarter Sessions records which have survived. This enables him to compile various statistical tables respecting prosecuted crime and conviction rates, and relate these to various quantitative data respecting living standards. As might be expected, these reveal some relationships between prosecuted crime and the cost of living, though other contemporary statistical compilations – notably poor-law expenditure – are unexpectedly absent. He is also able to detect some increase in prosecuted crime deriving from policing initiatives, though these were exclusively local as the county eschewed adoption of the permissive rural policing acts of 1839–40, and the issue of detection is addressed in one of the more valuable chapters. But even here, there are problems; did for example the increases in prosecutions for sheep-stealing also reflect its loss of capital status in 1832? Another significant chapter addresses ‘criminal women’ responsible for much – but certainly not all – thefts of wood, and the taking of grain and other produce; these are discussed in the context of the virtual extinction of remaining common rights through enclosure over this period.

There is much to be applauded in this work; our empirical knowledge is fortified, and interpretative debates enriched. Having said that, there are some structural shortcomings and glaring omissions. One wonders why this study commences in 1800, when the entire country was threatened by famine in wartime, rather than say the better benchmark of 1790 before the spiralling inflation and intensifying poverty following 1793. More importantly, the socio-economic context is not systematically addressed. True, we learn that the county’s landlords and farmers responded to rising produce prices with a further round of enclosure and increase in arable acreages, which possibly aggravated the impact of the enduring post-war depression as it did elsewhere. Quite critically, the issue of poor relief is not coherently addressed. Although there are numerous

passing references to the poor law and the odd recognition of its importance, including the overall ‘mesh of the welfare net was getting wider’, the fundamental impact of the New Poor Law of 1834 is not analyzed despite its status as the most hated statute enacted in the entire century. If Shakesheff acknowledges that the cost to the parish of workhouse accommodation for families left without the main breadwinner on father’s imprisonment or transportation for theft, probably deterred many victims from prosecution, he fails to see the broader relevance of the loss of customary allowances-in-aid-of-wages even when correctly ascertaining that most sheep-stealers sought meat for the pot. He persists in arguing that was poachers’ identical primary motive too, and this also serves as an example of his penchant – not confined to this topic – for flying in the face of his own evidence. The majority of poachers ‘poached for their own consumption’ (cf. pp. 20, 149–50.) In fact, a brace of partridges or pheasants, added very little to the pot. The need to hang them also dictated an additional risk of detection; disposing of them through the higliers who traversed the countryside dealing in legitimate and poached items was lucrative. For the poor, the proceeds secured a tranche of goods ranging from alcohol, replacement footwear and clothing, and the wherewithal to meet rents once their payment by overseers of the poor – said to be universal in the county – was stopped by the loathed Poor Law Commission. After the trade in game was legalized by a new licensing system in 1831, one Herefordshire debater in the local press in February 1834 observed that the Act’s supporters had claimed that ‘game would become so cheap no poacher would find it worth his while to *pursue his trade*, but how different has been the result’ (p. 175, my emphasis), an observation underpinned by Shakesheff’s own statistics of convictions under the game and trespass laws.

Although there are – curiously – no acknowledgements, the word thesis appears in a couple of places, suggesting that the book derives from a doctorate. In this context, quite uniquely for any major – and unusual even for very localized studies – the footnotes reveal no references to Public Record Office holdings. First, if the Assize records for Herefordshire – unlike other Oxford Circuit documentation – do not contain depositions for most of this period, extant papers, including indictments, have some value. Depositions from the county for the years 1800–1 do exist; hence my earlier remark about actual riot, when the county press – not uniquely – spoke of only a disposition towards collective action. Secondly, incendiarism and animal-maiming, were often perceived as terrorist attacks by landlords and farmers, which warranted reportage to the Home Secretary; moreover, given the growing volume of crime over this

period, rising levels alone repeatedly galvanized provincial communications to Whitehall (in addition to state sponsored investigations into policing – or the lack of it), and these contain valuable evidence. Thirdly, the records of the Poor Law Commission, especially in the early years following 1834, contain correspondence often embracing a wide variety of issues, including protest and crime, with almost every rural New Poor Law Union. While not all historians of these features of rural communities have used the latter source, one might argue that it should join the other two as obligatory for consultation, where available for the 1830–50 period.

ROGER WELLS

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MARGARET E. SHEPHERD, *From Hellgill to Bridge End. Aspects of economic and social change in the upper Eden valley, 1840–95* (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2003). xx + 380 pp. 47 tables; 41 illus. £35.

Margaret Shepherd's book provides a useful addition to the growing corpus of studies on rural areas in the nineteenth century. The monograph is based on an upland area in northern England and, as such, is to be welcomed given the relative paucity of research in this particular field. The book strongly merits its place as the second volume in the University of Hertfordshire's Regional and Local History series. It places its local in-depth study of change in the upper Eden valley firmly in a regional setting and, where necessary, also provides detailed analysis of events at the regional level of Cumbria.

Dr Shepherd draws on a wealth of primary source evidence for her study, using as a starting point the census enumerators books for 1841 to 1891. It would have been useful if the period had been extended to 1901 to take advantage of the latest census information and to provide a wider perspective on events throughout the whole of the Victorian period. However, there is a reason for the termination date. The investigation of the topic started as research towards a PhD which was awarded in 1992. Apart from not utilizing the 1901 census, generally the work has been satisfactorily updated since 1992. This is particularly the case in respect of secondary source material. However, there are some surprising, though albeit minor omissions of references to scholarly debate. These include, for example Nicola Verdon's recent work on the role of women in agriculture.

As to be expected from the title, the book covers a number of topics. It ranges competently and confidently through an overview of the economy of north Westmorland to the detail of agricultural change. In addition to the economic topics which consume three of the five

core chapters, the study also spends some time examining social change and migration. In the chapter on the economy, the towns of the area have been usefully grouped according to economic type. This results in a clearer insight into the significance of change in the upper Eden valley. In the detailed agricultural section all the expected topics are found, from landownership and occupancy to land use and the labourer.

The book provides a mass of detail which very occasionally results in a density of prose that affects the clarity of the points under discussion. Despite the fact that the bibliography demonstrates extensive reading around the subject, in a few places, and particularly in the first part of the book, the study tends to be rather myopic. More reference to academic debate on the particular topic and situating the upper Eden experience within that debate would have been helpful. For example, the chapter conclusions could have included some assessment of the typicality or otherwise of the findings. This approach is taken to good effect later in the book in the very clear sections on the employment of women and children. In her analysis of women's occupations, Dr Shepherd draws findings from other areas, acknowledges the problems of calculating the extent and type of female work and makes useful conclusions as she disaggregates her own research into an interesting analysis of the work patterns of single, widowed, and married women. Similarly, where she forays into research on Cumbria for the transport and communication chapter, the resultant information is fascinating as she details the linkages in the region and then beyond.

The section on social and cultural activities ranges widely and covers many aspects of society and civic life. Despite Dr Shepherd's caveat of not enough space to cover all aspects, her handling of education, religion, friendly societies, freemasonry and the temperance movement is detailed and informative. The final chapter on migration does an admirable job of examining the distance travelled, the different types of destinations and the levels of in- and outflow, though here it would have been particularly interesting to have seen some analysis based on the 1901 census.

In her conclusion, Dr Shepherd notes that, as has been discovered in similar studies, immense differences of experience can be identified between neighbouring parishes and it is unhelpful to use a single parish as a paradigm for a region. She also concludes that, while the upper Eden valley effectively deindustrialized during the period under study, it did not return totally to the pre-industrial experience. Finally, she acknowledges that the arrival of the railway had a significant impact on the changes taking place in the area.

The study is well supported by maps, tables,

photographs and indexes and is accompanied by detailed footnotes. The breadth and depth of research, albeit for a rather limited period, means that the book will be of great interest to both those interested in Cumbria as well as the specific area of the upper Eden valley. Further, despite the few minor reservations noted above, the book is of immense value to the researcher of the Victorian period who wishes to gain an insight into the extent of change in a remote upland rural area during a period of industrial and social upheaval.

CHRISTINE HALLAS

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T. A. BURDEKIN (ed.), *A Victorian farmer's diary. William Hodkin's diary 1864–66. Life in and around Beeley on the Chatsworth estate* (Derbyshire County Council, 2003). 144 pp. Illus. £8 incl. p & p from Library Administration, Cultural and Community Services Department, County Hall, Matlock, DE4 3AG.

The small estate village of Beeley lies a mile or two to the south of Chatsworth. Older members of the Society may remember a visit there during the Matlock conference in 1973. William Hodkin was in his mid-30s when he kept this diary, which has been edited by his great-grandson and illustrated with contemporary photographs and extracts from local newspapers. When he died in 1899 at Edensor, the main village on the Chatsworth estate, he was described in his obituary as 'a farmer and miller in an extensive way of business', who was active in public affairs as a parish councillor, poor law guardian and churchwarden.

The main value of the diary is in detailing the day-to-day work on the farm, as the seasons advanced. The varied tasks were performed by William himself, his father-in-law and his labourer, John. We read about rolling and harrowing in the fallow, the spreading of lime, harrowing the potato ground, ploughing the turnip fallow, cutting thistles, mowing bracken, leading oats all day in the waggon, spreading manure, harvesting oats, gathering apples, shearing sheep, ringing pigs, cleaning out the pigeon cote and the hen roost, repairing walls, catching rabbits, killing pigs, and an endless succession of other jobs. We also see how a farmer such as Hodkin was prepared to earn extra money from small local industries. He worked a coal pit on Beeley Moor and carted slag from an old lead mine to the nearest railway station at Rowsley.

Bakewell market was his main outlet for the sale of livestock, but he was prepared to cross the moors with his horse and cart to Chesterfield to sell hay seeds and to buy clover seeds, trefoil and rye grass. He sometimes sent sacks of flour as far as Newark. He often mentioned other Peak District villages, whose feasts he attended,

particularly if he had relations there, and like all countryfolk he was prepared to walk long distances. He surprises us in August 1864 by recording a railway journey to Manchester and Liverpool and a sea crossing to the Isle of Man and by a second visit with his wife to Liverpool, where he saw 'a very great market, I should think many thousands of sheep and cattle'. Another link with the outside world is revealed by his sending a cheque to the Paraffin Light Company in Birmingham.

He rarely caught sight of the Duke of Devonshire, but in June 1865 he was present at the great volunteer and yeomanry review in Chatsworth Park. Instead, he dealt with the agent, Mr Cottingham, and gave as good as he got in a dispute about land that he had ploughed adjoining Beeley Plantation (thus interfering with the game) and about his complaint that his farm was overrun with rabbits. After threatening to turn him out, the agent eventually relented. Life in an estate village was perhaps not so feudal after all.

DAVID HEY

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MARK FREEMAN, *Social investigation and rural England 1870–1914* (Royal Historical Society / Boydell, 2003). xi + 217 pp. 2 tables. £40.

Social surveys of Victorian and Edwardian urban England are well-known to historians. But, as Mark Freeman's illuminating monograph points out, investigations into rural life from the same period are also numerous. This book sets out to examine the changing methodology used by these rural social investigators and the divisions between them. Although the book begins with a useful overview of early surveyors of the countryside, its main focus is the period after 1870 when rural issues – trades unionism, depopulation and the land question – became national ones. Freeman identifies four main groups of investigations: the official government inquiry carried out by appointed commissioners; newspaper investigations undertaken by special correspondent journalists; systematic sociological surveys which complemented the great urban inquiries; and finally, the cultural investigation based on close personal contact with the rural poor. Much of the material under scrutiny is familiar to rural historians, from the royal commissions and Board of Trade reports, to the country writing of Augustus Jessopp, Richard Jefferies, Henry Rider Haggard and George Sturt. Others, perhaps, are not so well-known: Booth and Rowntree's own studies into rural life are assessed alongside similar contemporary surveys by Harold Mann and Maud Davies. Such studies, the author contends, 'helped to shape the ways in which rural society was understood by contemporaries and has since been interpreted by

historians' (p. 12). What this book shows, then, is that the historian cannot afford to ignore the methodological impetus behind this material as it moulded the attitudes, findings and conclusions of the investigations. Every historian that has an interest in or actively uses these investigations as primary source material should read this book.

Several key points emerge from Freeman's study of the methodology of rural investigation. The different agendas that shaped reports on the countryside between 1870 and 1914 produced a wide range of perspectives on rural wages, workers and conditions. 'Roving reporters' of the 1870s used a wide range of informants but most only had fleeting contact with poor rural inhabitants. 'Resident investigators' of the 1880s like Jessopp and Jefferies offered more reflective descriptions of the countryside than the 1890s royal commissions or Rider Haggard's *Rural England* which relied on the evidence of employers and local elites. Poverty surveys of the early twentieth century used the questionnaire method to tabulate the level of rural distress, but they also stressed their intimate knowledge of the local inhabitants under investigation. George Sturt's and Stephen Reynolds' cultural studies went much further in breaking down class barriers and both were informed by a strong belief in investigating the poor 'on their own terms rather than according to an agenda imposed by external authorities' (p. 141). These different methodological approaches meant that all investigations were criticized and contested. So although many of these surveys contributed to a better awareness of rural conditions, few legislative changes were forthcoming. In addition, investigators shared certain characteristics (the majority being male, middle class, urban dwellers), and all studies were infused with moral and cultural assumptions about rural labour and life. Thus the voice of the rural labourer is marginalized in many of these investigations. The reports of Jessopp and Jefferies often resort to the 'Hodge' stereotype and assume rural life was demoralized and decaying. Sturt and Reynolds, on the other hand, elevated the life of rural workers but, as Freeman puts it, 'the lionization of the labourer did not necessarily reflect an achievement of empathy any more than had the reduction to an unflattering stereotype' (p. 152). The 'objectivity' of the scientific poverty surveys can also be questioned because the agenda 'remained determined by elite perceptions of the rural population and its role' (p. 130) and although the Liberal Party's Land Enquiry Committee (whose rural volume was published in 1913) set out to fully incorporate the views of the agricultural labourer, the perspectives of its members remained 'fundamentally external' to the rural poor (p. 181).

The difficulties in investigating rural life were not

overcome in the period 1870–1914. Payments in kind and the wide range of non-wage resources clearly contributed to rural subsistence but translating these into cash estimates was fraught with complications. Regional distinctions in hiring, wages and living conditions persisted, making it hard for any local study to claim to be representative of England as a whole (let alone Britain). Thus there are also difficulties for the author in conveying the diversity of opinion represented by these investigations. Understandably the voluminous royal commissions are glossed over somewhat, whereas the poverty studies of Mann and Davies, for example, are discussed in some detail. But this criticism is perhaps unfair as overall the book is successful in its main aim – to detail the methodological diversity of rural social investigation. It deserves a wide readership.

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DOROTHY CALCUTT, *Born in a stable* (Charlbury: Wychwood Press, 2001). 79 pp. £7.50; GEORGE PICKARD, *87 and what can I remember* (Illustrated by Julia Matcham) (Disley: Millrace Books, 2000). 74 pp. £9.90.

Born in a stable by Dorothy Calcutt is a prequel to her 1999 book *The salt of the earth*, which detailed the poverty-stricken life of an Oxfordshire family at the turn of the twentieth century. Here Calcutt looks back at the family's preceding history to tell us the 'true story' of John Ashton, an illegitimate son of a northern landowner and Emma, a teenage barmaid working at the coaching inn at Long Hanborough. This is an enjoyable yarn of disparate lives, involving exploitation, illegitimacy, secrecy, adversity and salvation. Yet the utility of this account, especially for an academic audience, is questionable. John's story is factual and we learn much about the lives of the rural labouring poor: the ravages of poverty and illness, the unrelenting work of women, the self-help ethos engendered by involvement in the village chapel. However, this appealing material is juxtaposed against the tale of his father, Leo, which, we are told at the beginning, is 'mostly fiction'. The author paints Leo as a formidable patriarch, disappointed in the succession of daughters produced by his long-suffering wife Mary. The aim of his liaison with the young barmaid was solely to satisfy his desire for a male heir (Leo and Emma also produce a daughter, Georgina, but she is never recognized by her father). Leo is a generous benefactor but John cannot inherit his father's fortune. The success of this mechanism is debatable: whilst it allows the author to avoid exposing potentially sensitive details about a landed family, ultimately it weakens the power of the account.

George Pickard's reminiscences of his Bedfordshire childhood in the 1870s and 1880s offer a more lively and authentic portrayal of rural life in the late nineteenth century. His original idiosyncratic spelling and punctuation have been left untouched but the author comes across as literate, knowledgeable and humorous. This small volume is packed with information on rural customs and beliefs, work patterns, the household economy and survival strategies. Many aspects of his account suggest village life was traditional, unaltered from previous times. Belief in superstition is still prominent and villagers exact their own style of rough music against transgressors ('If there was any undue virtue going and villagers got annoyed about it, they would collect in the street with old buckets or anything to bang and march too and fro', pp. 30–1). Yet the changes taking place in the countryside really come to the fore in Pickard's writing: the impact of Methodism, the influence of Arch's union, the fight to secure the labourers' newly-won vote ('the primrose league dames were busy in the village', p. 27) and the role of transport – bicycles ('What fun we had when wheels came to the poor', p. 60) and railways (which provided work). George himself left farm work 'and went into factory life' (p. 72). This account will appeal to the general reader with an interest in local and rural history, and like all good reminiscences, also includes a good deal of material of use to historians of the late nineteenth-century countryside.

NICOLA VERDON
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JOHN VELTOM, *Sindles Farm. A story of a farm and its farmers* (Westbourne Local History Group, 2004). 96 pp. Illus. £5.

Of London origins, John Veltom came into the ownership of the 341-acre Sindles Farm at the foot of the South Downs in Sussex after a lengthy spell as a farm pupil, manager and tenant farmer. This little book records details not only of the farm itself from Domesday times but Veltom's personal experience of agricultural change over the past half century. The text is heavy with enjoyable anecdote in which we learn of the devilish complexities of the reaper-binder, the flair and natural eye required to build a decent stack of sheaves, the (to me at least) horrors of ratting at threshing time, the cold and discomfort of tractor driving in pre-cab days and very much more besides. Like most of us (apart from the loony green primitive tendency) Veltom is glad to see the back of the physically-demanding labour exacted by the land from its servants forty-odd years ago, and he applauds the extraordinary developments in technology and mechanization which have eased the farmers' lot. His story is very much the story of farming; of taking the

main chance, spotting an innovation, raising the necessary capital and putting it into practice. But it is also the story of love of and respect for the land. Again, like the vast majority of farmers in this country, Veltom did not have to be pressurized into environmental awareness by suburban *Guardian* readers; it came naturally to him. Good husbandry and sound rotational practices allied to sensible management of farm waterways and woodlands invariably promote wildlife interests – even to excess in some cases, as witness the pestilential expansion of badger and deer populations in recent years. Again, in common with many farmers, Veltom is apprehensive about the future as the farmer's primary business, that of producing abundant food of decent quality at reasonable prices, slips inexorably down the ladder of official priorities. The possibilities of diversification into bio-fuel production, of effecting environmental initiatives and converting buildings to light industrial use are all very well but where does this leave the 'farmer'? Since it appears that 'farmers' as such are trudging steadily along the path to extinction, a new dictionary definition is now probably needed.

John Veltom's little book, with its unsentimental descriptions of past and present practices and its discussion of the farmers and fields of his own delectable corner of Sussex is a welcome addition to the expanding assemblage of reminiscences and histories compiled by those who both know and feel the land. Here a working farmer has taken the trouble to spell out his own experiences, errors and heartbreaks. All power to Veltom and others who emulate him!

R. J. MOORE-COLYER
University of Wales, Aberystwyth

MICHAEL SHRUBB, *Birds, scythes and combines. A history of birds and agricultural change* (CUP, 2003). xi + 371 pp. 32 tables; 79 figs. £35.

The author of this book is both farmer and ornithologist, who has lived and worked through the modern agricultural revolution, and has first-hand experience of its environmental impacts. He is also an agricultural historian, so is able to set these recent changes into a longer temporal context. In this book, he traces the major agricultural changes that have occurred in Britain over the past 250 years (beginning fairly arbitrarily at 1750), and assesses their impacts on bird populations. Whether you are interested mainly in agriculture or mainly in birds, you are likely to find much of interest in this book.

In Britain, we are fortunate that the recent history of agriculture has been well documented in books and journals, as well as in the 'June Census Statistics' on the extent of crops and numbers of stock, which have been

gathered annually since 1866 by the Agriculture Departments. These publications form the main sources of information on the agricultural aspects, some of which are nicely illustrated by old drawings and photographs belonging to the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading. Likewise, the history of our bird populations has been relatively well documented, but with progressively increasing accuracy and precision into recent decades. During the last forty years, the abundance levels and distributions of most of the species discussed have been monitored by the British Trust for Ornithology, providing good quantitative data, and many species have been individually studied by numerous biologists working in various parts of Britain. So both the agricultural and ornithological aspects of the book are based for the most part on solid information, and the book is well referenced. The author takes a broad view of 'farmland birds', including most of the country's breeding landbird species. This is not unreasonable, considering that almost all the open parts of the British landscape, from sea coast to mountainsides, are used for some type of crop or meat production, and are therefore at the mercy of agricultural policy.

After introductory chapters dealing with the farming background and the birds respectively, subsequent chapters deal with specific aspects of agricultural change, including the development of arable farming systems, enclosure, hedges, drainage, weeds and pesticides, grassland and stock, labour, machines and buildings. From his review of the evidence, the author concludes that, throughout the period considered, continual changes have occurred in the distributions and abundance levels of birds, in association with every major change in farming system. However, it is the revolutionary developments over the past half century, and especially over the past thirty years, that have caused the most widespread and devastating declines in bird populations. (One could of course extend this conclusion to other animals and to native plants.) The impacts of modern farming have created in western Europe what many regard as the major conservation problem of our age. The main drivers of the wildlife impacts are the large-scale use of pesticides and inorganic fertilizers, widespread land drainage and the change to more intensive grassland management, excessive stocking densities and overgrazing of the uplands, the switch in the lowlands from spring to autumn cultivations, and the progressive change over much of the country from mixed farming to arable monocultures. As far as the birds are concerned, these changes mean much less habitat and much less food, and in some species increased vulnerability of eggs and chicks to machinery, trampling by farm stock and perhaps also predators.

No wonder almost all bird species have declined on farmland in the past thirty years, some by more than eighty per cent. Much of this revolution has of course been brought about by state subsidy and intervention. Increasingly, then, the decisions taken by farmers have come to reflect not the most sensible land management options, but whatever will reap the biggest subsidy. In theory, some lessening in the environmental consequences of modern farming could come from widespread adoption of the recently introduced agri-environment schemes, providing that they are sufficiently well financed; but in the view of the author 'past experience suggests that not too much environmental optimism should be placed on that'. Only time will tell.

In conclusion, this book provides the most comprehensive review of the relationship between British farming and birds yet written, with much discussion of the factors that have driven the various changes over the years. I enjoyed the book, partly because of the mass of interesting historical and contemporary detail that it contains, but also because it is eminently readable.

IAN NEWTON

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DAVID W. HOWELL, *Taking stock. The centenary history of the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society* (University of Wales Press, 2003). xiii + 287 pp. 93 illus. £19.99.

Like many small countries, Wales is inordinately proud of its national institutions of which the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society is one of the foremost. Founded in 1904, the Society was to become closely involved with many developments in twentieth-century rural Wales and, by way of its annual shows, the shop-window for Welsh farming. Indeed, a disproportionate amount of David Howell's book comprises rather lengthy accounts of the shows themselves; of attendance figures, exhibitors, financial problems, schemes for raising money and all manner of other matters from the 'growing abuse of alcohol' to the complex logistics of car parking. As we have come to expect from Professor Howell, his reading of the sources appears painstaking and methodical, but since he offers no footnotes and only the briefest of bibliographies the reader is unable further to pursue the unfolding story. Even so, whether writing of the petty feuds and jealousies marking the early doings of the Society, the tardiness of agriculturalists to subscribe to its coffers, or the extraordinary efforts of the organization to acquire and develop a permanent site for the show in the 1960s and 1970s, he seems to have left few reports unstudied and few minute books unread. Merely thinking of Howell's exhaustive labours as I worked my way through the book left me a

little weary! With enthusiasm akin to that of the small band of individuals who ensured the survival of the Society in the difficult inter-war years, he happily engages with details of stock judging, wrestles with the arcane and embarrassing names which people have the habit of giving to perfectly innocent bulls and rams and discusses the numerous 'entertainments' seemingly craved by the non-farming public who flock to today's shows and gaze rapturously at the voluptuous charms of 'Miss Royal Welsh'.

But the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society was much more than the sum of its shows. As Howell points out, the past century has witnessed the involvement of the organization with a whole spectrum of activities aimed at improving the lot of the Welsh farmer and livestock breeder. The establishment of tubercule-free dairy herds, the vital issue of rabbit clearance, sire licensing and breed society registration, the founding of an influential journal; these and other matters, including a variety of educational initiatives, all came under the aegis of the Society. Confronted with the perennial Welsh language lobbyists who argued that the Society's limited local influence reflected insufficient use of Welsh in its dealings, the Society moved increasingly in the direction of a bilingual approach, while concurrently striving to ensure that its shows reflected a balance between technical demonstration/education for farmers and entertainment for the rest. If the Royal Welsh show has developed to become a major event in the social calendar, attracting many thousands of visitors from home and abroad, the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society, for all its involvement in farming affairs, appears to have singularly failed as a lobbying organization. Attempts to promote an animal health research station in Wales, to secure a Welsh substation of the National Institute of Agricultural Engineering, to revive the excellent *Welsh Journal of Agriculture*, all seem to have withered on the vine, along with a recent approach to the Millennium Commission to establish the Llanellwedd show site as a centre of excellence for rural Wales. Even if one sets this litany against the successful promotion of the national Welsh Agricultural College in the 1970s, the track record is less than impressive. Howell points out these bold facts but offers little in the way of explanation. And this is one of the major drawbacks of his book. Lavishly illustrated with photographs of the great and the good (human, bovine, porcine, equine and ovine), it contains little in the way of social and economic context and less in the way of critical analysis. We are told, for example, that there 'is no mistaking' the steady improvement in livestock quality exhibited at the show between 1910 and 1939, but Howell gives no indication of the criteria on which this judgement is based. There are, indeed, many

who would question the whole relevance of agricultural shows in the matter of livestock improvement! Again, a close analysis of why the Society failed to attract membership (e.g. in 1939 there were only 1133 members compared with some 10,000 in the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland) would have provided an important insight into the nature of Welsh rural society in the inter-war period. In the sense that the history of so important an organization could have been used as a vehicle for a critical study of the economic background to rural Wales over the past century, one cannot escape the conclusion that this book represents an opportunity lost.

Readers of this *Review* who know and admire Professor Howell's earlier works, noteworthy as they are for their rigorous and meticulous scholarship, will wonder how far the present contribution was subject to direction from above; I strongly suspect that the form, nature and tone of the book was pre-determined from the start. Knowing Howell, I very much doubt, for example, that given a free hand he would have resorted to the sycophantic hagiography which dominates the latter part of the work. As a narrative history of the Society, the handsomely-produced volume will give much pleasure to the members, most of whom will probably make the index their first port of call. Historians of Welsh agriculture and rural life will quarry the odd nugget from it, but on the whole will find little here to quicken their pulses.

R. J. MOORE-COLYER

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CHRISTOPHER JESSEL, *Law of the manor – the twenty-first century* (Barry Rose Law Publishers, 2003). xviii + 137 pp. £32.

For those who think the manor and its associations are anachronisms that no longer have a function in twenty-first century Britain then this slim book is a reminder that the past not only lingers on in the imaginations of historians, but occasionally it comes alive in everyday living, even if only rarely or marginally.

In 1998 there appeared Jessel's *The law of the manor* (reviewed earlier in the *Review*, 47 (1999), pp. 107–8). The present volume is a sequel and brings the story into the twenty first century by showing how the legislation of the recent past has an impact on land, both on its ownership and public access to it. Not many weeks pass without newspaper reports of trespass, ransom strips, and disputes over access to so-called common places. Even if cases do not all refer to manorial laws, nevertheless we should be aware that the lord of the manor lives on, whether as an individual, corporation or local authority. Even where legislation has diminished their powers, there are still discussions and disputes over the

interpretation of whatever powers still remain. The most wide-ranging law of recent times was the Commons Registration Act of 1965 and this had a direct bearing on manorial custom and ownership. In the present and last parliaments the interpretation of commons and commonality has arisen again through both official and unofficial debates and discussions, not least related to the actions of organisations like the Countryside Alliance and issues over the so-called 'right to roam'. This book contextualizes some of these issues and in particular draws attention to the sequel of commons registration through the Countryside and Right of Way Act of 2000 and its granting of public rights over common land and open country. It also raises the very tricky question of who owns what through the Land Registration Act of 2002. It all adds up to a reminder of the past living on in the present. In particular perhaps it reminds us of the enduring influence of custom and practice. While legislation can abandon the anachronisms of the past by repealing old laws, the framing of new or replacement laws increasingly takes place through carefully considered reminders of the fairness of much of the past. Thus we learn that 'there are now few opportunities for a lord to exclude the public from the right to roam over common land or waste' (p. 44). Perhaps the tricky question is over the definition of what is or is not common land or waste. In short there are many opportunities for lawyers and historians of property to collaborate; the surprising thing is the few occasions where obviously they do. Colleagues in BAHS might usefully consult this book and its predecessor just to see where such opportunities might still exist. The manor lives on; long live the manor.

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Elsewhere and General

PETER BELLWOOD and COLIN RENFREW (eds), *Examining the farming/language dispersal hypothesis* (Oxbow Books / McDonald Institute Monographs, 2002). xiv + 505 pp. 83 figs. £50.

Prehistory is a profoundly geographical discipline. Prehistoric processes not only occurred over very long spans of time but over large areas. Innovations, such as agriculture, emerged in specific regions at particular times and then spread outward. Language families also spread widely, such that many of the world's languages can be shown to have common roots. The human genetic heritage also has a geographical component, for it is clear that even after the initial dispersal of humans from Africa throughout the Old World, there were additional diasporas to the New World, Oceania,

and Australia, and even afterward there were more movements on a continental and subcontinental scale.

Sometimes the evidence for these movements of crops, languages, genes, and people converges, particularly during the last 10,000 years. In particular, the hypothesis has been advanced that the dispersals of several principal language families are correlated with the expansion of farming, especially when farming has been spread through the movement of people. When people move, they take their genes with them, which is where the genetic evidence comes into play. This volume contains 36 papers that emerged from a conference at the McDonald Institute in Cambridge that explore and assess this convergence of evidence. In addition to methodological and theoretical overviews, the volume has a global scope, including papers on Europe, the near east, south and east Asia, Oceania, and the new world.

The farming/language dispersal hypothesis is summarized by Renfrew as follows: the current distribution of some of the world's largest language families (e.g. Niger-Kordofanian that includes Bantu, Austronesian, Indo-European, and Afro-Asiatic) is due to the demographic and cultural processes that accompanied the dispersal of the practice of food production from the core areas in which animals and plants were first domesticated. Renfrew first floated the idea in 1987 with specific regard to the spread of the Indo-European language family, which he argued occurred from Anatolia with the spread of agriculture into other parts of Eurasia. This flew in the face of conventional philological wisdom, which considered the dispersal to have occurred several millennia later and from a core area on the Eurasian steppes north of the Black and Caspian Seas. Subsequently, the hypothesis has been exported to other areas, with Bellwood being a very strong proponent based on his own research in the south-west Pacific area, and others, many of whom are contributors to this volume, embracing it to various degrees in other areas.

Although the hypothesis leaves open the possibility for language spread through the dispersal of agriculture by cultural diffusion to foragers who adopt domesticated plants, animals, and language, a major part of the discussion hinges on the concept introduced by Ammerman and Cavalli-Sforza of 'demic diffusion', the cumulative effect of long- and short-distance moves by farming peoples resulting in a 'wave of advance' of agricultural dispersal. This is where things get sticky, because archaeologists differ in the degree to which they believe that prehistoric people moved around. As a reaction to the traditional archaeological interpretation that change was the result of population movement, many archaeologists in the 1970s and 1980s embraced the assumption of in situ development until proven

otherwise – except when patently impossible. Other archaeologists reasserted that migrations and colonizations may have played a significant role in prehistoric cultural change. This resulted in a degree of polarization between the ‘indigenists’ and ‘migrationists’.

As with any issue so polarized, the truth has to lie somewhere in the middle, and the growing body of genotype mapping offered hope for a resolution. For the most part, these data consisted of the mapping of genes in modern extant populations that were believed to have been in place for several millennia rather than the recovery of ancient DNA from archaeological skeletons, a technique still in need of methodological refinement. Over the last several decades, molecular biologists have built up an immense corpus of genetic data on ‘native’ populations from all continents. Inevitably, however, the genetic data often provide conflicting evidence for demic diffusion associated with the spread of agriculture.

Europe offers a particularly confounding example of the complexity of integrating archaeological and genetic evidence. In Europe, opposing clinal haplogroups 1 and 9 have been identified, discussed in detail by the biologist Matthew Hurles in his paper. Haplogroup 9 is considered to be the signal of immigrant farmers originating in Anatolia, and its frequency tapers out dramatically along an axis from SE to NW, such that it is very scarce in the British Isles, although it even occurs at a low frequency in the Balkans and central Europe, presumably closer to its point of origin. Haplogroup 1, on the other hand, is believed to reflect the indigenous stock resident in Europe since the Palaeolithic, and it gives a very strong signal all along this axis and is overwhelmingly represented in north-western Europe. These data appear to contradict the notion of much population movement associated with the spread of agriculture, although fact that the ‘Anatolian’ strain is present at all says that some demic diffusion probably occurred.

Renfrew, in his introductory passage, addresses this problem and connects it to the question of language dispersals by presenting the hypothetical case in which farmers move into a geographically contiguous series of cells over a period of several centuries, intermingling to a relatively small degree with the indigenous population. By the end of several iterations of this process, the percentage of genes from the original ‘immigrant’ population that started it all could be vanishingly small, yet the resulting population after a millennium or more would be farmers speaking a tongue descended from that spoken by the original incoming farmers. The genetic signal can become attenuated while the cultural and linguistic signals are amplified.

The European case gives an example of how difficult it is to process these various streams of data. To carry the

metaphor a bit further, certain regions such as island south-east Asia are full of static, whereas in other parts of the world, the data are so sparse that they are open to diametrically different interpretations. The key issue, put so well by Hurles, is ‘whether the archaeological record, which is so successful at allowing the reconstruction of ancient societies, identities and ways of life underrepresents to some degree the “compound interest” of inter-generation admixture that seems to be so critical in understanding the spatial and temporal distribution of genetic diversity’ (p. 307).

As might be expected from this discussion of the complexity of the issues involved, this volume offers no breakthrough consensus. Some authors seek harmony among the competing categories of evidence, while others suggest that the hypothesis works in some places but not in others. Such is the current state of the field. Another stream of data is entering to complicate things still further. The study of isotopes such as barium in prehistoric human bones and teeth, and the comparison to local background isotopic frequencies, is expected to provide evidence on which individuals were born and raised locally and which ones entered the area bearing isotopic signatures from elsewhere. Once the techniques for the extraction and analysis of ancient DNA mature, prehistoric skeletons will be able to speak with several voices about their lineage, which will be very important complements to the evidence from archaeology, linguistics, and population genetics.

In these days when the field known as anthropology is concerned with ‘globalization discourses’, the language/farming dispersal hypothesis really does address a real global anthropological problem. In many respects, the integration of archaeological, cultural, biological, and linguistic evidence is in the grand four-field tradition of true anthropological inquiry. The papers in this volume reflect this spirit of comparative analysis. Whether or not one agrees with their arguments or conclusions, one has to appreciate the scholarship that the papers in this volume demonstrate. None appear to have been dashed off in haste in order to gain a trip to a conference. Such a level of scholarship makes *Examining the farming/language dispersal hypothesis* an important contribution to an ongoing debate.

PETER BOGUCKI
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PATRICK E. MACGOVERN, *Ancient wine. The search for the origins of viniculture* (Princeton UP, 2003). xix + 365 pp. 16 plates; 42 figs; 7 maps. £19.95.

In 1996, the archaeological scientist Patrick MacGovern published with two other collaborators an edited volume on the *Origins and ancient history of wine* (see AgHR 45

(1997), p. 98 for a review), directed primarily towards specialists. The present book is 'a more popular and updated *précis* of the conference proceedings' (p. xv). The conference and the volume on the *Origins* was prompted by the identification and analysis of organic residues that were attributed to wine in the interior of a pottery vessel found in Godin Tepe, present-day Iran, and dated to 3500–3100 BC. Since then the author's lab has carried out analyses on a range of archaeological samples ranging from the neolithic to Byzantine periods (fourth to sixth centuries BC), from sites in Mesopotamia, the near east, Egypt and Greece. More recently, he has also been involved in an ancient DNA project (that has yet to produce definite results) which aims to find out when and where the wild Eurasian grape was first domesticated. This book popularizes the results of these analyses. It does more than that, however: it attempts to combine a wide range of data beyond biomolecular information – environmental, archaeological, epigraphic and textual, linguistic, iconographic – in order to produce a grand synthesis that solves many of the problems to do with the origins, the spread and early history of viniculture in the eastern Mediterranean and the middle east. Moreover, as we read on the dust jacket of the book, the author believes that 'the history of civilization is in many ways the history of wine'. Wine production and consumption, therefore, becomes here an excuse and opportunity for the author to venture into at times fascinating discussions, and at other times questionable themes, such as 'the search for the pro-Indo-European homeland' (p. 35).

The basic points of the book are that there may have been a single centre for the domestication of grape vine in the eastern Taurus mountains or Transcaucasia (although the author himself admits that this is a projection on the basis of very limited current DNA knowledge); that the deliberate human selection of plants to produce wine might have started in the palaeolithic; that large-scale winemaking began in neolithic times; and that the classical tradition of mixing wine with other plants, herbs and spices has a long history and prehistory, with tree resins being the most common earliest additives. The author attributes the proliferation of wine production and consumption to the development of a 'wine culture'. Once humans discovered the mind-altering properties of the alcoholic drink, it became a desirable 'social lubricant' and a powerful medicinal drug, the consumption of which spread from the temperate upland areas (environmentally more suitable for vine cultivation) to other regions, and 'trickled down' from the upper social strata, which initially controlled its production and consumption, to the wider population.

There is a lot to be commended in this important book, and the general reader will acquire an impressive amount of information on the topic, although some of the descriptions of the analytical techniques will be hard to understand. Yet, the broad-ranging nature of the book is both its strength and its weakness. It succeeds in showing the potential of organic residue analysis for the investigation of wine consumption, and in demonstrating that the study of wine drinking and of viniculture may hold the key to the understanding of a range of social processes in the prehistoric and historic past. At the same time, however, the archaeological assumptions made by the book are often problematic, outdated or plainly unsubstantiated. The author, for example, assumes that bronze age Knossos was governed by 'a line of rulers', when there is no evidence for the existence of a single ruler in Knossos at the time, and the whole issue of its political and social organization is highly disputed. In Byzantine mosaics depicting a woman and a baby, he sees 'a throwback to the neolithic "mother goddess"' (p. 247), a thoroughly discredited patriarchal notion. More importantly, the author assumes a linear, almost evolutionist continuity in wine consumption since early prehistoric times, whereas a more careful analysis would reveal a much more uneven and diverse pattern in terms of scale and level of participation, not to mention social meanings and effects. In this diverse pattern, the trickling down effect may not be the most adequate explanation.

The specialist reader must be even more cautious with the book and its claims. For a start, the author makes the astonishing claim that prior to chemical analyses, the study of ancient food was based on 'ancient recipes and cookbooks, frescoes and drawings' (p. 293), disregarding thus more than a century of careful investigations involving archaeobotanical and zooarchaeological evidence, as well as the even older study of pottery, and food-related installations. Moreover, he assumes and demonstrates an almost absolute certainty with the results of chemical analyses of organic residues, a certainty with which few specialists would concur. Organic residues are the products of biodegradation, and their analysis is subject to serious problems to do with loss and sample contamination, not to mention the difficulty of identifying certain organic signatures (bio-markers) linked to a single plant, since many chemical compounds are widely available in nature. Many specialists also recognize that the chemical detection of ancient wine is more difficult than that of other substances such as lipids and waxes, for which more research has been carried out, although further improvement of the techniques may alter this. Until then, it should be remembered that unambiguous results

should probably be reserved for the rare occasions of finding sealed vessels. Finally, the automatic assumption made by the book that tree resins found in pots indicate the deliberate flavouring of wine (which has given rise to claims such as that the modern Greek *retsina*, dates back to the bronze age) fails to account for the widespread use of such substances as vessel sealants (cf. N. Boulton and C. Heron, 'Chemical detection of ancient wine' in P. Nicholson and I. Shaw (eds), *Ancient Egyptian materials and technologies* (2000), pp. 599–603). The study of ancient wine cannot rely on any single category of evidence, and can be more profitably achieved by the integration of all types of material, from chemistry to epigraphy and pottery analysis, taking into account the limitations and problems of each. More importantly, it cannot be divorced from context-specific historical and anthropological enquiry that relates the sensory and embodied experience of wine drinking with the social contingencies and the power dynamics in each context.

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BRENDA COLLINS and PHILIP OLLERENSHAW (eds),
The European linen industry in historical perspective
(Pasold Research Fund/OUP, 2003). xxvi + 334 pp.
20 tables; 16 illus; 10 figs. £55.

This book is the result of a conference, 'Linen in Europe', held at Lisburn in Northern Ireland in 1998. Compared to the woollen cloth industry, linens have been neglected by historians of economic and social history, at least in the United Kingdom, so it is a pleasure to read a volume that provides a useful, northern Europe-wide perspective of the linen industry from the late medieval period to the early twenty-first century. A survey of archaeological finds of linen and the tools used in its making from a wide range of sites from Russia to north-west Europe underlines how widespread was the production of linen.

The study of the technology of producing high quality linen damask explains why some areas were less successful than others in making this material so sought after by the rich. Brian Mackey traces the foundation of the linen industry in Ireland and debunks the myth that Cromwell and the Huguenots introduced linen making there. It was not until the 1690s that Protestants from northern France and Holland were invited to settle in Ireland. Chapters by Robert DuPlessis and Adrienne D. Hood show that there were strong links between the manufacture of linen in Pennsylvania and Ireland between 1700 and 1830, but in the nineteenth century cotton replaced flax in North America. Jane Gray's discussion of the linen industries of Flanders, Ireland and

Scotland during the long eighteenth century points up their differences. By 1815 half of the yarn used in Scotland was produced in spinning mills, while hand spinning was still common in the other two countries. Migration from Ireland, especially Ulster, grew in the first half of the nineteenth century. Men were in a minority in the Irish linen industry and women's wages were low.

In England the period 1660–1800 saw changes in the market for linens. Strikingly large quantities of calico and muslin were imported from India in the later seventeenth century, which led to English manufacturers copying Indian prints. In an attempt to protect the local industry, an Act of 1700 barred imported printed cottons and all cotton imports were banned in 1721. In the 1750s linen still dominated the English market, but twenty years on there was a great increase in cotton textiles at the expense of linen. This was the period when cotton manufacture in Lancashire was growing fast. In a chapter discussing these changes, Beverley Lemire observes that 'offered the choice, consumers turned to cotton wares and in so doing they changed the material culture of their society'.

In other chapters Inger Jonsson contrasts wealthy flax-growing farmers and poor female flax-dressers in early nineteenth-century Sweden, Alistair J. Durie examines the effects of government policy on the Scottish linen industry before 1840, Peter M. Solar charts the birth and death of spinning firms in Ireland and Belgium in the nineteenth century, and Karl Ditt the rise and fall of the German linen industry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A final chapter by Philip Ollerenshaw analyzes the effects of stagnation, war and depression in the UK linen industry between 1900 and 1930. There was a brief revival of the industry during World War I due to the demand for linen for uniforms and tents, and a second short-lived revival occurred in Germany in the 1930s. But these were mere interruptions in a course of long-term decline.

NESTA EVANS
Tostock, Suffolk

C. A. SPINAGE, *Cattle plague. A history* (Kluwer Academic, 2003). xx + 765 pp. 41 tables; 90 figs. £156.50.

Cattle plague, or rinderpest, is caused by a virus, one of six related species in the genus morbillivirus, the others being measles in humans, which appeared over 5000 years ago when humans began to associate with cattle, canine distemper, cetacean morbillivirus – a disease of whales, phocine distemper affecting seals, and *peste des petits ruminants* (PPR), a disease of sheep and goats that in the past has been confused with rinderpest. A wide range of cloven-hoofed animals, from bison, yak, antelope, deer

and camels, to sheep, goats and pigs, can act as hosts for the disease. The virus enters the body of an affected animal through the upper respiratory tract and goes on to attack the cells lining the respiratory, alimentary and urogenital tracts, producing fever, gastroenteritis, discharges from the eyes and nose, and, very often, diarrhoea, dehydration and death.

The historical significance of rinderpest derives not only from its immediate effects on cattle populations and, consequently, their human consumers, but also from its impact on the history of veterinary medicine and legislation, and its environmental effects. There are recorded outbreaks of what are variously described as plagues, pests, distempers, diseases, and murrains of cattle from ancient times, and all over Europe. Whether these are all attributable to rinderpest is less certain, because the symptoms described could often equally apply to other fatal conditions such as anthrax. It seems to be generally accepted, however, that rinderpest was probably responsible for the great mortality of cattle in Britain between 1315 and 1317, and further outbreaks later in the century. It was certainly the cause of the better-known eighteenth-century outbreaks that began in 1714 and 1745, and of the epidemic that killed over 278,000 head of cattle between 1865 and 1867 and led to the establishment of a government-run slaughter policy. But these British outbreaks, significant as they were at the time, seem relatively minor in comparison to the prevalence and persistence of the disease in continental Europe and Asia. Spinage's list of animal disease episodes in Europe that could be associated with rinderpest covers more than two pages for the period between 431 BC and 1514 AD, and he then has a further five chapters covering the better-documented outbreaks from the seventeenth century to the twentieth, when the last occurrence (in Greece, in 1926) was known. In Asia, it appears to have been endemic from early times to the later twentieth century.

Given the ease and speed with which it can spread, and the resultant mortality (up to 90 per cent in some cases), it is not difficult to see why rinderpest has had significant economic effects, often accentuated by its association with war. When armies moved slowly enough to drive their food supplies with them on the hoof, they were often the cause of its spread. Ironically, one of the few benefits of mechanized warfare in the twentieth century was a reduction in the spread of rinderpest in Europe, since live cattle could no longer keep up with the troops. Rinderpest has also, and perhaps to a greater extent than any other disease, been the starting point for much progress in veterinary medical knowledge and legislation. One of the first effective campaigns to control it was instigated in the Papal States

in 1713. The Pope, acting on the advice of his surgeon, Lancisi, introduced strict regulations covering the movement of cattle, with stringent punishments for their contravention: laymen could be sentenced to death, although clergymen escaped with banishment to the galleys for life. In mid-eighteenth-century England, in contrast, movement restrictions and slaughter were encouraged by compensation payments. The methods may have been different, but the long term implications were the same: a greater interest in finding explanations and control methods for animal diseases, leading in time to increased veterinary competence and government involvement in public health. Spinage covers the original sources for these and other outbreaks in great detail. In Part One of the book he examines the science of the disease and its origin; in the following two parts he deals with its history in Europe and the attempts to control it there; and in part four he deals with the search for a cure.

Much of the final part of the book is concerned with the history of rinderpest in Africa, where it has also been associated with a controversy in environmental history. It was unknown south of the Sahara, in one view, until it was introduced in 1887 as a by-product of the Italian invasion of Eritrea; within a decade it had reached the far south and west of the continent. Millions of cattle and many of the people who depended upon them died, and bush expanded at the expense of grassland. Populations of the tsetse fly, a carrier of sleeping sickness, could expand more quickly in the lush vegetation of the bush, and so prevented the return of people and their cattle; hence the European view of an unspoilt empty Africa teeming with game, and many subsequent conservation policies. Spinage demonstrates that the story may be more complex than this, for there is some evidence for the existence of rinderpest south of the Sahara before the late nineteenth century. But in this, as in other parts of the book, he does not come down decisively on one side or the other. Indeed, throughout the book, he presents the evidence, usually in great and well-referenced detail, without much discussion of its wider implications or reliability. It seems churlish to complain, for it is difficult to believe that anything of great significance specific to cattle plague has been omitted from this book, but it makes few concessions to the reader without specialist veterinary knowledge, and engages only sporadically with historical debates. It is a wonderfully comprehensive source, but those wishing to work further on the history of the cattle plague need not feel that there is nothing left to say.

PAUL BRASSLEY
University of Plymouth

WILLIAM BEINART, *The rise of conservation in South Africa. Settlers, livestock, and the environment, 1770–1950* (OUP, 2003). xx + 425 pp. 17 illus; 3 maps. £65.

A history of conservation by white farmers in selected livestock grazing areas in South Africa might seem a limited topic, but Beinart uses it to study a much larger one, the interactions of science, local knowledge, and the state during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Not content with that he includes a study of ideas about erosion and land failure in Western cultures, a collective biography of South African conservationists, a survey of changes in the South African land and among its peoples, and some observations about the 'rural political economy' of the region (p. xv). To complicate matters further, he speaks not only to academics, South African and abroad, but to South Africans interested in their history. Such a complex narrative demands, and receives, a careful organization. Two introductory chapters, one on the ways travellers, scientists, and Africans understood the Cape in the early years of settlement, the other on science and conservation to the mid-nineteenth century, establish the dimensions of local and Western knowledge and conservation's deep roots in settler society. There follow chapters on the graziers' major problems and the applied sciences that studied them. Among these studies of fire, livestock diseases, erosion, irrigation, predator control, drought, and imported plants are two biographical accounts, one on a major conservationist, the other of a progressive farmer, and the book ends with a chapter on twentieth-century conservation debates among African farmers and a postscript on the persistence of declensionist arguments.

Despite all these topics and approaches, this is not a survey but a carefully organized set of studies on a single issue, conservation in the South Africa, all of it informed by extensive research and animated by Beinart's deep interest in the land and the people. It should be of interest far beyond South Africa and find a place on the shelves of historians of agriculture and agricultural science, the environment, European settler colonies, and European overseas empires, for it places the white South African experience in these contexts, aiding comparative studies and giving perspective to work on other areas. South African farmers faced no new problems, worked in the same world commodity market as stockmen from New South Wales to Manitoba, found their government helping and hindering in ordinary ways, and appealed to the same applied sciences, but they did so under the unique conditions of the South African land, already shaped by earlier inhabitants and being changed by their own actions. Focusing

on the graziers' problems and the applied sciences that addressed them allows Beinart to show the interplay of local and metropolitan knowledge, the ways that scientific understanding clashed or meshed with the stockowners' views, and what science actually did for people on the land. The chapters on the 'progressive' farmer who applied the gospel of conservation on his land and the government agricultural bureaucrat charged with bringing in new knowledge add other perspectives. This last, a study of the Afrikaner drought expert H. S. du Toit, shows unfamiliar aspects of the story of American agricultural expertise abroad, and interested students should read it with J. M. Powell and Ian Tyrrell's accounts of American-Australia connections in mind.

The entire book deals with environmental issues but speaks directly to the field of environmental history in two ways. It offers a narrative that shows nature as an active force in history and includes a meditation on the popularity of declensionist narratives, those tales of ruined lands and failing societies so popular in so many societies over the centuries but with added relevance now that humans shape every ecosystem in the world. Beinart places these arguments in the context of recent South African history, where a minority applied 'progressive' agriculture on individual holdings before coming under siege from a majority with communal traditions and no love of the modern world market. His conclusions are largely cautions: that people must 'disturb' nature to live, that nature is not static, that we cannot go back to some imagined pristine land, and that we have only begun to understand the long-term impact of our life on the land. They are, though, useful warnings and this detailed history an important argument for them. All in all, this is an impressive work that should stimulate and inform scholarship in several fields.

THOMAS R. DUNLAP
Texas A&M University

WILMA A. DUNAWAY, *The African-American family in slavery and emancipation* (CUP, 2003). xi + 368 pp. 32 illus; 7 maps. £55 (hb); £20.95 (pb).

Scholarly fascination with American slavery, particularly slavery in the antebellum South, shows little sign of diminishing. A first response to this new book might well ask what more could possibly be said about the slave family? In the 1970s, revisionist historians such as John Blassingame, Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, Eugene Genovese, and especially Herbert Gutman argued that the slave family survived the brutality and inherent instability of plantation slavery. While disagreeing with one another in many respects, they suggested that most slaves grew up in a family situation

of some kind, if not nuclear then extended in structure. An impressive body of scholarship on slave women that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s highlighted the important role played by females in what some described as the matrifocal slave family, but also stressed the great trauma caused by sexual assault. More recently, Brenda Stevenson, Michael Tadmán, and Walter Johnson have placed far greater emphasis upon planter control and the fragile slave family that was frequently broken up by owners who, despite claims to be paternalists, had no hesitation in selling for profit.

Where does this new book fit in? According to Wilma Dunaway, it has a major contribution to make. She asserts that study of the slave family has been hampered 'by four fundamental weaknesses', a reluctance to accept that owners broke up the family by sale, overemphasis upon large plantations, neglect of slavery in the upper South, and 'exaggeration of slave agency' (p. 2). She sets out to correct the mistakes of 'the Gutman-Fogel paradigm' that reads 'more like a Disney script than scholarly research' (p. 270). Contrary to the wide scope of the book's title, however, the subject is far narrower, concentrating upon the Appalachian South between 1850 and 1870. This is not a general synthesis, nor a decade by decade chronology, but a tightly-focused monograph on a specific time and place. Displaying impressive research, the book utilizes a quantitative study of 216 counties in six upper South states and thirty-eight counties in three lower South states, some manuscript sources, and 600 interviews with ex-slaves from the mountain area. Great stress is placed upon the narratives as presenting the voices of the slaves themselves. *The African-American family in slavery and emancipation* is a welcome and valuable addition to the field. Slavery in Appalachia has not been investigated in the same detail as in other parts of the South and studies of the slave family have indeed based their interpretations upon evidence from large plantations, which were rare in the mountain area.

It is in providing a detailed discussion of slavery and its demise in Appalachia that this book works best. Crisply written chapters mix qualitative and quantitative evidence illuminating numerous topics such as slave sales, health and nutritional intake, disease, living conditions, the surprisingly diverse work experiences of Appalachian slaves, the informal economy, and, of course, family structure and roles. Particularly noteworthy are three chapters on the Civil War and Reconstruction that present a bleak picture of the limited choices available to black Appalachians, who were mistreated by both Confederate and Union forces despite the latter's claim to be liberators. The reader gains a rounded insight into the lifestyles and

struggles of Appalachian African-Americans in the mid-nineteenth century. Less satisfactory is the failure to incorporate the vibrant recent literature on Appalachia in this period, including work by Dwight Billings, Martin Crawford, Durwood Dunn, John Inscoe and Gordon McKinney (although older books by the latter two are mentioned in the bibliography). Undoubtedly, the book would be much stronger if it had engaged with this scholarship.

Most problematic, though, is the application of conclusions about mountain slavery to the South as a whole. There were just 300,000 slaves in Appalachia in 1860 out of a total slave population of approximately 4 million. Dunaway insists that their experiences were 'typical of the circumstances in which a majority of US slaves were held' (p. 5). This is dubious. Not only was more than half the slave population found on plantations of twenty or more in 1850, most slaves were located in close proximity to one another, especially in the Deep South, enabling the formation of cross-community ties. That this did not happen in Appalachia emphasizes the region's atypicality. Moreover, the stress upon refuting Gutman and Fogel is misplaced. Post-revisionist historians have been chipping away at their position for nearly two decades. Very few, if any, academics now accept the notion of slave agency uncritically or minimize the devastating impact of the internal slave trade. It would have been far better to place the Appalachian African-American family within the context of the historiography as it stands in 2004, not 1980. Alongside Tadmán and Stevenson, who are mentioned, important recent studies have been published by Norrece Jones Jr., Ann Patton Malone, and, above all, Walter Johnson. By ignoring these scholars, Dunaway not only diminishes the importance of her own findings but misses the opportunity to build upon work that shares her stress upon the overriding brutality of American slavery.

DAVID BROWN
University of Sheffield

HUBERTUS HILLER, *Jäger und Jagd. Zur Entwicklung des Jagdwesens in Deutschland zwischen 1848 und 1914* (Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 2003). 279 pp. €25.50.

From comparable medieval origins in privilege of royalty and aristocracy, the development of hunting in the United Kingdom and Germany experienced quite different paths of development, especially from the mid-nineteenth century. The hunting of foxes never achieved anything like the following in the latter country that it did in the former. Manifestly more edible and prized for trophies, wild boar and deer survived longer in relative abundance for stalking and shooting in a country that remained comparatively heavily forested

and therefore impractical for the chase. In Germany, enclosure, providing clear property rights over consolidated area of land and hedgerows or fences for jumping, was relatively rare and belated. The presence of rabies motivated prohibitions on chasing foxes on horseback, as kills merely increased the fecundity and encouraged the movement of foxes – and the rabies virus – to new areas. From 1934 the Nazis banned all forms of killing fauna involving the use of dogs because ‘cruelty to animals was involved’. This coincided with the elimination of the remaining cavalry regiments in the German army and the creation of Panzer divisions. A few drag hunting clubs still exist in Germany, mainly in the northwest – as do a few wild pigs. Otherwise, apart from decimating declining numbers of hares and grouse, the ‘sport’ essentially embraces the stalking and shooting of deer.

Until the 1970s the German deer-hunting fraternity had successfully convinced the general public that their hobby was environmentally friendly and necessary to maintain the ‘balance of nature’. This changed from 1971, when a programme broadcast on national television pointed to the devastating effect upon forests and wildlife of trophy-driven hunting. The work under review investigates the hunting code of today as derived from legislation dating from the aftermath of the Revolutions of 1848–49 and the extent to which hunting in Germany was consequently ‘bourgeoisified’ by the elimination of aristocratic privilege.

The supposed ‘primitive instinct’ of humanity to hunt was an invention of the post-1850 era, initially to distinguish the activity from its antecedence in privilege based upon noble birth. The ‘instinct’ presumably was not shared by the ‘lower orders’. In response to the 1848 abolition of privilege connected with hunting, and ensuing mass slaughter of wildlife for food and to eliminate agricultural pests, an enactment of the Reaction from 1850 effectively precluded over nine-tenths of landowners from hunting on their own land. Although the author of this work does not mention it, fear of a peasantry armed for the hunt justified the restrictive legislation. Access of the bourgeoisie to hunting was catered for by a provision for hunting leases, with the practice diffusing into ever more remote areas with the spread of railways.

At the same time it became necessary to distinguish the hunter from the poacher and, from 1891, when rabbits were declared ‘free wild’, the rabbit shooter. This was done by creating a hunter-specific concept of prey, encapsulated in the ‘noble stag’. A ‘tradition’ was invented, with its own particular rules and regulations extending *inter alia* to hunting costume. In the process the actual kill came to be represented as but a moment in the ritual of hunting, which resulted in a ‘beautiful death’, a humane killing compared with that resulting

from a Darwinian struggle for survival. But in the author’s view, this was mere flimflam, intended to disguise the urge to festoon walls in homes and public houses with antlered heads. Since 1970 this fetish has come to be increasingly questioned from perspectives ranging from the ecological to the psychological.

Criticisms may be levelled against this monograph. One is that, apart from the secondary literature, the sources are confined to periodicals of the hunting fraternity. Another is that striving for objectivity is eschewed in favour of an anti-hunting polemic. These two facets of the work are related, and justifiable, in that the author is concerned to analyze and criticize hunting on the basis of perspectives presented by hunters. He is probably correct in believing that change in the activity of hunting has only come about through external pressure. And his excellent appraisal of hunting’s own invented traditions will lend weight to the reformist case.

JOHN PERKINS
Macquarie University

KIMBERLY D. SCHMIDT, DIANE ZIMMERMAN UMBLE and STEVEN D. RESCHLY (eds), *Strangers at home. Amish and Mennonite women in history* (Johns Hopkins UP, 2002). xii + 398 pp. Illus. £27.50.

Strangers at home is a collection of fifteen essays, many of which originated as papers presented at a 1995 conference ‘The quiet in the land? Women of Anabaptist traditions in historical perspective’. As the title of the book intimates, these essays seek to expose the paradoxes and ironies in the lives of women from Anabaptist traditions. (Not only are Amish and Mennonite women treated, but early Anabaptist, Old Order River Brethren and Quaker women are all subsumed under the designation ‘Anabaptist’.) Thematically the editors have chosen to portray the dilemmas of Anabaptist women and of the scholars that research them as one of positioning, ‘insider’ versus ‘outsider’. This is not an innovative approach to Anabaptist studies, as such a boundary is integral to Anabaptist self-definition, yet the editors are successful at defining it with nuance in their introductory essay in a variety of ways: scholars and the closed communities they are researching; Anabaptist women on the periphery of patriarchal communities; gender studies versus mainstream Anabaptist scholarship. However, it is the dialogue engaged in by the essays themselves that illuminate and expand the complexity of boundaries for Anabaptist women.

Methodology is the beginning point in this collection. Hasia R. Diner, in a solicited article, contends that both insider and outsider knowledge contributes to comprehensive scholarship. She draws on her own experience of

researching both Jewish woman (as a Jewish woman herself, she benefited from intuitive knowledge) and Irish women, in which her observer status allowed her to see what the Irish themselves could not. Diane Zimmerman Umble brings this discussion into the specificity of being a Mennonite researching her own people. In a relationship where scholars and subjects share an ethnic identity, the scholar must recognize that as well as the multiple positions she holds – woman, scholar, Mennonite – her subjects also position her, complicating her research. Beth E. Graybill expands on Diner's discussion of intuitive knowledge, and, I suspect, speaks for other scholars in this volume when she acknowledges that sharing an ethnic identity with her subjects demands that she think critically about her own assumptions.

Other essays move the conversation beyond methodology. Katherine Jellison's article about American government New Deal officials studying Amish communities in the mid-twentieth century and Cathy Ann Trotta's article on nineteenth-century Mennonite missionary to the Hopi, Martha Moser Voth, have the potential to explore gendered interaction across boundaries. Unfortunately, both essays too quickly dissolve any tension between Anabaptist women and 'outsiders,' and instead identify commonalities between the two groups discussed. Kimberly D. Schmidt's and Royden K. Loewen's essays examine with more subtlety the assimilation of Mennonite women as they move from communities that maintained ethnic distinctions into more mainstream American society. The Quaker women of Barbara Bolz's essay made use of the Quaker ideal of silence to propel themselves beyond the Quaker community into public ministry. These essays suggest that boundaries for Anabaptist women are porous, even as they are vital to the self-identity of Anabaptist women.

Other essays examine communities whose boundaries are more intractable. Marlene Epp writing about post-World War II Mennonite refugee communities in Paraguay and Margaret C. Reynolds in her essay on an Old Order River Brethren communion breadmaking ritual, demonstrate how important women are in the formation of their communities, calling into question the editors' contention that a peripheral position for women means being 'outside.' According to Epp, great effort was expended by the established Mennonite leadership to ensure that women refugees would conform to mainstream Mennonite values of family and church. Old Order River Brethren women more willingly contributed to the maintenance of traditional gender roles in the communion ritual, as it gave them a position of influence within the community. While less concerned with boundaries, the essays by Jeni Hielt Umble and

Linda Huebert Hecht on sixteenth-century Anabaptist communities, also demonstrate how integral women were to their communities.

In another solicited essay, Jane Marie Pederson concludes the volume with a look at Anabaptists and antimodernism. This is a disappointing conclusion, for Pederson fails to differentiate between the variety of women examined in this book, whether that be distinct Amish or assimilated contemporary women. Not only is the essay confusing in this regard, it also overlooks the very complexities that the essays have meticulously revealed. Likewise Julia Kasdorf in an otherwise insightful essay about contemporary Mennonite women poets and their conflicted relationship with the Mennonite community prematurely, given the complexities these essays emphasize, asks why 'couldn't all Mennonites be seen as a people who strive to break boundaries and dissolve polarities' (p. 335)? The essays in this book demonstrate that the ability to do so is varied, and the desire is, at best, ambivalent among Anabaptist women.

Strangers at home is a most welcome addition to the still limited amount of scholarship on Anabaptist women. However, its appeal and usefulness will not be limited to scholarship of Anabaptism and gender. Methodology, gender and community formation, self-definition of minority groups, assimilation – all are relevant to a larger group of scholars, particularly those engaged in ethnic studies.

KERRY L. FAST
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JEAN CHOATE, *Disputed ground. Farm groups that opposed the New Deal agricultural program* (McFarland and Company/Shelwing Ltd, 2002). v + 232 pp. 16 illus. £30.40.

Farm protesters boast a long and honourable tradition in the United States. The federal government has often been subject to agrarian unrest, as it was in the 1930s. Many US farmers disapproved of the New Deal's agricultural policies, and some farm organizations actively opposed the government programs. In *Disputed ground*, Jean Choate presents seven such farm groups, largely from the midwestern states. She seeks to recover the lesser-known organizations and their leaders – an admirable goal. As she says, 'this is a story of people who struggled and lost' (p. 1).

The first three chapters treat significant figures and groups in agricultural history: John Simpson's National Farmers Union, William Hirth's Missouri Farmers Association, and Milo Reno's Farm Holiday Association. These men had been Populists in the 1890s, continued working for the agrarian cause, and supported Franklin D. Roosevelt for president in 1932. However, they

vigorously opposed his major agricultural programme of production control via acreage reductions and payments to farmers, preferring instead government-guaranteed costs of production. Choate adds little to the Simpson and Reno stories, which have been well-told before, as she acknowledges. She offers some insight into editor-organizer Hirth and his Missouri group. Yet, strangely, these chapters devote more space to pre-1933 events than to the New Deal, and none go beyond early 1934. The fascinating figure of Reno reappears two chapters later to spark the National Farmers Process Tax Recovery Association, which played a role in US Representative William Lemke's attempt to secure refund of a questionable 'tax' on hog producers.

Probably the best part of the book is its array of farmers' criticisms of the New Deal. Scattered throughout are plausible claims that Roosevelt's agricultural programme undermined opposition movements by 'buying off' protest, used the ideas of Big Business and/or university intellectuals rather than dirt farmers, favoured larger producers and hurt smaller ones in distress, sliced food production while people went hungry, instigated political and economic over-regulation, and unfairly attacked critics. One Kansas farmer wrote about the New Deal 'tax-eaters ... all the big shots and Cozack pots from the Agricultural College' (p. 177). Some farmers simply resisted 'being organized' by the New Deal (p. 192). Many thousands saw the New Deal as undemocratic, the opposite of its self-image. These criticisms are more or less familiar but it is good to read the farmers' words.

Overall, though, Choate's book has severe problems. One is organizational: there is no introduction or even context-setting. Nothing more than a short paragraph on 'the New Deal agricultural program' (the subtitle) is given until Chapter 7. At least two and a half chapters deal with Choate's best new story – the Tax Recovery Association's fight against the corn-hog program – but her diffuse analysis leads to needless repetition. Another serious problem is stylistic. Choate usually writes in short, choppy paragraphs. Few chapters have any introduction or conclusion. Storylines are left up in the air, unexplained. She strings together too many quotations and presents too many unrelated facts. Frequently, the book reads more like an undigested chronology than a coherent narrative.

Other problems are more substantive. Important agencies such as the Soil Conservation Service and the Farm Security Administration were core aspects of the agrarian New Deal, yet they are unmentioned in the book, which focuses solely on the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. The book's subtitle, then, is misleading. Still, the 'Triple-A' was the first and main New Deal farm agency. Choate says, though, that it

ended in 1936 (p. 134) when in fact it continued into the forties. She does not analyze the Farmers Union's favourable turn toward the New Deal in the later thirties, nor does she acknowledge the American Farm Bureau Federation's concurrent turn against the New Deal; the Farm Bureau is presented throughout as if it were always pro-Roosevelt. Moreover, two extremely minor organizations that get a chapter each – the Farmers Independence Council and the Farmers Guild – seem hardly worth the attention. Only slightly better is the treatment of the Corn Belt Liberty League, which may have convinced some farmers to vote against the Democrats in 1938, thus fuelling an anti-New Deal Congress. A case could probably be made for the significance of all three of these ephemeral farm organizations, but Choate does not make one.

She does provide a decent concluding section, admitting that the 'groups were not successful in either attracting a large membership or in defeating the New Deal agricultural program' (p. 187). Choate tries to explain why, but does not consider the possibility that most farmers actually liked the policies. Although this book is not an accomplished work of history, Choate's substantial research in the relevant primary sources will be useful to scholars studying these seven farm organizations.

JESS GILBERT

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GENE WUNDERLICH, *American Country Life. A legacy* (University Press of America, 2003). xiv + 208 pp. \$36.

The American Country Life Association was one of the organizations that defined rural America for the twentieth century. Born out of Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission, the ACLA was formally established in 1918 by representatives of a range of state institutions and non-state organizations who recognized the need for collective action to address the problems of rural life. In particular, it defined out-migration as the great problem facing rural America and identified the prosperity of farming as the key to retaining population – it elided rural problems with agricultural problems and promoted a vision of country life that was founded on the cornerstone of the family farm. As such, it has been argued that the ACLA, together with the Farm Bureau, framed the political construction of rural America as a policy object, positioning agrarianism at the heart of rural policy and legitimating state intervention to support rural life.

Yet from the beginning, the ACLA recognized that rural life was more than the economics of agriculture. Its second conference in 1919 was largely devoted to rural

health and its membership was wide-ranging. Indeed, from the start the ACLA championed a partnership approach, bringing together farm unions, church groups and organizations involved with education, health, economic development and welfare. The bringing together of these groups was itself an important function of the ACLA which was bolstered by a strong educational agenda. The ACLA's attempts to encourage school curriculums to reflect local communities are regarded as among its greatest successes.

Wunderlich's book hints at the significance of the ACLA in the definition of rural America during the twentieth century, but does not develop this analysis in detail. *American Country Life* is less a critical academic tome and more a biography of the organization – and one that clearly reveals the endearment of the subject to the biographer. It is nonetheless an invaluable resource for anyone searching for detailed information on the ACLA or on rural America during the mid part of the last century. Based on painstaking research in the ACLA archives, the book is saturated with an impressive amount of detail about ACLA activities and leaders. These two dimensions form the structure for the book, first describing the ACLA's organization and profiling some of its key leaders, and then moving on to a chronological account of its activities that is largely framed around discussion of its annual conferences. The importance of individuals in shaping the organization's path stands out from the narrative, as do the recurrent problems of underfunding and understaffing.

Moreover, the book provides an insight into not only the ACLA but also the changing nature of rural America. As Wunderlich observes, 'Rural life in America is projected through the lens of this extraordinary organization. ACLA is a metaphor of country life in much of the twentieth century' (p. xii). The distinction made by Wunderlich between 'generation one' and 'generation two' of the ACLA membership neatly conveys a sense of how much rural America changed during the few decades of the mid-twentieth century and of how such changes threw up new leaders, new challenges and new policy contexts. The ability of the ACLA to evolve with rural America was not wholly successful. As Wunderlich's chronology reaches its conclusion, the distance of the ACLA's rural vision from that of modern corporate agriculture and the marginalization of the ACLA in rural policy debates both become increasingly apparent. The demise of the organization in 1976 is treated with a tinge of sentimentality: 'Its death was a lingering one, unattended' (p. 123).

The subtitle of the book is 'a legacy', and it is the legacy of the ACLA that occupies the final chapter. Wunderlich imagines a third 'ghost' or 'spiritual'

generation of the ACLA that has carried forward the principles of the organization without the organization itself. He cites as evidence for this the continuing concern for issues of community, land and stewardship that were nurtured by the ACLA. Wunderlich also points to some of the broader lessons to be gained from the experience of the ACLA, suggesting in particular that the ACLA taught that not all rural life is farming, that rural life is multidimensional, that community extends beyond place or people and that space matters. Wunderlich may be accused of overstating his case in these ambitious claims, but in other respects the discussion of the legacy is curiously underdeveloped. The inter-organizational approach pioneered by the ACLA is newly fashionable again and there are several rural groups, particularly those with a more 'progressive' agenda, who are seeking to connect the different components of rural society and environment just as the ACLA did. Anyone interested in the future of rural America – and in how rural America got to where it is – could do worse than to look back at the ACLA. This book will not provide all the answers, but its rich mine of information forms a valuable resource.

MICHAEL WOODS

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

DAVID J. O'BRIEN and STEPHEN K. WEGREN (eds), *Rural reform in post-Soviet Russia* (Johns Hopkins UP, 2002). xvi + 430 pp. 53 tables; 17 figs; 10 maps. £44.50.

This is an important collection on the rural economy and society in the Russian transition with contributions by leading scholars, including David O'Brien and Stephen Wegren, Grigory Ioffe, Tatyana Nefedova, Maria Amelina, Ethel Dunn, Larry Dershem and Zvi Lerman. Their overall assessment – that agrarian reform has been more successful than is widely reported – is reflected in their empirical research. They show 'incremental institutional change' (p. 408) to quote the editors' summary statement.

Adaptation to markets is the institutional change being studied. Rural adaptive behaviour is identified and described from a diversity of disciplinary perspectives in the three parts of the book. Introductory chapters, including some that draw on articles published elsewhere, discuss the legal framework and provide an overview of Russia's agrarian institutions, such as the commune and the culture of production. A fine chapter on geography by Ioffe and Nefedova underscores the rapid transformation of agricultural space, with much land being removed from production and the more fertile areas experiencing a demographic revival and renewed vertical co-operation. The chapter by Valeri

Patsiorkovski on household strategies covers mostly material published elsewhere, but emphasis on the legacies of the past and institutional organization in rural areas is useful. His update of the 1995–97 panel survey of three villages using 1998 data adds to our understanding of income growth. The importance of household production in the rural economy continues. He also traces the devolution of power to the local level, i.e. from regional to village-level governments, a process only beginning. Zvi Lerman's survey of rural welfare covers general tendencies well known in the literature, including in his own impressive work. With a wide ambit, he shows the importance of weighing opportunities as well as benefits that have been gained and lost in transition. The rural population has lost the certainties and amenities enjoyed under the central planning regime, but it has gained land and property and freedoms of choice (p. 63). Stephen Wegren and Vladimir Belen'kiy's review of land rights has largely been published elsewhere, but it adds a vital contribution to this collection in its emphasis on the security of land rights.

The second part is about opposition to reform as an obstacle to adaptation. The chapter which deals with this topic most effectively is Jessica Allina-Pisano's excellent case study of Voronezh *oblast*, in which the method of farm reorganization is closely tracked. Margaret Paxton's symbolic topography of the village introduces the familiar contours of historical village culture, but too loosely associates that culture with current opposition to change. David Macey provides a close and authoritative analysis of historical continuities.

Two other key chapters in this section are Denis Donahue's on human capital and income inequality based on Rounds V and VI of the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey and Amelina's lucid and powerful, 'What

turns the *kolkhoz* into a firm?' Amelina effectively explains the preservation of Soviet-style distribution at the sub-national level, more characteristic of some *oblasts* than others. By examining two *raiony*, she provides examples of the more and less interventionist sub-national regimes, with the latter imposing a harder budget constraint, resulting in more extensive and more radical restructuring of farms. The last part adds new material in a finely textured work on rural life by Dunn and research results published elsewhere by O'Brien and Dershem.

The conclusion gives a positive evaluation of the state of the sector after the first decade of reform. This conclusion is further supported by trends after the completion of these chapters. However, Zvi Lerman's overall estimate is more cautious:

How has reform affected the economic situation of rural families? It is practically impossible to answer this question with any certainty, as in Russia (and the rest of the former socialist countries) land reform is just one component of a complex process of transition and its effects cannot be isolated from the effects of other components (p. 61).

The strength of the book lies in its almost exclusive focus on rural institutions, but the long-run outcome of reform, presumably the further shrinking of the sector, and the pace of change in rural society will depend upon many factors, including employment opportunities, the diffusion of biotechnological innovation and the impact on productivity of the newest entrants among producers, the vertically integrated large companies, including Gasprom and other energy suppliers.

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