

Book Reviews

RICHARD BRITNELL (ed.), *Durham Priory manorial accounts, 1277–1310* (The Surtees Society, CCXVIII, 2014). lxxiv + 379 pp., 15 tabs. £50.

One can only approach this edition with sadness. The editor, Richard Britnell, in his acknowledgements thanks Alan Piper for his archival work in identifying and dating the early account rolls of Durham Priory, but regrets that Piper's premature death meant that he could not contribute to the introduction of this edition. A further note on the same page records that Richard Britnell himself died after taking the text to the proof stage, and that three scholars completed the work of proofreading and indexing. This volume represents the last major contribution to agricultural and economic history by Britnell, and we can only salute his creativity, the fertility of his ideas, and his industry which enabled him to complete more than a dozen volumes as author or editor over a period of 30 years.

The book presents us with a further example of Britnell's careful scholarship, unselfishly applied for the benefit of other researchers. This is another valuable addition to the primary materials available to historians of the medieval agrarian economy, together with a lengthy introduction that provides background and context. The documents printed here (in Latin) fall into three categories. The first group are the 'original accounts', that is, accounts (in cash and kind) from eight individual manors on the Priory estate compiled between 1277 and 1306. Occupying much more space is a series of enrolled accounts which were intended to provide a full summary of the accounts from individual manors for the whole estate. These cover the period 1296–1310, though with some gaps. The third small group of documents comprises miscellaneous items, such as manorial inventories of 1302 (listing seed corn, grain in store, livestock and deadstock), and an inventory of livestock for 1310. The summary records for all manors are a familiar accounting device for large estates, of which the best-known examples are the pipe rolls of the bishopric of Winchester. After such central accounts had been compiled, the accounts of individual manors were often discarded,

so the handful of 'original accounts' for Durham are a fortunate survival.

The estate economy bore a strong resemblance to that of other large church estates, generating an annual income of about £2,000, partly from tenant rents, and partly from demesnes on which each year about 3000 acres were sown, and which profited from a flock of some 5000 sheep. Much produce was sent to Durham for consumption, and self-sufficiency was practised even in the supply of iron.

The documents have some peculiar characteristics. Whereas conventional accounts include both income from rents and from production, Durham Priory recorded rents separately, so the documents here are focused on demesne agriculture. The local officials could not use money derived from rent to pay expenses such as wages or the cost of equipment – instead cash was sent out to the manors from the central administration in Durham. The administrators did not observe a standard accounting year, so the period covered does not begin and end at the conventional date of 29 September, but often at apparently arbitrary dates between August and November, which varied from manor to manor and from year to year. This would have presented difficulties for any official attempting to calculate the annual rise and fall of profits, but there is no evidence that such profit estimates were made. The measures of corn included, as well as the usual quarters and bushels, such units as chalders, rasars and kennings. Britnell's introduction guides us through these unusual features, and also explains that the important local officials were the sergeants, who were more substantial men appointed by the priory, with more varied responsibilities than the manorial reeves most often encountered elsewhere. Manors slipped in and out of direct management, though the reasoning behind the decision to lease or not to lease cannot be certainly established.

Historians pursuing particular themes will find valuable data in these records. Those interested in technology will learn much here about choices of crops, the balance between arable and pasture, and yield ratios. Oxen on one manor were fitted not with yokes but with

collars. In spite of the emphasis on self-sufficiency, within the estate there is still valuable information on markets, such as the cart acquired ready-made in the town of Darlington, and the horse and cattle bought at Corbridge, the site of a busy livestock fair.

The editor has provided a glossary which is not confined to unusual words, apparently in a move to help those with imperfect Latin. The Surtees Society is thereby recognizing a problem: for how long can they continue to publish documents entirely in Latin and exclude many potential users of their publications?

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MARK BAILEY, *The decline of serfdom in late medieval England: from bondage to freedom* (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, 2014). xii + 373 pp., 56 tabs., 6 figs., 4 maps. £60.

Mark Bailey's new study consciously echoes the title of Rodney Hilton's classic short student guide, offering (amazingly) the first ever monograph on this important topic. Where others have given up in the face of a plethora of fragmented evidence buried in manorial records, Bailey has applied a clear-headed and systematic approach. Part one offers an overview, surveying the existing literature to consider the importance of serfdom in late medieval England, the chronology of its decline, and the causes of that decline. Part two examines the evidence of court rolls and accounts from 38 manors in two localities: 29 from East Anglia (mostly Suffolk) and nine from the South Midlands (mostly Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire). While the geographical coverage is far from comprehensive or even, the manors are chosen to represent different size categories and a variety of types of lords. The three main aspects of the decline of serfdom are tracked using this documentation: first, the disappearance of servile incidents such as chevage, childwyte, merchet, millsuit and tallage, along with labour services – with a particular stress on heavy week works rather than harvest works; second, the conversion of villein tenures to non-servile fixed-term tenures for money rent; and third, the disappearance of the language of servility in describing customary terms of tenure. In part 3, two concluding chapters return to the issue of timing (when did serfdom disappear on most manors?) and causation (what was the most likely cause of serfdom's disappearance?).

The conclusions drawn from this approach are startling. Rather than finding evidence of an 'Indian summer' in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, when serfdom was retained or even strengthened, and life went on more or less as normal, as much of the

existing literature assumes, Bailey finds that serfdom decayed immediately after the Black Death, before 1381. This was true whether disappearance is judged by the majority of customary land being converted to non-servile tenures, or by the majority of servile incidents falling into disuse. Evidence of land values from leasehold rents showed a steep decline between the 1340s and 1360s, with customary tenures not fully reoccupied until early 1360s. The growing rental income of some manors between the 1350s and 1370s was due to the replacement of labour services with money rents, in other words it was due to the weakening of serfdom not its intensification. Only one aspect of serfdom was tightened after the Black Death and particularly after 1381: a growing distinction emerged between villein tenure and personal serfdom. While villein tenure was largely no longer regarded as servile, those identified as personally unfree were labelled 'bondmen of blood' and charged some servile incidents, particularly chevage, more frequently than before. Thus the institution of serfdom continued to change in character even as it disappeared. The findings also include some important observations about the emergence of different forms of copyhold tenure from the collapse of serfdom. The creation of fixed-term tenures for lives or years was most common on manors which had difficulty finding tenants; these tended to be manors with standard-sized holdings, heavy labour services, and little or no land market in the pre-Black Death period. Such manors were more common in the South Midlands than in East Anglia. The fixed-term tenures of the 1350–1450 period, which were often leaseholds, later developed into copyholds for lives. The less radically reformed villein tenures on manors where demand for land remained strong, which were common in East Anglia, developed into copyhold of inheritance.

Where the study is weakest however, is in its consideration of the causes of these changes. Four main candidates for ending serfdom are suggested: manumission, resistance, migration, and economic forces underpinned by demographic change. And despite acknowledging the multi-faceted nature of historical change, the conclusion argues that the sharp decline in land values immediately after the Black Death offers the only convincing explanation of the speed and comprehensiveness of serfdom's decline in England. Differences between manors in the timing and nature of changes are explained in terms of lordly policy, landholding structures, and levels of over-population before the Black Death. Certainly, manumission was never a serious contender for the end of serfdom in England, but resistance and migration deserve more careful consideration. Here Bailey's

rigidly systematic approach is less helpful. Evidence of popular resistance against aspects of serfdom, of which this study notes many instances, is rarely clear cut. Bailey chooses to conclude that resistance was limited, accusing other historians of cherry-picking examples of active resistance to serfdom in order to overplay its significance. But given that he is only willing to consider overt acts of resistance to servile incidents clearly recorded in the manorial documents, and that such acts are recorded in the many of the manors in his well-documented category, another historian might interpret this as widespread resistance. He is even more conservative in his interpretation of migration, only counting those people formally presented for leaving a manor as migrating to escape serfdom. Yet it remains likely that the most widespread form of resistance to serfdom was for tenants or heirs to leave the manor to which they belonged to take up land elsewhere, and that most of these cases were not presented. The unusually high turnover in tenant surnames between 1348 and 1440 surely needs to be explored in this context, but Bailey's method does not admit evidence of tenant turnover, even when it is available in print for one the manors studied, as at Kibworth Harcourt. This is also symptomatic of the book's sparing engagement with existing scholarship on the topic, even those studies mentioned in the bibliography. Despite these quibbles, however, this is an impressive and valuable study, which will hopefully provoke further lively debate on this important but neglected chapter in England's economic development.

JANE WHITTLE
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BRODIE WADDELL, *God, duty and community in English economic life, 1660–1720* (Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History, The Boydell Press, 2012). xii + 273 pp., 8 figs, 1 tab. £60. Reading Waddell's incisive, incessantly questioning, and extremely impressive work, I kept finding sections, particularly in chapters 1 and 4, that I wished to set for undergraduates. At the same time, I wondered what they would make of them. At their best, modern history undergraduates are supremely goal-oriented readers, stripping through swathes of literature at lightning speed with a locust-like appetite for synthesis. Their objective is to identify and typify arguments, and (ideally) to formulate a synthesis that will encapsulate a subject, and answer the question. Brodie Waddell's self-consciously disruptive tome may therefore come as something of a shock.

A large number of sacred cows were harmed in the writing of this book. Waddell has no truck with much

of the received ancestral wisdom that British social history has passed down the generations since the early twentieth century. Out goes Weber's Protestant Ethic ('neither the world... nor Protestantism were particularly "capitalist" well into the eighteenth century', p. 80, n. 215). Out goes E. P. Thompson's distinction between 'moral' and 'market economy' (because repeatedly it becomes reduced in practice 'to a superstructural façade supported by the "real" economy', p. 12). Out goes a 'declension' narrative that began with Tawney, which construes the economic and social history of early modern England as 'the process of economic "modernisation" – essentially the shift from a "moral economy" to an "amoral economy"' (p. 18), from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft* via 'the World We Have Lost'.

In its place, Waddell introduces a new, non-linear narrative. At its heart is the idea that economic life and thought in early modern England was always governed by moral ideals, primarily those of English Protestantism. This was not a moral framework which either endorsed unrestrained accumulation, or (*pace* Weber) encouraged it inadvertently by the desire to seek material assurances of God's favour. Rather, it was and remained, a creed that was highly judgemental in matters economic, that placed social responsibilities to the poor above untrammelled individual acquisition, that sanctioned 'direct action' by the poor in times of dearth, that remained uncomfortable with usury, that continued to threaten the miser and the covetous with the pains of hell, and regarded 'contract' as inferior to the social bonds of patriarchal authority, lordship and reciprocity. He emphasizes the ways in which the widespread social acceptance of these values ensured that the poor could invoke them effectively to secure redress. This was not by knowing Scott-ian manipulation of the 'public transcript', or self-conscious acts of Thompson-ian patrician 'hegemony'. Rather, it was because the dictates of conscience combined with entrenched notions of paternalism, stewardship and patronage, to form a relatively uncontested (and perhaps unconsidered) *habitus* understanding of the moral imperatives of economic relations.

Waddell's source material is primarily, but not exclusively, the stuff of more 'cultural-history' approaches (sermons, ballads, chapbooks), focusing on the discursive content and boundaries of such values. However, he takes pains also to investigate lived experiences and practices through a wide range of other source material, including corporation records, guild books, personal memoranda, equity cases and parish vestry sources. There is scope for his argument to be pursued through a fuller and further-reaching

exploration of these latter materials, and this is likely to form the basis of his next project.

Since this book was published, Andy Wood has produced his most recent monograph, *The memory of the people. Custom and popular senses of the past in early modern England* (Cambridge U. P., 2013). While the perplexed undergraduate mind might rebel at the prospect, it is worthwhile reading both works together. Wood's highly nuanced analysis of an all-encompassing popular understanding of 'customary' ways of governing, sharing, conserving, exploiting and apportioning resources, communal and individual assets and entitlements tends to fall within the 'declension' narrative criticized by Waddell. However, it also emphasizes a conceptual point that would strengthen Waddell's discussion of household duties and communal bonds in chapters 2 and 3. This is Wood's demonstration that profound social conflict can occur within a single discursive field – so that landlords and tenants might both agree implicitly on the importance of limiting exclusive rights to private property by allowing the poor to glean corn, and might express this through a shared common moral language, but might fight bitterly over its precise practical implications. This is not merely the revival of a hoary reductionist, materialist objection to taking expressed values seriously. Rather, it suggests that contests over genuinely shared meanings and values are just as powerful as the cleavages of base and superstructure so beloved of earlier generations of social historians. It also implies that Waddell is correct to argue that we should not expect such contests to resolve themselves in any neat teleology of the 'rise of capitalism' or the 'decline of neighbourliness', either.

So, this is a book to confound the undergraduate desire for a linear narrative, an either/or argument, and a neat and tidy concluding paragraph. I hope that it also a work that causes some conceptual reconfigurations within English social history. The last person really to attempt the task was Alan Macfarlane in 1978, with *The origins of English Individualism*. Ultimately, Macfarlane's book was better at challenging the sufficiency of existing grand narratives of modernization and capitalist development, than in convincing practitioners that individualism began with the sources of English local history, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In effect, Waddell is trying to argue the reverse, that English Individualism never superseded morally bounded economic discourses until the advent of utilitarian principles around 1800, and that it never swept all other challengers from the field. Historians, whether in embryo as undergraduates, or as fully fledged practitioners, still remain change-seeking

animals, who sometimes overlook arguments that push against this reflex. This is much too good a book to deserve such a fate.

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HAROLD FOX, *Dartmoor's alluring uplands: transhumance and pastoral management in the Middle Ages*, ed. and intro. by Matthew Tompkins and Christopher Dyer (Exeter University Press, 2012). xii + 291 pp, 22 illus., 45 figs, 7 tabs. £55.

Sadly, Harold Fox died before completing the final stages of preparing this book for publication. His death was a significant loss to medieval economic history and the history of Devon, but the loss would have been all the greater had Matt Tompkins and Chris Dyer not stepped in to see this book through to publication. This book bears the hallmarks of Harold Fox's research style and expertise: meticulous and thorough in his approach to the surviving documentation, deeply knowledgeable about Devon, but also imaginative and flexible. It draws evidence from archaeology, maps, place-names and the landscape as well as from manuscript documents, and uses comparative examples from other parts of England and Europe and from later time periods where this was helpful in developing the interpretation. The result is an impressive and revealing study, with a firm focus on Devon's medieval pastoral economy and the unique role of Dartmoor within it.

The study ranges from the Anglo-Saxon period to the nineteenth century, but its core is the golden age of manorial documentation from fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Fox's central argument is that Dartmoor, far from being an area of wild and unusable 'waste', was the key element in a wide-reaching system of pastoral transhumance. In the early medieval period this was genuine transhumance, with people as well as livestock moving seasonally to Dartmoor to benefit from the summer pastures. In the high-to-late medieval period it was what Fox describes as 'impersonal transhumance', by which 'down country' farmers entrusted cattle to the guardianship of either moor-side middlemen or royal officials on Dartmoor for part of each year. As a result Dartmoor's pasture benefited not only the parishes and farmsteads that bordered the moor, but the majority of Devon, an extensive area west of the Exe and lower Taw rivers. The evidence is not always exactly watertight, but is presented clearly and in detail to the reader. The earliest evidence is the remains of huts on Dartmoor, possibly used by transhumant shepherds and dairymaids each summer. Certainly intriguing are the detached moor-side sections of distant manors such as Kenton on the Exe estuary and Cockington

on the Torbay coast. Place-names and administrative boundaries provide further evidence of the movement of livestock, seasonal occupation and links between Dartmoor and a much wider area of Devon. Comparative evidence from studies of the Kentish Weald and Warwickshire Arden where transhumance was also practiced shows that such systems were not unknown in England, as is often assumed. For the late medieval period the large numbers of cattle sent to Dartmoor (although not sheep which must also have been moved) in the summer are documented, with grazing fees of 1½*d.* per head paid for over 10,000 cattle in the fifteenth century, in addition to cattle sent by more local farmers of 'venville' tenements which were exempt from the fee. As might be expected from a book not quite finished at the time of the author's death, some parts are a little uneven in style and approach, and there are romantic interludes alongside hard-headed assessments of the available evidence. The editors provide a helpful introduction and summarizing conclusion, which draw out the wider issues addressed. The book is well illustrated with diagrams, maps and photographs (many in colour). This all adds up to a vivid and accessible account of a neglected topic despite the complexity of the evidence and issues discussed. It is an important addition to the literature on the agricultural systems of the medieval period, as well as to the history of Devon.

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DAVID HEY, *A History of the Peak District moors* (Pen & Sword Local, 2014). viii + 207 pp., 84 illus., 4 maps. £12.99

This is a very personal book which carries evidence of David Hey's love of this area, his deep knowledge of its history and – it must said – his politics. On the face of it, the structure of the book is standard in that it starts with pre-history and works forward to the present day. What makes it distinctive is that, rather than trying to cover the full history of each part of what is (after all) a complex area, Hey discusses in great depth how one or more parts of the Peak District were affected by events. It is a delight to read these discussions, which put the area in context – especially the period up to about 400 CE – without getting bogged down in too much detail. This is not a typical 'book of X' but a narrative demonstrating the author's love and profound knowledge of the Peak District. The story has both bones and flesh to fill the frame. We have here a narrative linking place-names, topography and archaeology to reveal not only the change over time but also parallels with other areas of Britain with which his

audience might be more familiar. We are given clear but deep descriptions of events in particular places, which allow the reader to integrate each narrative into a developing understanding.

Hey starts with a broadly based introduction, where he describes such fundamental aspects as topography and vegetation followed by their implications in terms of agrarian potential. These themes are developed further in subsequent chapters, where he never dumbs down the concepts under discussion but approaches each in such a way as to make them accessible to all. Consequently, technical terms are used as an invitation rather than to repel the novice by proclaiming the writer's expertise. Throughout, Hey wears his scholarship lightly; an educated man chatting to new acquaintances and drawing them in to share his own delight.

The first four chapters are, in many respects, standard history. Chapter 5, 'Improvement and enclosure', covers more than the usual ground, for his 'Peak District' contains Sheffield, Saddleworth and various other areas not normally included in the designation. This gives a depth to the discussions which is normally lacking when writers confine themselves within the National Park boundaries. This explains what happened prior to the creation of the Park, resulting in some parts being excluded and (naturally enough) it is here that the politics start to show. Chapter 6 takes us across the Grouse Moors from the introduction of guns into what we now call field sports, their impact upon vegetation and wildlife, and the huge amounts of money involved in 'shoots'. Whilst there are obvious links between field sports and the Right to Roam movement, nevertheless, in some respects, the last two chapters sit a little oddly. That said, Hey sets the record straight on a number of important aspects of such things as Kinder Scout and the legend of mass trespass. These discussions have considerable value, which is not lessened by his own long-term support of the Ramblers' Association to which reference is made in the Preface. It is in these last chapters that Hey's politics really stand proud, and there can be no objection to that. Do we not all write under the influence of our personal views? The casual reader will gain a greater understanding of both landscape history and the impact of resource exploitation whilst being handed a framework for reading the landscape. And those of a more academic bent will feel confident that Hey's facts are reliable (and quotable). Although there are no footnotes, the book has a useful bibliography and index.

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DAVID SHORT (ed.), *An historical atlas of Hertfordshire* (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2011). xv + 201 pp., 30 figs. £25.

The University of Hertfordshire Press (like the historians of its host University) has an excellent record of publishing volumes of local and regional history which meet the needs both of academic historians and of an interested public. This recent addition is no exception, offering excellent value for a large-format and colourfully illustrated, stoutly produced paperback, with a brief but insightful introduction on historical atlases by Nigel Goose with an excellent bibliography of the genre. Local historical atlases have tended to fall at one of two ends of a spectrum. At one end are those more academic publications which set themselves a historical agenda, covering all the main thematic areas across time, and then seek to provide maps which illuminate those themes, even if the data available for mapping some concepts are often elusive, requiring careful historical evaluation. At the other end are those (generally aimed at a wider public) which start from mappable data, not attempting to cover all topics, and leave the reader to draw wider thematic conclusions. This particular volume falls somewhere in the middle. It is organized thematically, covering in turn boundaries, buildings, communication routes, demography, early settlements, industries and work, landscape, religious buildings and religion, social issues, towns and villages, war and civil unrest, but as the alphabetical ordering of that list suggests, it imposes no particular chronological model of county development on those subjects (after an introductory section on the physical landscape and the origins of the county), and some of the individual topics selected, such as icehouses, City of London coal tax markers or medieval and Tudor graffiti, reflect the enthusiastic knowledge of particular researchers. There are 82 separate sections, mostly consisting of two pages with one map, and the text tends to summarize the topic and the lessons to be learned from the map for the general reader, rather than evaluating the sources and reliability of the data being mapped. Nigel Goose manages to get two maps each to illustrate his sections on Tudor and Stuart population and on straw-plaiting and hat-making in the nineteenth century, as does Nigel Agar for agricultural trades. The longest sections, however, are those on the county's garden cities and new towns, which together get an unrivalled ten pages. The 51 contributors are an impressive mixture, with heritage professionals and local historians rubbing shoulders with leading figures in landscape and local history and historical geography such as Tom Williamson, Evelyn Lord and Hugh Prince.

It has to be confessed, however, that this is not an atlas designed to please the agricultural historian. Agar begins his section on agriculture in the nineteenth century by noting 'Although agriculture has been practised in Herefordshire since Neolithic times, the first century for which we have really detailed information is the nineteenth', and this controversial view seems reflected in the volume as a whole. There is no systematic coverage of settlement history or types after the Anglo-Saxon period (not even in Domesday), apart from a section on abandoned settlements, and no attempt to map patterns of landholding: even the location of major estates can only be deduced from the discussions of buildings and landscape features. There is a section on markets and fairs, though it only maps markets established up to the sixteenth century, but it offers no analysis of the agricultural produce marketed. The sections on landscape address woodlands (mapping woodland with over 200 swine in Domesday), rabbit warrens, dovecotes, parks and 'great gardens' (two sections on the latter two topics), but only the modern sections on parliamentary enclosure, orchards and agriculture in the nineteenth century reflect directly on farming practices: even the last-named section simply illustrates parishes with more than 60 per cent arable or more than 60 per cent pasture from the 1836 tithe commutation data. The chapter on mills deals entirely with mills up to 1400, predominantly those in Domesday. There is a section on malting and brewing, focused on Ware's role as a malting centre for London and nationally, but nothing in the text indicates the source or date of its map of malthouses and breweries. The map accompanying the section on watercress-growing is dated to around 1900, but is classified by the type of bed structure used in growing, not in relation to other farming types. Agar's and Goose's sections noted above throw some light on dealers in corn, hay, malt and cattle and the spread of the straw industry in the mid-Victorian period, but there is no further consideration of agricultural produce, processing or trading; the other industries covered are technologically interesting ones such as bell-founding and papermaking, not the standard cloth, leather and metal trades. The texts on medieval roads/bridges and on turnpike roads refer occasionally to agricultural goods: an account of the origin and numbers of wagonloads of grain passing through Colliers End in 1632 is described as 'probably the first ever traffic census', but both these sections and that on rivers and navigations are either silent about the goods carried or refer to produce from East Anglia moving through to London, rather than the county's own output. The only author really to address agriculture is Goose, both briefly in his discussion

of population trends after 1500, and at slightly more length in his introduction, where he confirms 'the "fame" of the county for tillage, and its essentially agrarian economy for much of its history', but, sadly, despite its many other virtues, this volume does little to reveal that agrarian economy or society.

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RICHARD HOYLE (ed.), *The farmer in England, 1650–1980* (Ashgate, 2013). xvi + 358 pp., 51 figs., 28 tabs. £80.

Farming, as readers of the *Review* will readily appreciate, is a very broad church. Irrespective of environment, location and soil type, the practice of the craft and science of farming will be determined by many complex and even contradictory factors. Family background, patterns of inheritance, method of tenure, availability of capital and the existence or otherwise of suitable heirs are among the many elements concerned. A man of 60 with no immediate family may take a very different view of the next ten farming years than his neighbour with a brood of sturdy sons keen to follow in his footsteps.

As Richard Hoyle shows in his admirable introduction to the present volume, the 'farming ladder' was occupied by all sorts, yet our ability to see them as a community and to assess their success or otherwise in overcoming the elements or coping with periods of depression is often obscured by the absence of good-quality source material. For earlier periods farm diaries, memoranda and accounts (often chance survivals) are frequently little more than things of threads and patches, giving tantalizing glances of income and expenditure but casting little light on real profits and losses and other elements of business activity. The problem is partially illustrated in Joyce Burnette's chapter where she makes a brave attempt to apply sophisticated econometric analysis to a range of accounts as a means of assessing seasonality of agricultural employment between 1740 and 1850.

The reality is that for all the voluminous sets of extant nineteenth-century farm accounts, only the data collected by the Farm Management Survey from the mid-1930s onwards allows for a detailed view of the sectoral advance or decline of farming as a whole. Until more recent years the general body of farmers, irrespective of their level of agricultural education, have been at best reluctant keepers of records. Suspicious of officialdom and sceptical of the claims of 'science', the bulk of the pre-twentieth-century farming community tended to farm much as their fathers had farmed before them. Of course, they kept a close eye open to the

main chance and in following trends in prices not infrequently adopted rotational and cropping measures wholly unsuited to the circumstances of their farms. If the price was right they followed it, but otherwise the efforts of landlords and their agents to cajole or even coerce them into change were often met with dour scepticism.

There were, of course, exceptions and to the extent that contributors to this book offer a series of essays on noteworthy individuals, its title might better be 'Some farmers in England, 1650–1980'. At the peak, as it were, of the farming pantheon stood the genuine innovators, men like James Mason (1824–1903) and Rex Paterson (1903–1978), creative thinkers whose innovative approach towards their craft was instrumental in stimulating various significant developments in agricultural science. Yet, as Peter Dewey takes pains to point out, Mason's ample wealth enabled him to sustain the considerable farming losses occasioned by his experiments, while Paterson, John Martin tells us, brought skills to his calling from outside the farming world. Meanwhile, the capitalist nineteenth-century farmers described in detail by John Broad and Susanna Wade-Martins, were hardly typical of the ordinary run of husbandmen. On the other hand, in common with Hoyle's late seventeenth-century English farmers, the former would probably have attributed some of their success to a flexible approach to cereal cropping policy. Flexibility, adaptability and sheer toughness undoubtedly characterized those denizens of the uplands of the north west described by Hilary Crowe while similar qualities were required of the Lancashire smallholders of the eighteenth century who, Andy Gritt writes, played so important a role in the agrarian and industrial economy. Somewhat earlier, Lancashire was the home of the remarkable Quaker farmer, Sarah Fell, who successfully managed her customary and freehold lands with a sharp eye open for entrepreneurial opportunities. Her activities are considered by Jennifer Holt, while Nicola Verdon contributes further to the gender debate by elegantly outlining the life of Louise Cresswell who ran a substantial farm in Victorian East Anglia and wrote extensively of her experiences.

In sum, this book comprises a series of interesting and sometimes intriguing snapshots of individual farmers from the sixteenth century onwards. But as Richard Hoyle readily admits, it is not, nor could it ever have been, a comprehensive portrait of 'the farmer'. Perhaps a final chapter based on returns from the Farm Business Survey would have given us a glimpse of the economic and social condition of the farmer in 1980? This would have provided some sort of conclusion or epilogue to a volume ending rather abruptly with

Philip Conford's essay on the organic pioneer Robert Stuart (1900–1980). It would, moreover, have laid the foundation for a study of the alarms and excursions, triumphs and traumas of the past 30 years of the agricultural world to which historians should soon be turning their interest. Professor Hoyle might care to reflect upon this, perhaps in discussion with the inimitable and evergreen Ted Collins, to whom the present work is affectionately dedicated.

R. J. MOORE-COLYER
Llanrhystud and Malmesbury

RICHARD DAVIES, ALAN PETFORD and JANET SENIOR (eds), *The diaries of Cornelius Ashworth, 1782–1816* (Hebden Bridge Local History Society, Occasional Publications, 2011). viii + 368 pp., 43 illus. £19 + £3 p. & p. via www.hebdenbridgehistory.org.uk.

Rural domestic workers, with a foot in agriculture as well as manufacture, lay behind the rise of West Yorkshire as the major wool textile region of industrializing Britain. Cornelius Ashworth (1751–1821), living at Walt Royd, Wheatley in Halifax parish, was one such, although he was not a typical farmer/handloom weaver. Following an early marriage to the widow of a propertied family he was unusual in that his wife had inherited the farm (16 acres with farmhouse and seven additional cottages) for her lifetime. The Ashworths were therefore ratepayers and Cornelius played a role in the administration of his township. Through his wife's family he also had close London connections and step children (though no issue of his own). He was also unusual in keeping a diary. Four volumes of everyday observations have survived covering two separate years of the 1780s, a year or so of 1809, and just over a year 1815–1816. They are here the subject of careful (and for the first time complete) transcription, indexing and analysis by three experienced researchers of the Hebden Bridge Local History Society. It is published by the Society, on high-quality coated paper with both black-and-white and colour illustrations, with the aid of bequests and subscriptions that have rightly recognized the unique value of this, albeit intermittent, record of daily life at the cutting edge of the first industrial revolution.

The book starts with a thorough and knowledgeable introduction to Ashworth's various occupations, their routines and technologies, his religious practice, travel and the economic and social conditions of Halifax parish at this time. Footnotes point the reader to a wealth of complementary information and potentially puzzling entries in the diaries are thereby clarified. Nigel Smith's exemplary indexes to places, persons

and subjects complete what is a thorough context for the diaries themselves. It even includes a glossy copy of J. F. Myers' Map of Halifax Parish, 1835, tucked into a sleeve in the back endpaper. Students will find it instructive to trace Ashworth's perambulations.

In the mid-1780s Ashworth records when he carried each piece of cloth to market, as well as the amount he wove each day. His output was just less than half a piece of 30-yard kersey per week but sometimes he wove twice that amount. Shifts to weaving different sorts of double worsted cloths are recorded and the diary shows Ashworth weaving into the twilight hours and before dawn. He was also involved in building, quarrying, labouring and hop dealing. By the time of the later diaries weaving is no longer mentioned. Farming and social events become more prominent, including the Ovenden enclosure of 1817. Throughout there is intermittent but useful mention of prices for farm produce, animals, and labour, much about oats, cows, harvesting and water furrowing. Ashworth was a reticent recorder with little time for sentiment but two things stand out: his faith and his preoccupation, on a daily basis, with the weather.

Whether entirely new to the economic and social history of this part of Yorkshire or already an expert, this book has much to offer. It will be very useful for those wishing to understand: the industrialization process; domestic textile manufacturing and hand weaving; small scale mixed farming; multi-occupations; the importance of seasons and climate, familial ties; the central importance of the evangelical revival in this part of Yorkshire; and the everyday lives of relatively lowly people living in a period of economic and social transformation.

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BRIAN BONNYMAN, *The third duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith. Estate management and improvement in enlightenment Scotland* (Edinburgh University Press, 2014). x + 218 pp., 7 figs. £45.

This important volume is a valuable addition to the growing, but still small, field of detailed empirical historical research into estate management in Scotland. As such, it should attract a wide audience, not least because it combines a detailed study of one of Scotland's great estates with a fascinating analysis of how the management and policy of that estate was influenced by the intellectual ferment of the Enlightenment, centred in nearby Edinburgh. This book is built upon a wide range of sources, but central to the study are the Buccleuch papers, one of the premier archival collections for landed estates history in Britain. This

collection has been neglected by historians in the past, heightening interest in this volume, which is in addition handsomely supported by maps and images.

The Buccleuch estates remain the largest private landed estates in Scotland, and this book traces their eighteenth-century history; a formative period where they underwent significant change under the rubric of Improvement, led by key personalities of the day, as well as unknown, but wildly influential estate managers. The central figure under consideration is the third duke of Buccleuch, who oversaw his vast patrimony through a period of revolutionary change. He was guided through this by his tutor, Adam Smith, the great political economist, and one of the joys of this volume is the way in which it exposes the intellectual networks that made later eighteenth-century Scotland such an exciting and challenging place to be. Although much has been written on the intellectual history of the period, this book is the first attempt to examine the process by which the insights of contemporary political economy were applied to the management and improvement of a landed estate. As such, it will be of great interest to readers concerned with agricultural and improvement history, landed elites and estate management, and Enlightenment thought and its application.

The book is divided into six substantial chapters, which although broadly thematic, also slot roughly into the overall chronological span of 1746–1812. They cover roughly five decades of upheaval and reform in the management and personnel of the estate, the purpose and design of its leases, the nature of agriculture and other economic activities such as forestry and fishing and the management of the family's 'interest', social and political. As well as this, the reader will be rewarded with a detailed insight into the education and training of a young nobleman in the mid-eighteenth century. For the third duke of Buccleuch, this meant having Adam Smith as a personal tutor and being accompanied by him on a Grand Tour of Europe. It was a long-standing and rewarding friendship, and although Smith took on no official role on the estates, his influence on the duke's thinking is beautifully teased out here.

At the core of this book lies the tension between personality and land, the opportunities and restrictions of Improvement, and the limits of idealism. The author embeds these tensions in a series of discussions; on the theory and practice of Improvement and how it was instituted and by whom; the 1707 Union project and its perceived benefits, as defined by the landed classes; debt, consumption and estate finances; and the political and governing power of families such as the

Buccleuchs, their close family connection, the Argylls, and friends and colleagues, such as Dundas. Crucially, this picture of power and influence is nuanced with a study of the patterns of resistance to Buccleuch power, especially to the programme of Improvement being rolled out across the lowland and upland estates, within and without the estate management.

One of the heroes of the book is William Keir, one of the Buccleuch estate managers and a man who was fundamental to the design and execution of Improvement on the estates. He faced opposition from his senior colleagues in the management, and from the populace affected by his lease re-structuring plans. Tenants formed 'combinations', there was fence breaking and rioting on the estates and as a consequence a tightening up of the policing of behaviour. This is not a story of a smooth transition to modernity, but one of tension, conflict and deep social and economic complexities. The third duke was a man dedicated to his role as a 'public-spirited patriot'; he supported thinkers and inventors and he believed his improvements would benefit the national economy. This volume paints a complex picture with an admirably light touch; it deserves its place in a prestigious publishing series and makes a key addition to a wide range of historical and intellectual fields.

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BONNIE WHITE, *The Women's Land Army in First World War Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). ix + 207 pp., 6 illus. £55.

In their striking uniforms of khaki breeches, overcoats and boots, the appearance of Land Girls in the latter part of the First World War aroused much contemporary comment, some amusement, and a large degree of consternation. The Women's Land Army has also been well-served by historians. Peter Dewey's research in the 1980s sought to calculate the contribution of the WLA to First World War agriculture vis-à-vis other forms of substitute labour. Other work, by Pamela Horn, Susan Grayzel, Gill Clarke and Cecilia Gowdy-Wygant, has seen the WLA as a symbol, amongst other things, of wartime patriotism, personal liberation and rural rejuvenation. Is there anything else to be said about an organization that figures so heavily in public and academic consciousness? Bonnie White's new book shows that the answer is a resounding yes.

The Women's Land Army in First World War Britain is the most comprehensive history of the origins and development of the organization to date. It is based upon an extensive trawl of the national archives housed at Kew and Edinburgh, of personal testimonies found in

the Imperial War Museum, and local records deposited in repositories around the country. The sheer breath of research, and a critical reading of the sources, permits a rather different history of the WLA to emerge. It was a body whose inception was far from smooth. Emerging from a patchwork of organizations that were set up to encourage women into land work, the WLA was formed against a backdrop of administrative mismanagement, lack of co-ordination and initial government indifference. From its formal inception at the beginning of 1917 the WLA was not an independent body and the different layers of bureaucracy led to operational confusion at both the local and national level. The WLA was therefore distinguished by a degree of conflict and tension, which hindered its efficiency in recruiting, training and placing women into farm work. By July 1917 the organization had placed only 2000 additional women on farms, with 2200 in training centres. Although a national organization, the WLA in Scotland differed in its orientation, operation and outlook from the WLA in England and Wales, highlighting the importance of understanding regional variations.

The book also critically explores a number of other important themes. What motivated women to join the WLA? Traditionally it has been painted as a patriotic act, to assist the war effort, but here we are shown that this argument is incomplete. Individual motivations differed. Sometimes women joined to experience new work opportunities, and many cited working outdoors and with animals as key. Others believed they were taking part in a scheme of national importance. Some young women, stymied by the restrictions of domestic service, saw that the WLA offered a degree of freedom. Thus although the initial vision of the WLA was of a body of well-trained, educated, disciplined middle-class women from towns and cities, the reality was more complex. Recruits increasingly came from a variety of social, economic and educational backgrounds, and the training they received was mixed and often rudimentary. How did women fare once placed on farms? Again, the picture is complicated. The Land Girls had to negotiate several relationships, with farmers, farmers' wives, other farm workers, Group Leaders, Welfare Officers and other Land Girls. All could be fraught. Some girls took their work more seriously than others. Some farmers were critical of the abilities of women, others were more welcoming. Male labourers could sneer at the work performed by women, but they were also won over by their perseverance. The challenges faced by Land Girls were therefore not simply due to prejudice, but were also connected to local farming practices, fears over conscription if

women were used as substitute labour, and concerns of national and local leaders to convey a particular image of women agricultural workers that allayed concerns over gender and class relations.

In terms of the organizational history of the WLA I doubt if this book could be bettered. Individual readers may find some gaps. For me, Chapter 4 on the WLA in England and Wales would have benefited from greater assessment of local and regional demands within and between these nations. The use of personal testimony in this chapter, whilst illuminating in many respects, also caused some confusion as some of the women quoted, like Edith Airey, who worked on a farm in her native Suffolk for the first six months of the war, are discussed as being members of the WLA, when the organization did not yet exist. This might sound niggardly, but it raises questions about whether non-WLA workers experienced similar or different conditions. Some further investigation of the available statistical data would also have helped to assess the significance of WLA in terms of the broader history of agriculture and women's work in the early twentieth century. These criticisms should not detract from the success of the book, however. It is by far the most thorough and critically refreshing account of the WLA in the First World War and should be read by anyone with an interest in the Great War, women's work and agricultural labour.

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BRETT MIZELLE, *Pig* (Reaktion Books, 2012).
224 pp., 117 illus. £9.99.

Admiration, pity, fear, fascination, disgust, love: humans have a complicated relationship with most other animals, and pigs are no exception. It is presumably this complexity that has prompted Reaktion Books into commissioning their animal series to examine the historical role of animals and their significance in the worlds of trade and imagination, art and science. It is, they claim, 'a new kind of animal history'. The series now has over 60 titles from albatross to wolf, including chickens and ducks, discussed in 2012 in this *Review*, and pigs, the title under review here.

Brett Mizelle has assembled a wonderful collection of pig images, from Greek vases and Roman statues, through medieval manuscript illustrations to film and television stills, to illustrate his book. He begins with an account of the wild boar and its domestication, speculating on whether, given the behaviour of wild pigs, it was a treaty between consenting parties in their mutual self-interest. He goes on to examine the interactions between pigs and people throughout

history, touching on classical myths, medieval pig executions, and the different attitudes to pigs of Moslems and Jews on the one hand and Christians on the other. One of the constant themes of the book is the tension between the small scale and the industrial scale, both in pig rearing and in pigmeat processing. The chapter on the pig in the Americas contrasts the slaughter industries of Cincinnati and Chicago with home-killing traditions in the southern states of the USA, and much of the chapter on the modern pigmeat industry is set there too, comparing traditionally raised pigs favourably with the intensively farmed product. The remaining half of the book is concerned with what pigs do apart from providing something to eat. They hunt truffles and work as entertainers. In Australia there are pig races. There are now more Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs in the USA than in Vietnam since they became popular as pets. Their genetic similarity to humans makes them useful as experimental animals and sources of transplant organs, but also means that they can be sources of medical problems. There is a fascinating chapter on the linguistic and metaphorical role of pigs, and another on pigs in art and literature, from the medieval Testamentum Porcelli to Miss Piggy on television. The final chapter is concerned with the problems caused by feral pigs.

Does this approach constitute a new kind of animal history? And if it does, is it an improvement on the old kind of animal history? Its exploration of mythology and religion, images and literature – the pig of the human imagination – enables the author to make a powerful case for what he calls our ‘occlusion of the real experiences of pigs’ as the pig industry has changed in the last 50 years to move from the cottage and mixed farm pig to the pig as a component in a vertically integrated meat production business. But the reader looking for a discussion of why these changes have occurred, for some analysis of the developments (in feed formulation, genetics, biosecurity, capital intensification, supply chain integration and market concentration) that have combined to produce them, might be better advised to follow up the extensive and varied references listed in the final 30 pages of the book.

PAUL BRASSLEY
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BERNIE ECCLESTON, *Pumps, pipes and purity: the turbulent social history of providing the public with enough safe water in the Thirsk district and North Yorkshire from 1875* (Bernie Eccleston, 2012). 405 pp., 73 figs. £17.50.

Pumps, pipes and purity is the conflict-filled story of the development of mains water in a rural Yorkshire

district. From the moment the Thirsk Water Company was created in 1878, the water question spiralled into a series of battles between commercial interests, landowners, public authorities, sanitary officials and ratepayers. This account follows the water company and neighbouring local authority suppliers through the years up to their absorption into the Ryedale Water Board in the 1960s. It is a detailed and well-researched work, published by the author. Focused on local archival sources, it also draws on histories of public health and water politics in Britain and addresses a significant rural gap in this literature.

Thirsk had much in common with other rural and semi-urban areas during this period. Eccleston sets his study in the context of national policy, assessing the local implications of key government measures in water and sewerage. He highlights tensions between central and local government, exacerbated by permissive regulations, and between local government tiers. Fragmentation remained a key feature of the water industry until amalgamation policies took a firm hold in the 1960s and '70s. The long-term significance of the ‘beneficiary principle’, enshrined in 1870s public health legislation, is evident here. Placing the financial burden for local services on the parishes that benefited from them ensured highly localized water infrastructures and discouraged cooperation across governance boundaries until after the Second World War. The vagaries of local government obligations could be exploited. The ‘quasi-urban’ district of Thirsk itself – part of a Rural District Council – resisted pressures to adopt ‘urban’ sanitary powers for as long as possible.

This account demonstrates vividly that pollution was not just an urban problem. Eccleston examines the politics around recurring outbreaks of disease caused by unreliable water sources, inadequate sewerage and ineffective water treatment. Northallerton had the worst typhoid mortality rates in the country in the early 1890s. The villages of Boltby and Thirlby, threatened by *B. coli*, boiled their water for a whole year, as late as 1963. Informed by the work of Chris Hamlin and others, Eccleston suggests that sometimes the best course of action was unclear to authorities; at other times, cost-cutting was the main priority. He shows that ideological debate over public and private ownership of water supply was only one element in a complex arena, where powerful individuals – local officials, engineers and landowners – could influence events over several decades.

Despite the difficulties, this is also a story of rising domestic and agricultural demand in these areas during the twentieth century. New housing from the 1940s, with water closets, fixed baths and water

heaters, introduced changes in demand that were only dimly anticipated by water providers. In agriculture, mains water brought new dependencies, with farmers fashioning ad hoc piped connections. Cattle and dairy farmers, once connected for 'occasional use ... in dry seasons', became increasingly reliant on constant supply from the 1930s for water troughs and dairies, and, later, for irrigation. Eccleston shows the kinds of challenges the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers faced in trying to increase production at a time of public expenditure curbs. The post-war picture was one of repeated disruptions to supply, with more than one family forced out of dairying when lack of water for cooling and hygiene prevented them from meeting Milk Marketing Board standards.

But this was not a simple question of rising demand. Significant pockets of resistance to mains water (and its related costs), from public authorities and landlords, were part of the problem for those promoting new water schemes. Diverse modes of provision continued into the 1950s and beyond, even within individual villages, with continued use of private rams, village pumps and wells, standpipes and water carts, alongside water mains. Sewerage was even slower to develop. Eccleston highlights the work of Women's Institutes nationally in campaigning for better rural sanitation in the 1940s, protesting at earth closets, bucket lavatories and shared facilities. Drawing on census records, he estimates that two thirds of rural Thirsk households still used outside privies in 1951. Further localized research into the politics of household amenities and everyday life would enrich this picture.

The book is readable in style. Each chapter ends with a useful summary of sources and suggestions for further research. It contains photographs, maps, tables and an index. An epilogue considers the (public) regional water authorities in the 1970s and Yorkshire Water (privatized in 1989) during its controversial first decade. It is not a light read. Its length and in-depth coverage of conflicts that were repeated over time and across different parts of the district make for some repetitiveness, and can obscure the main developments. It provides, however, a multitude of fascinating insights into the transformation of an agricultural district, which will be valuable for future studies of rural provision and daily life.

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ROBERT NEWSON, PETER WADE-MARTINS and ADRIAN LITTLE, *Farming in miniature. A review of British-made toy farm vehicles up to 1980* (Old Pond Publishing Ltd, 2013). 360 pp., 970 illus. £49.95.

As the story goes, toy manufacturers realized the potential for playing at farming in the aftermath of the First World War. With a dip in consumers' enthusiasm for lead soldiers and all things military, the London-based company Britains launched its *Home Farm* for Christmas 1921, beginning with a horse-drawn tumbrel. By the mid-1930s, one could buy a *Model Home Farm* set featuring 'a nice assortment of Animals, Sheep, Pigs, Cows etc., Farm People, Horse Plough with Driver, and Four-wheeled Farm Waggon (sic) with Driver'. Toy tractors joined Britains' range only from 1948, by which time the attractions of what the authors of *Farming in Miniature* refer to as 'carpet farming' (p. 64) were well established. Later cohorts of children had combine harvesters and crop sprayers to play with, as well as plastic churns and hay bales to load and stack.

Farming in Miniature presents a catalogue of the toy and scale-model farm vehicles made in Britain during the period c.1920 to 1980. Before then, the market depended on wooden or tinsplate toy wagons from Germany, or more modern models from the United States; after 1980, some British brand names survived, but most toy manufacture had moved overseas. The study will eventually fill two volumes, the content organized alphabetically by maker's name. Most of these miniature vehicles were meant to be played with, raising obvious questions about the attraction of agricultural themes for children in an increasingly urbanized society. Lone Star marketed a *Farmer's Boy* series of tractors and implements from 1978 to 1979, though one assumes it wasn't just farmers' boys who bought them.

There were some interesting connections to the makers of full-size machinery. Ferguson – always innovative in its marketing – brokered an arrangement with Airfix, who produced models of Ferguson tractors to be given away by salesmen. Chad Valley, maker of wooden and die-cast tractors, branched out with *To Market* (early 1950s), a board game with little Ferguson playing pieces: players landed on squares carrying promotional messages for the brand, such as 'Hydraulic control prevents damage from hidden obstacles – go forward 3'. Links with machinery firms also led to models aimed more explicitly at adults: Denzil Skinner advertised for business in *Farm Mechanization* magazine in the early 1950s, showcasing its expertise in making 'perfect miniatures' for 'display and demonstration'.

The book includes a few novelty tractors: Die Casting Machine Tools (DCMT) created a clockwork *Tricky Tractor* in 1949, which did stunts, and a subsidiary of the firm produced squeaky vinyl tractors for babies in

the late 1960s. But model tractors were rarely generic. There were lots of model Fergusons, Massey-Fergusons, Fordson Majors, and a few David Browns. The colour of these vehicles – such a distinctive feature of branding in agricultural machinery – could be surprisingly varied in their interpretation for the toy market. Airfix's Ferguson tractor came in a rather random range of colours, apparently reflecting the difficulties of sourcing plastics in the late 1940s.

Some striking features emerge from this overview: large numbers of toy tractors in the late 1940s and early 1950s were driven by toy land girls; trailers hauling timber were clearly very popular; old-fashioned horse-drawn wagons and hay carts were the mainstay of many manufacturers' catalogues well into the 1960s. Most farm toys before and after the Second World War drew on traditional forms of country life rather than reflecting changes in agricultural practice, and working horses persisted long after they had disappeared from most farms. By the 1960s, however, toy farms were embracing technical development and modernity, and motor vehicles and implements became more of a focus. From the 1970s, Britain employed a consultant for their farm models who spent the rest of his time

working for the Agricultural Development Advisory Service.

The collectors' market has inspired most publications on the subject, and this volume is also aimed primarily at that specialist readership, providing a well-illustrated guide to variations in models produced, and reproducing images of packaging and trade catalogues where available. Most of the book is devoted to the technical and manufacturing history, with only brief excursions into reflection on the phenomenon of 'farming in miniature' and the ways in which it did and did not relate to contemporary agriculture at a scale of 1:1. But one of the problems in studying the history of toy farms has been access to adequate source material. With its companion volume (which will cover the remaining manufacturers, from Dinky to Wendal), *Farming in Miniature* offers the first thorough survey of what was marketed and when, opening up opportunities for historians to take a closer look at this aspect in the popular representation of agriculture, prominent in the lives of so many children as they were growing up.

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