

## Reviews

*The Ancient Burial-mounds of England.* By L. V. Grinsell. Methuen & Co., Ltd., London; 2nd ed. revised and reset, 1953. Pp. xviii+278; 24 pls., 12 text-figs. Price 25s.

The first edition of this book, published in 1936, was deservedly popular and has long been out of print. It is safe to prophesy that this revised edition will be equally popular, for no better guide to the visible burial-mounds of England, their contents and their lore, could be demanded. The book has been completely recast and rewritten and the author has spared no pains to bring it up to date by references to all the latest relevant post-war discoveries. There is even a postscript referring to new facts and new interpretations which came to the author's knowledge while the book was printing. Let no one therefore think that possession of the first edition absolves him from acquiring the second.

The author divides his subject into two parts: (i) aspects of barrow study, dealing with general considerations such as types of barrows, methods of construction, funeral rites and folk-lore; and (ii) topographical, in which the monuments of the various main barrow regions of England are discussed in turn. Part i could not be bettered. There can be no subject connected with visible barrows that is not discussed, and the footnotes to each chapter are full enough to guide the reader to other works where even fuller information can be obtained. Part ii is excellent also, so far as it goes, but could perhaps have been expanded with profit, for there are certain regions, including our own upper Thames valley, which only receive incidental treatment; so much so that, e.g., the important group of barrows in the Wychwood area is not mentioned at all.

We might hope, also, that in the third edition the author will feel able to expand the book by including a section on ploughed-out barrows and ring-ditches, such as occur in great concentrations in the Thames valley and elsewhere. These raise problems of their own for the archaeologist as regards both recognition and interpretation, and a discussion of them by one with Mr. Grinsell's deep knowledge and insight would be of the utmost value.

But these demands for more must not be taken as criticisms of what the author and his publishers have provided. Both are to be congratulated on a good book, well produced, which sums up what is at present known about our barrows and sets the stage for further advances of knowledge.

D. B. HARDEN.

*English Prehistoric Pottery* (Victoria & Albert Museum 'Small Picture Book' No. 26). By Hugh Wakefield. H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1952. Pp. 4, 32 plates. Price 1s. 6d.

This little picture book of British Prehistoric Pottery, which the Victoria & Albert Museum have brought out to accompany their travelling exhibition, stands somewhat apart from the kind of book normally reviewed in *Oxoniensis*. Yet it deserves a brief mention, if only because it contains two local pieces (no. 25 from Dorchester,

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Oxon., and no. 32 from Sutton Courtenay, Berks.), not to mention numbers of other pots many of which are types which might well have come from the Oxford region. The brochure contains 32 illustrations of the commonest varieties of lowland British pottery and will be of great value not only to students but to the informed general public.

D. B. HARDEN.

*Stonor, a Catholic Sanctuary in the Chilterns from the Fifth Century till To-day.* By Robert Julian Stonor, O.S.B. R. H. Johns, Ltd., Newport, 1951. Pp. 400; 20 plates and 6 tables. Price 21s.

This book tells the story of a family which has held an estate continuously from at least 1315 and whose house contains a chapel which has always been devoted to the Roman rite. The profits of the book are dedicated to the upkeep of the chapel.

Love of his profession, his family and the home of his ancestors fires the author, but sometimes betrays him into exaggeration—even in the very title, for there is no solid evidence that Stonor was a Catholic sanctuary in the Dark Ages as it suggests. It is 'quite possible'; but so would be the suggestion that a pocket of 'highland zone' culture (where the Old Faith lived through the centuries of Protestant power) might conceivably have sheltered the vestiges of pre-Christian paganism. Nor is there proof for the claim on the dust-jacket that the Park 'has passed in unbroken descent from father to son for at least 800 years'—though the unvarnished truth is remarkable enough.<sup>1</sup>

The author modestly disclaims the qualifications of a historian (p. 9) but students of all periods may be startled by the suggestions that worked flints bear witness 'to those days when Christ was living in Galilee' (p. 15), and that the spiritual deterioration of sixteenth-century monasteries was caused by the Black Death *eighty* years before (p. 229), as well as by the elevation of Mr. Gladstone to the peerage (p. 334). Local historians will be puzzled to find Brightwell Baldwin described as the parish church of Shirburn Castle (p. 213). But the book is of considerable interest for the study of a great South Oxfordshire family which has preserved its eighteenth-century letters and papers in enormous quantities.

The book is chronologically arranged. It contains some statements which should be noticed lest they gain credence.

The topography of Stonor is important for the interpretation of a Saxon charter about *Readanora*.<sup>2</sup> Dom Julian Stonor identifies *Readanora* with Benson, in ignorance of the statement in Hemming's cartulary that it is Pyrton. He confidently identifies *Stanora* of 774 with the *Stony Hill* of an estate map of 1725, half-way between Holland-ridge Farm and Northend. But after three days on horseback in the vicinity armed with an improved text of the charter and the notes which Miss M. Midgeley is publishing in the forthcoming volume for Oxfordshire of the Place-Name Society, I have been led to believe that the boundaries should be read in the reverse direction.

The *Greenway* is probably the track along the south west boundary of Pyrton Hundred which places *Stanora Lege* on the west side of the Henley-Watlington road

<sup>1</sup> The first four of the generations were 'presumably fathers and sons' (p. 62). The third of these is the earliest to be indubitably associated with the neighbourhood, viz. Bix in 1241 (*Oxon. Fines*, 112, quoted as 'Placets' on p. 62). A group of nine Stonor manors is mentioned in a grant of free warren in 1315 (*Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1300-26).

<sup>2</sup> See *Oxoniensia*, xiv, 89.

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instead of on the east side like the present park. The park is marked on the estate map as having been anciently on the west of the road and by a coincidence another 'Stony Field' is marked on the map of 1725 at the required spot. On this reading *Mapolytre on West healf Assundene* might be identified with Mapletree Close on the estate map, and Roll's Farm (one of the isolated steadings of the district whose locations are dictated by the availability of surface water) would be the site of an ancient 'rough dairy steading' and Hremhryc would be Hollandridge. This would not contradict Dom Julian's interesting identification of *Stanbeorn* with a barrow which he found on the Buckinghamshire county boundary where Fawley and Hambleden meet the old Pyrton boundary. I do not believe that the similarity of *Badan Dene* with *Bod's Deane*, a field in Swyncombe, justified the suggestion made by another local interpreter of the charter that the victory recorded at Sigordene is Mount Badon. But the possibility of a Romano-British enclave is supported by Sir William Craigie's interpretation of the trenches on Watlington Hill as having been constructed by skilled military engineers after the catastrophe of 571 to prevent Saxon invaders from the western lowlands forming a 'bridgehead' against the uplands on the tip of that Hill. For the Hill is peculiar in rising at its outer extremity. The location of Sigordene, a coombe of victory, might provide the tactical key to a battle wherein the Roman enclave was conquered or the Goring gap by-passed by a turning movement up the Stonor or Hambleden valleys, towards Northend.

It is a pity that no measured plan of the house was given either in a recent article in *Country Life* on Stonor or in this book. The 'chaplains' cloister' is really the remains of a late thirteenth-century Hall, as was suspected by members of the Oxford Architectural and Historical Society in 1951 and confirmed by Miss Margaret Wood (Mrs. K. Thomas). The building described (p. 357) as the ruins of Pishill church is also identified by Miss Wood as a specimen of thirteenth-century domestic architecture, though her attention was only called to this and the original hall at Stonor after the publication of her survey in *Archaeological Journal*, supplement to vol. cv. The purchase of bricks for Stonor (p. 117) in 1416-7 is a commonplace of local history since the publication of the *Stonor Letters*, though six years earlier than the 'earliest' English use of brick cited by Kestell Floyer.<sup>3</sup> It may be connected with the use of bricks at Shirburn Castle where building was in progress almost simultaneously.<sup>4</sup>

It is to be hoped that Dom Julian will consider publishing an edition of some of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century letters at Stonor. These he has exhausted only from the standpoint of family and religious history, but apart from economic history the references to letters home and school reports of the sea-sick scholars of Douai (p. 303) and the Napoleonic military adventures of General von Stonor make those of us to whom this book will be available hope that the full text of some will soon appear in another volume. The raw material of the medieval chapters was already available in the *Stonor Letters and Papers*, and, as men seem often most attractive and interesting when in opposition than in power, there are good reasons why a large selection of the eighteenth-century papers of this great Roman Catholic family should be published.

It may seem to a reader with a protestant background a little like special pleading for 'Bloody Mary' when death by fire is called 'much more humane' than hanging,

<sup>3</sup> *Archaeological Journal*, LXX, 126.

<sup>4</sup> In my note on the building of Shirburn Castle in the *Thame Gazette*, no. 4975, the authority for statements about building materials is the series of Shirburn Court rolls at Shirburn.

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drawing and quartering (p. 237), for it was an age when for some divinity was more important than humanity. But it is proper that a study of the Stonors should be the work of one of their Faith. It is interesting to learn of the connexions of the family with martyrs (p. 226), and the descent of Lord Camoys from sixty-two old Catholic families (facing p. 328), and there is a valuable appendix on the chaplains of Stonor (p. 365). Though the writer condemns A. L. Rowse as 'bitterly anti-catholic' and 'unsympathetic', he fairly conceded that Dorchester Abbey (in whose peculiar were Pishill, Nettlebed and other neighbouring churches) was 'in a very bad way indeed' in 1474 (p. 150).

It would be interesting to have an objective study of the interrelation between the Stonors and their Protestant dependants, some of whom earned the nickname 'Kitchen Catholics'. The Stonors appreciated the friendship of the incumbents of Pishill from at least 1790 (p. 390). Between 1615 and 1790 a Stonor was a party to every known conveyance relative to the rectories of Pishill and Nettlebed, Pishill church with its Stonor aisle contains the tombstones of Roman Catholics buried at at various dates, and as a Peculiar of the former Abbey of Dorchester the bishop would not have had much control over the parish. One would wish to learn more of the relations between squire and parson and it is noteworthy that one of the Roman Catholic tombstones just precedes the Restoration: 'Pray for the faithful departed, Simon Doe dyed on ye 10 day of Novem An. Dni 1659'. The Whig Lord Parker who had displaced the Catholic lord of Shirburn bought the advowson of Bix in 1720. So the ruin of the church in Bix Bottom cannot be connected with the hostility of a Catholic patron any more than the ruin of the other Bix church which took place before the Reformation can be attributed to Protestant apathy. There is no evidence of Bix being packed with either Catholic or dissenting tenants to embarrass the parson in the eighteenth century. One wonders if there is any connexion between the presence of a Catholic squire and the strength of dissent in Watlington and Rotherfield Peppard. In the latter eighteen presbyterians had been long established in 1738,<sup>5</sup> and there was a dissenting congregation of 400 in 1841,<sup>6</sup> numbers which are large enough to rival Chinnor, where the memory of Prince Rupert's 'beating up' may have made the Church of England unpopular.<sup>7</sup>

Under the 'illegitimate' Elizabeth the tale was one of martyrdom. But owing to the nature of the sources used and a hagiographical desire to honour martyrs in their own country, no light is thrown on the gradual transition from persecution and fear to toleration and respect.

Even before Bishop Stonor shocked his flock by open support of the Hanoverian usurpers, connivance at the Stonors' religion is suggested by the omission of their name from the survey of recusants made in 1705.<sup>8</sup> Twice in 1630 Lady Stonor was excused obedience to a summons on the strength of a verbal message from a servant,<sup>9</sup> and even in the year before the Armada Sir Francis Stonor had secured the institution of his nominee as rector of Rotherfield Peppard.<sup>10</sup> A house which boasts of its illegal press could hardly have escaped governmental attention when a Spanish fifth

<sup>5</sup> MS. Oxford Diocesan papers, d. 554, fol. 13.

<sup>6</sup> W. H. Summers, *History of the Congregational Churches in the Berks., S. Oxon., S. Bucks. Assoc.*, 1905, pp. 154-5.

<sup>7</sup> See my note on 'Dissent in Aston Rowant, Kingston Blount, Crowell and Chinnor' in the *Thame Gazette*, no. 4971.

<sup>8</sup> See my note on 'Papists in Early Eighteenth-century Oxfordshire', *Oxoniensia*, xiii, 76.

<sup>9</sup> MS. Top. Oxon., c. 56, pp. 30, 35.

<sup>10</sup> Oxon. Arch. Soc., *Report for 1918*, p. 128.

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column was feared, but 'centuries of bitter persecution' is perhaps too forceful a phrase to use of a family which has not had to forsake its beautiful home.

The only time when the Stonors were ousted from their home was in the period before the Reformation. After 35 years' dispute Walter Stonor recovered his 'poor house' in 1535 from that Sir Adrian Fortescue who has since been beatified.<sup>11</sup> In the mid-eighteenth century it is ironical that the steadfast Quaker family of White (farmers and brick-makers at Christmas Common) who refused on conscientious grounds to pay tithes saw persecutors in the servants of 'Thomas Stoner call'd esquire', the tithe renter.<sup>12</sup>

The Catholics were not unique in suffering persecution when in a minority and indeed Stonor is not the only name of venerable antiquity locally. The eighteenth-century Quaker records often mention the name Toovey. A *Tovi* had held Ibstone before the Conquest, when it passed to that Hervey in whom Dom Julian sees the possible founder of the Stonor family, and *Novi Tovi* (a benefactor of Abingdon Abbey at Lewknor) is described as a very noble person in 1052 though he was a Dane and not native.<sup>13</sup> The only Toovey I know in the neighbourhood is a labourer.

Few who believe in the importance of their faith for salvation can welcome opposition to it, but it may be admitted that religious competition in the Stonor enclave has quickened the Church of England's interest in popular education. In Rotherfield Peppard in 1815 the rector told the Bishop that a National school 'would rescue a number of children from the grasp of the Methodists'<sup>14</sup> with good results. At Pishill in 1753 Christ Church bought the only acre not owned by the 'Romanist Peer Lord Camoys' to build a school when it was learnt that all the Protestant children were 'being trained up as Romanists' and that the Catholic population had increased from 30 to 80 in ten years.<sup>15</sup> Families other than the Stonors of local Catholic parentage are strangely hard to find.

It is to be hoped that the Catholic tradition of Mapledurham (whose numerous papers might document an equally romantic tale) will find a chronicler of equal piety and zeal. Papers at Mapledurham are closely interrelated with others at Stonor which have not yet been used, and illustrate the conduct of business throughout the country by an eighteenth-century Catholic lawyer.

W. O. HASSALL.

*Notes on Brass-rubbing, with a list of some Brasses in the Oxford Region.* 3rd ed. Pp. 38. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1952. Price 2s.

This little handbook is much more than its title implies, and would be better described as a short introduction to the study of brasses. An admirable survey of the techniques of rubbing is compressed into six pages; the remainder provides a summary of basic knowledge on most aspects of the subject, serving as a useful preliminary to a study of the standard works. The high level generally maintained affords little scope for criticism, and the comments which follow are mainly by way of supplement.

<sup>11</sup> *Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, VIII, no. 844; *id.*, XIII, 1, 586 and II, app. 22. Cf. Lord Clermont, *History of the Family of Fortescue*.

<sup>12</sup> Warborough Quaker Minute Book.

<sup>13</sup> *Abingdon Chronicle* (Rolls Series), I, 461.

<sup>14</sup> MS. Oxon. dioc. papers, c. 433, fol. 165v.

<sup>15</sup> Christ Church muniments, Pyrton Box, 33 D., no. 145, recently calendared by Mr. Bill, to whom this reference is owed.



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Figure brasses first appeared in this country during the first half of the thirteenth century; they did not suddenly cease about 1650, but continued in diminishing numbers to the end of the century, and there are four eighteenth-century ones over and above the 'isolated' specimen mentioned. The theory that the latten was manufactured mainly in Cologne is now generally discredited in favour of Flanders, where Tournai and Bruges did a brisk traffic in brasswork.

The contrast drawn between English and foreign workmanship is slightly misleading. In addition to quadrangular plates, the continental artists turned out brasses of 'separate inlay' type in considerable quantity from c. 1250, or possibly even earlier, until at least the end of the sixteenth century, and the adoption of this type by the first English engravers in preference to the large quadrangular plate was merely a choice, dictated in the main, if not solely, by reasons of economy, between two already existing *foreign* types. The chief difference between continental and English work lies in the treatment of the quadrangular plate (which only appeared in England towards the end of the fifteenth century) by foreign and native craftsmen.

The section on costume does not refer to the hats often shown on figures of ladies in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which occur much more frequently than those worn by the males. The term '*liripipe*' is usually applied by writers on costume to the long pendent end of the hood, the streamers hanging from the elbows of the fourteenth-century *cote-hardie* worn by both sexes being known as '*tippets*'.

Apart from the broad-toed sabbatons, the principal distinguishing feature of Tudor armour for almost a hundred years after Bosworth was the large skirt of mail, which, somewhat surprisingly, is not mentioned. Tassets, which began in the first half of the fifteenth century, and were already a 'standard' part of the knightly harness by the commencement of the Wars of the Roses, are not *especially* typical of the Tudor period.

A word might have been spared for the 'local schools', of which there were at least four (Yorkshire, East Anglia, the Midlands and Kent).

In assessing the value of brasses, a further point is worth making. Brasses and incised slabs, as the only *habitually* dated medieval works of art, are often a valuable aid in dating other artistic products of that era.

The section on palimpsests is particularly well done.

F. A. GREENHILL.

*Oxford Portfolio of Monumental Brasses*. Series II. Pt. III. 6 plates. Published by the Oxford University Archaeological Society at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1952. Price 7s.

Owing to the tenacity and keenness of the Editorial Committee of the Brass-Rubbing Section of the Oxford University Archaeological Society, Part III of their new series of the Oxford Portfolio was published in Trinity Term 1952. The aim, as in earlier issues, was to provide illustrations of little-known brasses from churches in the diocese of Oxford. In this the Committee has been eminently successful and the former high standard in reproduction has been maintained.

The Foxle brass at Bray was included as the only reproduction readily available is that appearing in *Monumental Brasses of Berkshire* by the late H. T. Morley, where the figures are incorrectly assembled and no matrix is shown for the top of the canopy,

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though the whole is in a tolerable condition, the slab being fixed upright on the wall of the north nave aisle.

The brasses illustrated are : Casement of the lost brass to an unknown Knight and his lady. c. 1480. Iffley, Oxon. ; Sir John de Foxle and his wives, Maud (Brocas) and Joan (Martin). 1378. Bray, Berks. ; John Yonge, woolman, and Isabel, his wife. 1451. Chipping Norton, Oxon. ; John Spence, S.T.B., Master of the Hospital. 1517. Ewelme, Oxon. ; Joan Bradshawe and her husbands, William Manwayringe and Henry Bradshawe, Chief Baron of the Exchequer. 1598. Noke, Oxon. ; G. and M. Box. c. 1650. St. Peter-le-Bailey, Oxford.

From some quarters criticism has been made of the method of representing casements, the suggestion being that remaining rivets, plug-holes and 'runners' should be shown. If, however, these are included the indent becomes confused and it was felt that it was preferable to see a clear outline ; for instance, with the Iffley casement the plug-holes are large and unsightly, since wood was probably employed.

The material for the next number (Part IV) is available, but whether its issue becomes possible or not depends on the response from subscribers. It would seem a great pity if this publication, which was resurrected after a long interval, has to cease owing to lack of support.

H. F. OWEN EVANS.

*Magdalen College, Oxford* (Pp. 20, 4 plates, 1 fig. 1s. 6d.) ; *St. John's College, Oxford* (Pp. 12, 4 plates, 1 fig. 1s. 6d.) ; *Worcester College, Oxford* (Pp. 30, 4 plates, 1 fig. 2s. 6d.) ; *Oriel College, Oxford* (Pp. 16, 4 plates, 1 fig. 1s. 6d.). Oxford University Archaeological Society, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1950, 1951, 1951, 1953 respectively.

The Oxford University Archaeological Society is to be congratulated on its enterprise in inaugurating this excellent series of college guides, written by groups of its own undergraduates with the cooperation and support of the various college authorities. The texts are scholarly, the production attractive, and the price very reasonable. Each guide has a small, but adequate, plan and four illustrations. The text starts, wherever possible, with a short account of the founder and proceeds to a history of the college, a list of the presidents or provosts, an account of the buildings, which includes, as we are glad to see, even the most modern, and a bibliography. Further short sections are devoted to the gardens (except in the case of St. John's where they are dealt with under the heading of buildings), library, portraits, plate and other college treasures.

The general plan of the guides is at its most fluid in the case of the illustrations. It would seem to be the general policy to reproduce a view of each college from E. H. New's *New Loggan*. The two latest guides (Worcester and Oriel) have David Loggan's view also, and we hope that this will in future be a matter of general policy. In the case of Magdalen and St. John's there are views from Ingram's *Memorials*, which might well, for the benefit of strangers, be given a date. In an otherwise most attractive Magdalen guide, it is a pity to find no reproduction of the eighteenth century prints which, as described in the text, show the cloister quadrangle in the state of confusion to which it had then been reduced.

These are small criticisms. Far more important are the virtues of these guides. Their accuracy is exemplified by the St. John's guide, which silently corrects the

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description of the hall fireplace given by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. The Worcester guide, longer and consequently more expensive than the others, has admirably full accounts of Gloucester College and Gloucester Hall. The Magdalen guide mingles learning with wit and makes excellent reading, while the Oriel guide is the latest and perhaps the best of all, the *primus inter pares*. It would seem as if the series is advancing from strength to strength, and it is with the greatest pleasure that we welcome it and wish it well.

R. H. C. DAVIS.

*New College, Oxford, and its Buildings.* By A. H. Smith. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1952. 8vo. Pp. vii + 192. 15 plates and 5 sketches and diagrams. 21s. net.

This is an unusual college history in which the evolution of the buildings of a great and ancient academical foundation has been made the subject of special study with reference to the plan and purposes of its founder, to the requirements and tastes of its members during succeeding generations and to the dictates of the site and existing structures whenever subsequent alterations or additions have been undertaken. The buildings of New College, the prototype of the quadrangular collegiate lay-out that has come to characterize both Oxford and Cambridge colleges, are specially well qualified to be the subject of such an exposition.

It has been the common practice of those who have written about the history of college buildings to treat of them strictly in terms of architecture and archaeology. The Warden of New College has attempted something very different. 'I have written a book', he says by way of preface, 'of which the subject, as I think of it, is not the buildings of the college but the college and its buildings.' In so doing he has produced an intimate and observant book which could only have been written by one who with ardent curiosity and affection over many years has pondered upon the buildings of his college, part by part, and set himself with detective insight to provide answers to the many problems of adaptation and enlargement that successive changes in the buildings raise. His zest for eliciting from the existing structure, particularly in the case of the Warden's lodgings, the nature of the many changes that have taken place is apparent and will be shared by the interested reader; but even so, it may not always be found easy to envisage what has happened by the aid alone of the evidential details that he gives. In his examination of the medieval buildings of the college he has been fortunate in being able to avail himself of the researches of a former scholar of the college, Professor A. H. M. Jones, which will shortly become accessible to all when the forthcoming volume of the Victoria County History of Oxford, dealing with the University and Colleges, is published.

Although the Warden disclaims having any qualifications as an historian, he has certainly succeeded in composing an admirable portrait of William of Wykeham, as prelate and statesman. Wykeham's intentions and provisions as founder of the two St. Mary Winton Colleges in Oxford and Winchester are sympathetically elucidated in the Warden's understanding analysis of the statutes which the bishop framed for his foundation in Oxford. He notes with emphasis that in Wykeham 'the strongest strain of all (though it is clearly connected with the rest) is an absorbing devotion to beauty in architecture and in all works of art', and goes on to demonstrate the close relationship that exists between the founder's statutes and the architectural form of the buildings that he provided.



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In describing the founder's buildings the Warden is at pains to point out how the exterior elevation on each side of the great quadrangle was so designed that it 'reflects and emphasizes the interior use of the different sections of the buildings'. It was an unhappy departure from this design that subsequently brought the form of the library windows into conformity with those of the living rooms, for, as the Warden recalls, 'before the tracery was removed these windows had both mullions and transoms whereas the windows of the living rooms had mullions only.' This original characteristic of functional indication might still in large measure be regained if the reconstruction, tentatively begun, of the windows of the founder's library was fully carried out.

Wykeham was eminently well served by his master mason, William Wynford, and by his master carpenter, Hugh Herland; the researches of Mr. John H. Harvey have brought to light other commissions of these accomplished craftsmen; but the Warden pays them no tribute, not even mentioning their names. Their buildings have claim to be the first dated examples of the Perpendicular style in Oxford. It might also have been expected that the Warden would have devoted a section of his chapter on the medieval buildings to the bell-tower, finished in 1405, the year after the founder's death. It is a dominant architectural feature of the college; moreover building accounts for it, unlike those for the rest of the original buildings, have survived and those for 1396 were edited by Thorold Rogers, in 1891, for the Oxford Historical Society in *Oxford City Documents*.

In the informative account which the Warden gives of the subsequent alterations and additions, he points to the far-reaching and unintended consequences that have followed in more than one instance from a comparatively small undertaking. A sixteenth-century Warden's desire for an additional bedroom in his lodgings, which was satisfied by the erection of an additional story, created a precedent that was followed by the fellows a century later when an additional story for the provision of more living rooms was added to the quadrangle. And, again, the position of the new bursary building erected in 1449 and not the example of Versailles dictated the effective lay-out of the garden quadrangle with its succession of recessed blocks, as carried out by William Byrd and William Townsend.

No group of buildings in any college better illustrates the changes effected through several centuries in order to satisfy the demands for larger accommodation and for greater comfort; the Warden elucidates with engaging particularity these changes as they took place in New College. The changes, too, which the reformation in religion and subsequent fashions of taste wrought in the chapel are given due attention; it is to be regretted that David Loggan was not concerned to illustrate the interiors of college buildings and consequently has not left a record of the *deceptio* with which the ingenious painter, Henry Cook, in 1696 adorned the great blank space with which the reformers had simplified the east end of the chapel. Fashion has also worked characteristic transformations in the college garden and in that of the Warden. The portly demeanour of eighteenth-century academic Oxford is reflected in the change whereby the fellows were given access to the gazebo at the top of the mount by a gently winding walk in place of the steeply rising steps which sufficed for their seventeenth-century predecessors. Although the formation of a garden quadrangle by Byrd made possible the housing of gentlemen commoners, to the number of 16, in college for the first time, it was not till 1857 that the almost exclusive dependence of the college upon its sister foundation at Winchester for its admissions was relaxed.

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under the new statutes made for both colleges by the University Commissioners. In his penultimate chapter the Warden describes the remarkable renaissance and expansion of the college that quickly followed on this event and explains, if not excuses, the lofty four-story building erected by Scott in Holywell as 'the visible memorial of the exciting years when the college in all that it was doing gave a signal example of Victorian energy, competence and ambition.' The Warden carries his survey down to 1939.

There are three Appendices at the end of the book; the first is devoted to the oriel window in the gallery room in the Warden's lodgings, a particularly knotty architectural problem; the second to the college treasures; and the third to a full and interesting account of the recent discoveries made in the founder's library.

The illustrations which adorn the book have been well chosen and well executed. It would, I think, have been appreciated if the Warden had included a bibliographical note listing the articles that have appeared, some in *Oxoniensia*, dealing with various architectural features of the college.

A. B. EMDEN.

*Kings and Queens at Oxford.* By Miriam Elizabeth Freeborn. Oxonian Press Ltd., Oxford, 1953. Pp. 137; 12 plates. Price 8s. 6d.

The opening sentence of the Introductory Note states that 'The author of this little book is ninety-four years of age'. That fact in itself is enough to preclude any detailed criticism of the work under review. The idea was excellent, and the perseverance which has achieved its realization, admirable. At the same time, it is impossible not to regret that this attractive theme, hitherto neglected as a whole, with its wide appeal, worthy without doubt of commemoration by a serious study, has not been treated by a younger and, one is bound in honesty to say, by a more scholarly pen. The illustrations which range, like the subject matter, from St. Frideswide to Queen Victoria, are, with the exception of the imaginary drawing of the Empress Maud, well chosen, and well reproduced, the charming 'Reception of Queen Isabella by Oxford University in 1326' from Holkham MS. 659, being especially deserving of note.

M. R. TOYNBEE.

*Blenheim Palace.* By David Green. London, Country Life, Ltd., 1951. Pp. 348; 112 plates. £6 6s.

This book has been written from a dual point of view—social and architectural. It may be said to be the story of the building of the great house of Blenheim based on the substructure of the narrative of the many personal and family histories concerned. It is not only successful in this way, but Mr. Green has used the social information with a treatment which for many readers will butter the bread of the record of architectural development. It is engaging reading and is satisfying by the wealth of information, contributed, to no small extent, by the textual notes. This breaking away from the text proper to augment the narrative can be a little tiresome, but it is well worth it. In fact, to read the relevant notes after having completed each chapter avoids this trouble and is an adequate system of reading the book.

It was a happy thought to include a Comparative Chronology, which it is wise to scan before settling down to reading the text. As one reviews the events after

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reading the book, it is helpful to refer to this Chronology for verification and then, if necessary, to the text. It would have been of great help if a note of the page referred to had been made against the relevant item.

The amount of investigation which has contributed to this work is obviously enormous and Mr. Green has not spared himself in his effort to be thorough. His impartiality is complete. He does not defend the subject of his researches beyond the realms of reason and in his Introduction frankly refers to those who 'have the misfortune to meet its stoniest stare'. He even quotes the ninth Duke of Marlborough as writing 'the probable impression made by the building on the casual observer is that it is ponderous without being stately and irregular without being tasteful'.

The scale of the construction is aptly indicated by another quotation from the ninth Duke: 'In many parts there are about as many feet of solid stone as a modern architect would put inches of lath and plaster.' There is no doubt that much thought and scheming contributed to the final form and detail of the building, even to the revising of the main design which necessitated a change in the detailed plan. Vanbrugh obviously was scrupulous about the proportions of his Orders and insisted on a lightening of the scale to make a change from the Doric to the Corinthian Order for the central block. If the original Doric Order had been carried out, Blenheim, though heavy now with its Corinthian Order, would have been enormous, although its height and the grouping masses above the main entablature are greater as erected.

The comparison of Castle Howard with Blenheim shows the same approach to each of the two problems. Vanbrugh would be thought to be uninventive nowadays, but one wonders at the sizes of the two tasks and is entitled, I think, to take a generous view of his designing ability as it shows in these two enormous works. Wren, whose capacity was different in kind and nature, would not have produced two solutions of the same problem so alike as are Blenheim and Castle Howard.

The difficulties and organization needed for obtaining stone, the finding of carpenters, the enormous excavations and the concomitant disposal of the soil link up naturally with the work of today. The building was of national interest. St. Paul's was nearly completed when Blenheim was begun and people were ripe for a change of interest. The use of a Clerk of Works in the capacity in which he is known today is important to note. The office of Architect, which was combined in medieval times with that of the Controller of the Works, was at this date a separate entity. It is a 'profession' and a Clerk of Works becomes the person in immediate and continuous control.

Considering the amazing circumstances which developed between Her Majesty and the Marlboroughs, the rows between the officers in charge of the various branches of the work, the lack of funds, the pleas from workmen for payment of salaries a year old, the difficulties of site and supplies of materials, one wonders why the building ever did reach completion.

Is it a house? Was it not a record of the Duke's and of the country's renown rather than a reward to the Duke for his services by providing him with a comfortable home? What Mr. Green makes perfectly clear is that the rhetorical, ideological outlook never abated and despite the harassed but insistent Duchess's pressure for a house to live in, she got nothing of the kind.

Ostentation was ever the key note of the building effort. Grandeur and extravagance had to equal the country's first reaction to the Duke's military

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successes. Money became difficult but even that could not withstand the swelling pride which brought about the new design from the Doric to the Corinthian Order involving greater expenditure on the consequent future work and wasteful expenditure on alterations of the work already carried out.

But the scheme went on. Vanbrugh, in what has become the true vocation of the professional architect, became more than the mere technician: he became controller of the enterprise and the stimulator of a flagging enthusiasm.

Whether we derive pleasure from the building as a product of the art of architecture or despise the public sentiment which swamped the finer judgment of sound economics, we cannot help feeling sympathetic with the Duke and the Duchess in their desire for a simple house and beautiful garden. Blenheim was to satisfy the people, not to reward the Duke.

Whatever may have been the basis of the production of Blenheim it stands representing a phase of the Englishman's evolution and, with certain other buildings such as Castle Howard and Greenwich Hospital, it marks an epoch in architectural development. We are thankful there were not many more such structures on the same scale, and that the same character transferred to the small indigenous house of the village and town such as those at Chipping Campden, Burford, Buckingham, Thaxted, Salisbury, became as charming as the monster was sinister.

However, we are indebted to Mr. Green for his learned and subtle rendering of social history and architecture in a way which makes an immediate and increasing appeal to architectural student and lay reader. He has carried out a task which required doing in a way so thorough and so authoritative in its narrative that it compels acceptance and confidence. The book has nothing of the character of a guide book, a catalogue or a textbook. It is beautifully and attractively written. It is easy reading and entices those whose interests might not easily spread beyond biographical history to find in the association of architecture a charm and attraction uncommon in books less concerned with social and family history. It would be a great accomplishment if similar books could be written about all our precious building heritages.

THOMAS RAYSON.

*The Dragon of Whaddon, being an Account of the Life and Work of Browne Willis.* By J. G. Jenkins. Pp. xvii + 255. The Bucks Free Press. Price 15s.

In recent years (as the announcement of Mr. Jenkins's book points out) an increasing interest has been shown in the lives and achievements of the scholars and antiquaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Now that both history and archaeology have emerged as distinct academic disciplines it is, indeed, appropriate that their common origins should be the subject of careful inquiry. In his *English Scholars*, Professor Douglas has brilliantly surveyed the beginnings of English historical research in the seventeenth century, and Professor Piggott has revealed in William Stukeley the father of British field archaeology. Now Mr. Jenkins has undertaken, in a scholarly and sympathetic biography, to trace the life and labours of Browne Willis, the 'Dragon of Whaddon'. As an archaeologist, Willis was less notable than Stukeley, and as a scholar he can hardly be compared with the great figures of an earlier generation. But as an 'original' he has an honourable place in the long list of eccentrics which enlivens the history of English antiquarianism, and as a local historian he is not without honour in his own county of Buckingham. Moreover, as a

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pioneer of Parliamentary history, as a collector of coins, and as the author of the first attempt at a comprehensive survey of the English cathedrals, he was of more than merely local renown. He was well known in Oxford, and it was upon a man of learning as well as upon a generous benefactor that the University bestowed the degree of D.C.L. in 1749.

The materials for Willis's life are extensive: there are over a hundred volumes of his manuscript collections in the Bodleian Library, and much concerning the squire of Whaddon is preserved among the papers of his friend William Cole, now in the British Museum. Of these, and other, sources, Mr. Jenkins has made good use, though the chapter on church-building might have been supplemented from the diocesan records of Lincoln, and Willis's activities in this direction were perhaps less singular than he supposes: for it was, after all, in 1711 that a Tory government passed an Act for building fifty new churches in London and Westminster, and, despite the ravages of nineteenth-century 'restoration', Buckinghamshire churches are by no means devoid of the evidences of Georgian piety. The best chapter in the book is probably the one which deals with Willis's work as an author and scholar. Himself the editor of a County Record Society, Mr. Jenkins is well qualified to assess the value of Willis's contribution to local and ecclesiastical history, and he does not attempt to conceal the serious weaknesses which mar Willis's work—the mistakes due to the employment of amanuenses, the inability to make his books readable. For, as Hearne observed, 'Mr. W. is a poor writer of history and antiquities unless he gets somebody to do it for him, at least to cook and adjust his papers,' and Willis himself confessed that he had no time for the 'polite part' of authorship.

Mr. Jenkins's own writing is so polite that one could wish that he had devoted rather less of his book to printing *in extenso* Willis's not always very interesting letters to Dr. Charlett, the Master of University College. But some of them were certainly worth publishing, and despite this hard core of correspondence in its midst, Mr. Jenkins' book is a very readable addition to the select library of English antiquarian literature—and one, moreover, for which his publishers are asking a remarkably moderate price.

H. M. COLVIN.

*The History of the University.* Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1953. Pp. 36; 8 half-tone plates. Price 2s. 6d.

This booklet was prepared as a guide to an exhibition held in the Bodleian Library in 1953, as part of the celebrations in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Cecil Rhodes and the fiftieth anniversary of the Rhodes Scholarships. The aim of the exhibition was to show the history of the University as a whole, without reference to the individual colleges. In the same way the historical introduction, with which the guide opens, outlines the development of the University as a corporate body, and the changes in its teaching methods. This introduction is followed by a catalogue of the exhibits, which ranged from the earliest known privilege acquired by the University (award of the Papal legate in 1214) to the copy of the diploma of the honorary degree of D.C.L. conferred upon Her Majesty the Queen as Princess Elizabeth in 1948.

Although the exhibition is now over, and the objects dispersed again, the short introductory history will continue to be of great interest to any who would like to obtain a short account of the University's history, especially perhaps to those coming up to Oxford for the first time.

JOAN R. KIRK.



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*Sir Arthur Evans Centenary Exhibition, 1951.* Oxford, Ashmolean Museum [1951]. Pp. 12; and portrait.

The exhibition brought together in the Ashmolean in 1951 in honour of Sir Arthur Evans reminded us how much Oxford owes to one of her greatest sons. No department or branch of the Museum is without his benefactions. His most enduring memorial there is the Minoan Room, the expression of his work at Knossos and of the years of exploration in Crete which preceded it. But the Heberden Coin Room is enriched from his collection of coins—one of his earliest and most abiding interests; the prehistoric section has as its nucleus his father's collections, presented by him; many of the finest Greek vases in the Museum were acquired by him as Keeper, during his Sicilian period. In a wider sense, the whole building of the Ashmolean is a monument of the vision and energy of its first modern Keeper. How much is owed to him by those who now use the Ashmolean as a centre of study is brought out by D. B. Harden in the brief memoir which accompanied the exhibition.

The exhibition and the memoir recall attention to the earlier phase of Sir Arthur's rich and varied life; before he began to excavate at Knossos he had already accomplished what most men would be proud to call a life's work. The later phase is more familiar. But there is a salutary reminder that the four volumes of *The Palace of Minos at Knossos* do not comprise all that he had planned in the way of publication of the results of his work in Crete. The second volume of *Scripta Minoa* was recently made public, thanks to the devoted labours of Sir John Myres. But there is a third volume to come; and also the materials brought together for an Atlas of Knossian Frescoes, which it is hoped may soon see the light of day.

T. J. DUNBABIN.

*Oxfordshire and District Folklore Society Annual Record*, nos. 1-5, 1949-53. 16 pp. each. Obtainable for an annual subscription of 2s. 6d.

It is with pleasure that *Oxoniensia* welcomes a new contemporary, devoted to local antiquarian studies on the folklore side. The Oxfordshire and District Folklore Society was founded in 1948 to encourage 'the study, collection and recording of traditions, customs and beliefs in Oxfordshire and the surrounding districts'. The Society listens to lectures on folklore and allied topics (not all of local flavour), synopses of which are given in the *Annual Record*, but the main function of the *Record*, which has appeared with commendable regularity since 1949, is to print notes and short articles by members on dead or dying local customs and folk-traditions. Amongst the items in these first five issues may be mentioned 'Old Sports at Filkins' by George Swinford (No. 2, 1950); 'Fragments of Oxfordshire Plant-lore' by E. C[ordrey] (No. 3, 1951); 'Fragments of Oxfordshire Folklore concerning Courtship and Marriage' by C. H[ole] and 'The Devil in Oxfordshire' by E. C[ordrey] (No. 4, 1952); 'Monuments of Folklore in Oxfordshire' by E. Ettlinger and 'Some Weather-Beliefs Still Current in Oxfordshire' by E. C[ordrey] (No. 5, 1953). There is much of interest here for folklorists and others and we look forward to further issues of this little periodical in the confidence that they will be of equal merit.

D. B. HARDEN.