

## Reviews

*It should be understood that all statements and opinions in reviews are those of the respective authors, not of the Society or Editor.*

Lesley W. Heppel and Alison M. Doggett, *The Chilterns*, Phillimore, 1992. Pp. xvi + 272; 171 illustrations. Price £19.95.

Despite their obvious well-defined physical characteristics, the Chilterns are a remarkably elusive region to pin down. It is easy to describe their distinctive physical make-up of an irregular chalk escarpment, a wooded 'cordon sanitaire' dividing the Home Counties from midland England. Their cultural stereotype 'stockbroker belt' image of well-defended detached houses, leafy lanes and gymkhanas is also a fair reflection of the role that the Chilterns, in part at least, have played in the second half of the 20th century. They provide a pleasant home environment for those who spend their working days in nearby London, which has had an immense impact on the human geography of the region. Yet it is quite difficult to get beyond these stereotypes, to extract the essential character of the Chilterns in the same way that one can, say, with the Cotswolds or with the Peak District. This elusiveness is reflected in the relatively sparse generic literature on the region. Most serious writing on the Chilterns has been confined to the study of that portion of the four counties which straddles the escarpment. Therefore, this volume in a new regional series by Phillimore is a particularly welcome addition to the modest library of Chiltern offerings.

There is a wealth of useful material in this book. It is written in an easy style and is well illustrated with line drawings, colour- and black-and-white photographs. The authors take us through from the physical background, through Palaeolithic man right up to the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy on the Chiltern landscape. To cover such a range of material successfully is a daunting challenge at the best of times and is a task often best pursued through the interpretation of landscape. However, although landscape analysis is a constant theme of the book and the authors profess to adopt a landscape approach, the book ultimately fails to throw much new light on the quintessential Chilterns. This is partly because the authors try to outline the archaeological or historical background for each of the periods they examine and end up providing us with a potted introductory economic history of England with special reference to the Chilterns. They have read extensively and quote from authorities with such disparate interests as John Evans on mollusc analysis and Peter Hall on *London 2000*. They discuss the sources and the methodology at some length, often at the expense of giving us information specific to the Chilterns. Yet regrettably the sum of the parts does not make a satisfactory whole.

At times too the work is infuriatingly simplistic. For instance, when discussing the Anglo-Saxon Chilterns there is a section on the British enclave, a long-held theory that the Chilterns remained under British control in the 5th and 6th centuries at a time when surrounding areas were being settled and politically dominated by the Anglo-Saxons. The authors generally support this theory without really producing any new or substantive evidence for British survival, and one is left frustrated at the intriguing nature of the idea, but sadly lacking in convincing evidence. There are also considerable gaps in the landscape approach in the early chapters. For instance, there is no analysis of the topography of the

Chiltern towns. Dunstable is quite rightly referred to as one of the earliest recorded English planted towns in 1119, but there is no discussion of what this means topographically on the ground. Similarly, although it is recognised that the network of Chiltern market towns comes into being during the early Middle Ages, there is no hint that Henley, Berkhamsted, Chesham, Amersham, and so on all owe their origins to deliberate town planning in the 12th and 13th centuries and that their market areas, street plans and property boundaries all provide striking testimony to these origins on the ground today.

If the chapters on the archaeology and early history of the Chilterns are frustrating, the post-medieval section of the book is fascinating, and it is in the second half that the book really comes to life. Some of the most dramatic changes in the region have occurred within the last 250 years. The wooded character of the Chilterns is the result of the management of timber resources for a rapaciously fuel-hungry London. As alternative sources of fuel became available there was a rapid change from oak to the quicker growing beech, which then formed the basis for the Chiltern furniture industry. The chapter on turnpikes, canals and railways provides us with a graphic account of the attempts of engineers to provide communication through difficult terrain. And although the process of country house building and emparkment deserves fuller treatment we do obtain a clear picture of the evolution of the modern landscape. The account of the development of Metro-land is particularly interesting. The expansion of the railway network into the Chilterns earlier this century claimed large stretches of the region as garden suburb for London. Contemporary reaction to these developments was almost universally hostile, and in the light of subsequent horrors committed elsewhere in England appears to have been quaintly misguided.

The photographs taken by one of the authors have been well chosen, but the use of a wide angled lens has produced an inward lean on most of the church towers, an otherwise unknown regional architectural characteristic!

*The Chilterns* is a book that many will find useful, and it will undoubtedly be commonly included in continuing education book boxes. The fact that it is not the definitive book on the Chilterns may be due more to the format of the series than to the authors, who have served well the area they clearly love.

TREVOR ROWLEY

Anthony R. Hands, *The Romano-British Roadside Settlement at Wilcote, Oxfordshire: I. Excavations 1990-92*, British Archaeological Reports (British Series) 232, 1993. Pp. 213. ISBN 0 86054 757 4.

Wilcote represents a poorly-understood type of Romano-British site: the 'roadside settlement'. Indeed the relatively small number of these sites which have been archaeologically investigated at a significant level makes the use of such a generic term rather problematical. The category will inevitably include individual sites of very different character, many of which will have a tenuous interrelationship at best.

The work of Anthony Hands at Wilcote is welcome, therefore, as a potentially significant contribution to an area of archaeological study which deserves more attention. The speed with which the work has been published is notable; the results of archaeological projects all too often take an extraordinarily long time to appear in print (albeit for perfectly valid reasons in most cases). Unfortunately, there are serious problems with the text which make it impossible to give this report a whole-hearted welcome.

The report is structured in a fairly traditional manner. A brief introduction sets the

background to the site, its setting, and the project itself. The latter is clearly and concisely placed within the context of Romano-British roadside settlement studies, especially in the Cotswolds and Oxfordshire. The archaeology is then described and discussed in twelve sides of text (inclusive of illustrations). An extremely brief (one side plus five lines of text) and generalised Conclusions section is followed by specialist reports. These are of somewhat variable quality and length, at least partly reflecting the relevant assemblage sizes. The coins and metal small finds are catalogued first, followed by the stone, pottery, glass, worked bone, human remains, and animal bone. A section on the plant remains (more of an apology than a report) concludes the text, and is followed by a general bibliography. The site and finds are copiously illustrated, although the only photographs are in the animal bone report.

There are problems throughout the text. Some of these are editorial; there are, for instance, many typographical errors and inconsistent cross-references (especially in the coarse pottery report, where the catalogue of sherds is occasionally at odds with the fabric list). There is also a lot of wasted space, as on pages 44–8 and 64, and bibliographies appear at the end of several specialist reports, with a number of duplicated references. Most serious of all to the reader, however, is the lack of a coherent structure within the report itself. There is no consistency to the weight of headings and sub-headings both within and across sections of the report, which makes it difficult to keep track of the text. This is not helped by a poorly-structured approach to the chronological description of the archaeology, where the phasing of the site is never more than implicitly stated (but see below). The contents page presents a very simple demonstration of these problems: all of the specialist sections from glass down to plant remains are listed as sub-headings under pottery! This is not simply nit-picking: such editorial matters are precisely the concerns I deal with on an everyday basis both as a reader of archaeological publications, and as a professional archaeologist writing and editing reports.

The content of the report is sometimes equally confusing. There are a number of rather sweeping statements which are not adequately supported by the descriptive text. For instance, 'Akeman Street crosses the excavated area . . . but no traces of the road or its foundations were seen in the area excavated' (p. 11) is unfortunately phrased and perhaps factually questionable. The further contention on the same page that 'A date of c. A.D. 47 is therefore assigned to the earliest, level 6, deposits in the roadside quarries ay [misprint reproduced from the report] Wilcote' is predicated on a very brief semi-historical summary of Akeman Street's construction and is not backed up by the archaeological description and (undated) finds references.

Such problems occur at regular intervals. Some features are described as cess-pits, with no clear justification. It would have been relatively easy to establish this function through environmental analysis, but unfortunately this was not done, and so the description is speculative. Such problems tend to gain their own momentum, and sure enough the animal bone report consistently refers to material from these so-called cess-pits (although interestingly the only note of significant differential preservation of the bone refers to the well; one would expect some unusual preservation/concretion from cess deposits). A more general problem of mixing description with discussion underlies all these difficulties, as will be apparent from the specific examples noted above. In effect, this leaves very little to say in the Conclusions section. This also breaks from the format of the rest of the report, in providing single-column text with references in the margins.

The specialist reports generally present fewer problems, with two major exceptions. Both are fundamental. The first lies at the very beginning of the pottery report (which occupies half of the entire publication), where Hands explicitly states that quantifications have not been provided. His reasons are spurious, and are contradicted by his own discussion section (pp. 150–5), which actually refers to quantifications by percentage for a number of pot forms. The problem, simply stated, is that the coarse pottery report is virtually unusable

except as an (exhaustively) illustrated series. Even this is of dubious value, because it cannot be related back to an overall characterisation of the assemblage by number and weight. In other words, one has no idea of how the illustrated selection of pot sherds relates numerically or proportionally to the overall assemblage. The fabric correlations are also inadequate, especially where comprehensively researched type series exist (i.e. the Oxfordshire kiln products). The pottery report, then, provides little or no detail on fabric and form proportions/correlations, and the dating implications of these. Instead it confines itself to an interesting, but ultimately flawed, comparison of Roman and 20th-century English use of pottery or equivalent vessels. Many of the statements of date based on the pottery in the site description thus have to be taken entirely on trust, or at best treated with caution. The ultimate question to be asked of any pottery report is: how will future researchers be able to use and reassess it without having to go back to the original pots? That question cannot be answered here.

The second problem is in fact more of a pair of revelations in the animal bone report. This is essentially a carefully-researched and documented piece of work whose main flaw is a tendency towards flurries of text which one might expect to see in good undergraduate or postgraduate assignments, but not in published reports. The animal bone study is hamstrung, however, by a major problem not of the specialists' making. Their very first paragraph (p. 169) clearly shows that the assemblage was recorded and analysed *by phase*, and the report describes and discusses the results in this way throughout. This is exactly as one would expect, and presumably the context phasing was provided by Mr Hands either before or during the post-excavation process. Unfortunately, however, page 169 represents the first mention in the entire report that this reviewer could find of such an explicit phasing system! This not only undermines much of the thrust of the bone report, but also shows how much better and more useful the descriptive text would have been if the same descriptive system had been applied there.

The second revelation comes on page 170 (paragraph 3.i.), where the specialists state unequivocally that '... all the material has been excavated by the same individual', i.e. Mr Hands. This is a fundamental methodological issue, which might actually *enhance* the validity of the data-set for analysis, as the animal bone report makes clear. One looks in vain, however, for any such basic information elsewhere in the publication.

This brings the review back to the beginning. The report would have been greatly improved if there had been a detailed statement of the methodologies employed both on-site and in post-excavation. This will continue to be critical, as it is clear that this report is to be the first in a *Shakenoak*-style series. In many ways this issue lies at the heart of this review. The Wilcote publication reads as, and is, a very extended interim report. The contents are poorly arranged and edited (one expects much better quality control from the likes of British Archaeological Reports), and much of the text is somewhat confused. Despite the speed of publication, therefore, I wish that Mr Hands had waited until more data were available and had been digested in a more adequate manner.

GRAHAM D. KEEVILL

John Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire*, Alan Sutton, 1994. Pp. xxv + 230; 102 illustrations. Price £25.

It was an honour and a privilege to have been asked by the editor to review John Blair's new monograph *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire*, focused on the county he knows best for the period he knows best. It is a well presented volume, immediately attractive for its dust jacket which features the silver-mounted hilt of a sword from the Thames near Abingdon. The volume

overall is generously illustrated with figures, plates and maps which illustrate the author's extensive range of sources.

The launch of this volume was graced by the presence of the septuagenarian Prof. Martyn Jope, who in 1956 published a paper on late Saxon Oxford and its region, a classic in its time. Separated by the years, it provides an important counterpoint to Blair's work. Jope the biochemist used historical sources as data in the manner of a scientist. His work can be criticised, but as a foundation for the study of an important Saxon town and its hinterland his contribution was incomparable. Blair approaches a similar but a now more extensive body of data over a longer timescale, from the viewpoint of a historian. His forté is that he has a firmer grasp of archaeological evidence than any other historian of the new generation, and his development of hypothetical constructs is proportionately more imaginative. How, one wondered, would the Blair approach fare: would it focus on the philosophical questions which exercise the public imagination for the period, would it perhaps be the 'more general synthesis of written and archaeological evidence' which Jope hoped would advance our knowledge considerably? The author tells us plainly at the outset that he will concentrate on less familiar themes, which happen to be those about which he knows most.

Blair characteristically wades in with verbal *seax* to the 'Dorchester problem', leaving no existing model unscathed. The residual Romanised population retreated into Iron Age fortresses; in a national context he finds no strong case for a sub-Roman aristocracy, and although as elsewhere in the volume one needs to read closely to find the considered conclusion of his analysis, here one can divine that he prefers to see a clean break, the new Anglo-Saxon immigrants having their own minor aristocracy, with access to fine Frankish goods. He has an attractive use of metaphor and of colloquial translation: the Shakenoak *cnihtas* become 'the lads', buried as a 'gang'. The tribe which Bede described as *Gewisse* and 'West Saxons' are identified as the people of the Upper Thames valley, who may have styled themselves as the 'trusties' but whose neighbours may have looked upon them as a strong-arm gang.

Probably it was Chapter 2 to which the author referred as one of his 'less familiar themes', the origin of the minsters. Here is a restrained treatment of some very difficult hagiographical material, blended with sound comment on the arrangement of ecclesiastical estates. A 7th-century aristocracy is claiming religion for its own purposes, an enlightened prince is fostering a church where his powerful father had merely tolerated missionaries. One local minster attains a great estate. The narrative is persuasive, but it lacks a clear presentation of the evidence for individual minsters, like the tabulations used so successfully for other aspects of the Anglo-Saxon period in David Hill's *Atlas*. This makes it difficult to judge how clear a case there is for the growth of a major religious infrastructure in the period 660–750, and how it came about that the minor kingships of the previous two centuries were able to support this network of sacred places. Could not the evidence be explained by an increasing centralisation of power within the communities generally, which allowed their spiritual requirements to be equally centralised? Were the minsters in fact less centre-stage, and more in a dynamic equilibrium with secular power, leading in certain cases to exceptional wealth, in others to exploitation, oppression and martyrdom? The ecclesiastical framework which Blair constructs is nevertheless important because it reflects boundaries and affiliations between communities for which, apart from rare examples like that excavated recently at Worton Rectory, Yarnton, there is still so little in the way of material evidence. In this context Blair presents a useful analysis of the evidence from undated burials with finds (pages 72–3).

From 820 he finds Wessex to be ascendant over Mercia (and hence over Oxfordshire) and, despite an accommodation, the relative position of Mercia was steadily weakened. In the



870s it was still a junior partner in an alliance, however, and despite the annexation of four of its counties (including Oxfordshire) in 911, Mercia was still in fruitful alliance until 918 when the remainder was finally absorbed into Wessex. Blair finds some reason to think that from the late 9th century the area of his study was part of a separate sub-earldom, already rather peripheral to the new heartland of post-Viking Mercia, although its affiliations remained Mercian (page 97). He thereby establishes the context in which the town of Oxford was founded, one element in a protracted urbanising process occurring in both Wessex and Mercia.

In an attempt to place the foundation of Oxford in a precise historical context Blair cites numismatic evidence, a coin of Alfred inscribed with a mint name which might be an alternative spelling of Oxford. This is a difficult question which has exercised numismatists over nearly a century. Traditionally Oxford historians have been cautious, and it has been outsiders who have promoted the notion that the type was minted at Oxford; Blair is the first local proponent to carry it to its logical conclusion and use it to provide a firm date for the town. In a rare example of loose text however, he adds a plural to the *Ohsnaforda* coin, conflating it with a second coin by the same moneyer which he also illustrates, which patently has no mint name.

The difference is one of degree. If '*Ohsnaforda*' was Oxford, it is the only recognisable mint of Alfred in a place without Roman defences, the others being the ex-Roman towns of Exeter, Winchester and Gloucester. In the 9th century their Roman defences would be ancient, however, and the common characteristic between them as sites for mints could be simply that they were established, secure centres of economic importance at the foci of road networks. This would apply equally to Oxford, which later legends would provide with gates even before the arrival of St. Frideswide. We should not be surprised therefore to find a moneyer working here in Alfred's reign, whether from a fortress newly founded by *Æthelflæda* or *Æthelfrith*, which is Blair's novel proposal, or from some strong point associated with the minster or an established settlement, a more conservative view.

The decider here is whether Oxford was sufficiently central to the heartland of Mercia, a Mercia already eclipsed by its strong southern neighbour, to have merited the use of Alfred's surveyors and engineers to make it into a fortress, as Blair would have it. Would Alfred tolerate the establishment of a potentially hostile fortress facing him across an important river crossing, at a time when he was himself developing defences at river crossings? A more conservative view would be that the Oxford we know was planted as an extension to the minster settlement when Wessex annexed this part of Mercia in 911, and strode off to create similar fortresses in a fan-shape pushing back Danish resistance, as discussed by Stenton and mapped by Hill. Blair's view is seductive, benefiting from his forceful, scholarly and single-minded presentation.

It may be unfair, but the reviewer could not resist the comparison with Jope. A straw poll was taken of the language of speculation, the 'could have beens', the 'perhapses', the 'surelys' and the 'logicallys'. They are used generously in places. The author will agree that this is neither a textbook nor a guidebook, it is an essay, superbly referenced to the range of sources which impact on his themes, and therefore an invaluable source of imaginative ideas for the student. One could carp that he uses data repetitively; the Chapter 2 argument returns repeatedly to Kelly's work on Abingdon/Bradfield, there are numerous references to the 300-hide estate of Eynsham's minster, and there are several cross-references to page 67 which when followed up prove to be slightly disappointing. But the impact is a narrative which carries the reader along at a rattling rate; one wonders at what point in his career this author will take the next step and provide a replacement for Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England*. We must wait with eager anticipation!

BRIAN DURHAM

Emilie Amt, *The Accession of Henry II in England: Royal Government Restored, 1149–59*. The Boydell Press, 1993. Pp. 232. Price £35.

At a time when medieval history is steadily shrinking as an A-level subject it is interesting to see that it still retains its place in the academic world, and the bibliography to this work shows the continuing fascination that this Stephen/early Henry period has. The very comprehensive bibliography brings home the large quantity of older and more recent publications of both original evidence and secondary work. It is thus printed work that the author uses, for the manuscript sources quoted in the bibliography are limited to one; the other sources quoted, Pipe Rolls and the Red Book of the Exchequer, are in print and are referred to by printed page number. So this book is not to be judged on new evidence uncovered but on its handling of known evidence and of secondary works, and this it does with considerable success, especially in the more original Part I.

Part I, 'Communities in Transition', deals with the transitional period 1149–59, and considers six aspects. Chapter I is a straightforward account, based largely on chronicle evidence, of the events of 1149–59. It adds little to existing interpretations, but is clear, possibly clearer than the evidence really allows. The author generally avoids subjective judgment, probably wisely, since, for example, 'deadly rivals' (p. 8) seems unjustified by the evidence. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are concerned with the events of these years in three county areas: Gloucestershire (Angevin), Oxfordshire (divided), and Essex (royalist). Up-to-date local studies such as these form the best basis for future investigation into these years, and the three counties are very competently handled, although much more work remains to be done. Evidence and deduction are usually wisely differentiated, for the reader may at times wish to draw other conclusions. The author's caveat that 'this selection cannot be taken as a representative cross-section of England in Stephen's reign' (p. 79) is a wise caution. And while at this stage counties have to be used, how far county boundaries delineated spheres of influence is a question in its own right. Another question for the future concerns relations on the boundaries of areas of varying allegiance. Chapters 5 and 6 round off the survey of these transitional years, the first covering 'The Anglo-Flemish Community', the other 'The Financial Community'. Both topics inevitably stray well outside the decade of the title, so that it might have been worthwhile briefly indicating that close English relations with Flanders were very long-standing. Chapter 5 is a useful bringing-together of Flemings and their activities, although it is by no means clear why Pharamus of Boulogne merits some 2 pages. Chapter 6 starts with some 4 pages devoted to the Flemish financier, William Cade. He would have sat more happily in Chapter 5, for Chapter 6 is the least satisfactory in Part I. In all the others there is some causal connection between the activities of Stephen and Henry, but, as so very little here concerns Stephen, the information would have been better in Part 2; and it is rather tendentious to give much of a chapter on finance to the Templars (pp. 103–9), for it is only guesswork that they may have lent money to Stephen (p. 65) and there is no real evidence of loans to Henry II (p. 108). There were many non-financial reasons for supporting them.

Part II, Royal Financial Administration, has of necessity to confine itself to Henry II and the Pipe Roll of 1129–30. Four aspects are discussed: the Sheriffs and the Exchequer; the Condition of the Kingdom; the Farms and the Terre Date; Developments in Royal Revenue. The contents are considerably more technical than in Part I, and so may have less appeal for the non-professional historian. Although some use has been made of published figures the writer has produced a number of useful financial extracts and tables from the Pipe Rolls, a tedious but necessary task. These early rolls have been in use for a long time, and have been used in much published and unpublished work, but it is useful to have figures clearly set out, and up-to-date discussion of these specialized aspects. It is doubtful whether some of the

problems mentioned – ‘waste’ comes immediately to mind – are capable of solution. But evidence is fairly presented and discussion is as clear as medieval financial *minutiae* permit.

This book is, then, a welcome contribution to Stephen/early Henry II studies. It falls, as we have seen, into two parts, for the lack of precise financial information for Stephen’s reign gives Henry II a virtual monopoly of Part II. The information and, indeed, much of the interpretation of Part I, whet the appetite for more on the same lines, although it might be unfair to desire another two or three local studies at the expense of Part II. The copious bibliography suggests that the author would agree that without the toils of the many past editors and writers the present work could not have been produced; and it is a tribute to them and to her that this volume is now available for our study.

C.F. SLADE

J.H.C. Leach, *Sparks of Reform. The Career of Francis Jeune, 1806–1868*. Published by J.H.C. Leach, Pembroke College, Oxford, OX1 1DW. Pp. xii + 116. Price £12.50.

‘As light dawneth in a cellar from a decayed mackerel, even so it is bruited that in Pembroke, the cellar and dusthole of the university, there are those who send forth sparks of reform’, John Keble wrote to a friend in 1831, identifying Francis Jeune, a tutor at Pembroke, as one of the chief emitters of sparks. Some two decades later it was due to Jeune’s single-minded determination, as Master, that a new set of ordinances rid Pembroke of many of the founders’ restrictions, which had condemned it to a mediocre position among the colleges. Pembroke presented one of the most extreme cases of a ‘close’ college; the scholarships and fellowships were mainly tied to Abingdon school, which was itself in decline. The eventual opening of the college (in 1857) is the climax of Colin Leach’s lively book which, using a wide variety of manuscript sources, traces the fluctuating fortunes of Jeune’s reforming enthusiasms. Jeune’s election as Master, in December 1843, was disputed, and not confirmed until the following April; he suffered considerable odium among the other heads of house for promoting, and then consenting to serve on the royal commission appointed by Lord John Russell in 1850 to investigate the university. And he had to contend against a hostile college Visitor, the fourteenth earl of Derby. But he gained the crucial support of the university’s M.P., W.E. Gladstone, with whom he carried on an extensive correspondence. This documents Jeune’s despair when, at the end of June 1854, Roundell Palmer, acting on behalf of Winchester interests at New College, carried an amendment protecting the interests of privileged schools; days later, on 7 July 1854, to his and Gladstone’s relief, it was overturned in the Lords (‘They made a beautiful piece of Parliamentary work of it’, Gladstone recorded). There was one final, though not major, disappointment for Jeune when a technical failure to achieve a quorum of fellows at a single meeting in 1855 meant that the actual framing of new ordinances was done by executive commissioners and Pembroke was denied the credit, which Corpus, Exeter, Lincoln, and Queen’s obtained, of effecting its own reform.

Jeune’s reforming capabilities were apparent during his headmastership of King Edward’s School, Birmingham, and as Dean of Jersey, where he later played a part in the foundation of Victoria College. From 1864 until his death he was an energetic bishop of Peterborough. It was on Oxford, however, that Jeune chiefly left his mark: he instigated a substantial programme of rebuilding at Pembroke in the 1840s to which, as Mr Leach shows, Jeune contributed out of his own pocket; the broadening of the undergraduate curriculum in 1850 to include natural science, modern history and jurisprudence; and the establishment in 1853



of the professorship of Latin. Principal author of the section of the royal commission report dealing with the colleges, Jeune was notable above all for his work in securing the viability of the college system, not least by his pioneering bursarial initiatives to reduce college battels. This achievement was insufficiently recognised for a combination of reasons. His comparatively early death in 1868, before the accession of the Gladstone government from which he might have expected further preferment, denied him the position, Leach suggests, and perhaps the contemporary biography which his talents warranted. Jowett dismissed him as 'restless' and 'scheming', judgements which seem to receive some confirmation from evidence in this book that as early as 1855 Jeune was angling for a bishopric. It might be added that his achievements at Pembroke may have appeared to contemporaries short-lived. Within two years of his departure the college was involved in a scandalous fellowship election, while the reforms which he pioneered were taken up by other, wealthier colleges, leaving Pembroke, in the later part of the 19th century, once again in a position of comparative obscurity. Nor, for all his institutional activity, was Jeune associated with the movements which breathed renewed vitality in to the Oxford system after 1850: he was not prominent in the great debate about the idea of a university education, or in the introduction of individual tuition, or the development of collegiate spirit by such devices as organised sport. Nor did he contribute to Oxford scholarship. For all his evangelical piety, chapel at Pembroke during his Mastership was said to lack spiritual vitality, and to most undergraduates he seems to have been a distant figure.

Jeune was a man of business, and Colin Leach succeeds in bringing this essential activity to life. This book suggests the scope for studies of other heads of the unreformed colleges: B.P. Symons of Wadham, J.L. Cotton of Worcester and Philip Wynter of St John's would be candidates for similar treatment.

M.C. CURTHOYS