

REVIEWS

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

Tim Copeland, *Iron Age and Roman Wychwood: The Land of Satavacus and Bellicia*. The Wychwood Press, Charlbury, 2002. Pp. viii + 135. £12.00

Lying, rather forlorn, at the bottom of a case in the Ashmolean is a panpipe. It was found in excavations at Shakenoak and at once evokes the world of Classical pastoral and, through the names of two lovers inscribed on it, the Celtic inhabitants of this part of Roman Britain. There aren't many other names known from this part of Oxfordshire and they too are only known from Shakenoak graffiti (Anna and Sentica). However, rigorous analysis of Iron Age and Roman topography and of structural remains from the Wychwood area has allowed Tim Copeland to write a book which brings these people to life. The book will be important not just for students of early Oxfordshire or even the province of *Britannia* as a whole, but will be read with profit and admiration by all who are interested in the last phases of prehistory and the process of becoming Roman in the European provinces of the Roman Empire.

The quality of past research has had a determining effect on what we now know. The fascinating chapter on the Discovery of Iron Age and Roman Wychwood both discusses the discovery of Stonesfield villa and Henry Hakeill's fine work at North Leigh, and provides fascinating insights into researches by Brabrook, Price and White and then Leeds at Chastleton Camp, on Radford at Ditchley and on excavators at other sites which shows that the pursuit of quality in techniques and interpretation are not those of a linear improvement in excellence.

Copeland writes clearly and with conviction about field monuments, whether rather small Iron Age hillforts or farms or linear features which are only occasionally very prominent features of the modern landscape but clearly had enormous significance in the past, in these cases defining territories. It seems very reasonable to see Grim's Ditch as the creation of members of the ruling class of a section of the eastern Dobunni. In its present form Akeman Street is a Roman creation, perhaps a frontier (*limes*) marking the northern limit of what Copeland sees as the area of earliest Roman occupation though others would see it as essentially demarcating the lands of friendly client peoples, so maybe the concept of 'Roman conquest' featured in Chapter 7 is misplaced. It is certainly true that neither of these monuments seem to have anything to do with 'holding down' the natives who appear throughout to have been peaceable farmers.

With regard to occupation sites, if evidence for Iron Age farmsteads is at present not very extensive, it is clear from work of varying quality from the 17th century onwards that within this area is one of the densest group of villas in all of Roman Britain, many of them merely simple farmsteads, but including some much richer establishments, notably North Leigh, Stonesfield, and Beaconsfield Farm, Great Tew which were endowed with mosaics and in the case of the first of these at any rate almost palatial in size. These mosaics were laid by mosaicists from Cirencester and, realising the urban nature of Roman administration, Copeland rightly casts his view westward beyond Wychwood, beyond the county boundary to *Corinium*. However the distance of 30 miles would not, as he implies, of necessity have weakened its influence as this distance is just about the reasonable limit of a day's journey assessed by the inhabitants of parts of Africa today. Alchester lay nearer, for some marketing purposes, while within the area of his study lie the small settlements of Sansom's Platt, Wilcote, and Asthall, all of which have received some recent study.

Apart from villas, the area has provided some compelling evidence for religion, including Lee's Rest, excavated by the late R.E. Linington and never published. The stone head of Mercury, to whom the sanctuary was very probably dedicated, was only found in the past year. Fair Rosamund's Well in Blenheim Park is clearly another site potentially of great significance. In addition to sites there are a number of interesting sculptures of deities, some from domestic contexts, which partially compensate for the lack of inscribed altars. In general the treatment of religion is exemplary although it is a pity that Copeland did not slightly extend his boundary to the east in order to include the probable border-temple of Woodeaton which has given modern scholars so many insights into regional religious practice.

Extension of boundaries through time rather than space could have enlarged and invigorated rather a slim final chapter. We would have loved to know more about the connections between the Dobunni and the people who gave their name to the area but were in all probability the same; though for this we may have to await Stephen Yeates's thesis on the question of continuity of the line of Satavacus and Bellicia.

Otherwise the only omissions from this splendid book are in the bibliography, which needs to include Tom Freshwater's study of Stonesfield and its mosaic (*JBAA*, 153 (2000)). The list of places to see should surely mention the museums, notably the Ashmolean and, for the skill with which it presents the story of Oxfordshire - largely West Oxfordshire - through objects, the Oxfordshire Museum at Woodstock. The only mistake to provide a minor irritation to the pedant is that the 'bone pin' (illustrated on p. 26) is in fact the comb mentioned on p. 28. The reviewer, who has also written of the pastoral lovers of Shakenoak with a shared conviction that they epitomise the largely gentle, largely rural culture of this part of Roman Britain, feels that they have at last been projected to centre stage in the history of Roman Oxfordshire where they belong.

MARTIN HENIG

P. Booth, J. Evans and J. Hiller, *Excavations in the Extra-mural Settlement of Roman Alchester, Oxfordshire, 1991*. Oxford Archaeology Monographs 1: Oxford Archaeological Unit, 2001. Pp. 555, 229 figs., 35 plates, 90 tables. £35.00

In 1991 archaeological fieldwork took place in advance of the widening of the A421 from Junction 9 on the M40 (near Wendlebury) to Bicester, the route of which passes through the northern extra-mural area of Alchester, the largest Roman small town in Oxfordshire. The principal excavation sites were located northwest of the junction of Akeman Street with the Roman road from Dorchester-on-Thames to Towcester. After an introduction to the site and the excavation, the report falls into three main parts, a detailed presentation of the stratigraphic sequences, a discussion of the artefactual and environmental assemblages and a summary that also integrates the site with the wider history of Alchester and its region. The publication, already substantial, justifiably restricts itself to documenting and interpreting the development of this site and its relationship to Alchester. Nevertheless it also makes a notable contribution to the study of the 'small towns' of Roman Britain in general.

The evidence from the smaller excavation sites was limited to a Bronze Age cremation and Late Iron Age settlements and field boundaries. The earliest attested occupation from the main sites was of Middle Iron Age date, but this settlement had been abandoned long before the Roman conquest. The laying out of roads and fields from the mid 1st century AD marked a major re-configuration of the landscape north of Alchester (aerial photography suggests a similar re-organisation south of the town), although the different elements were established over some considerable time. A substantial ditch (the 'Big Ditch'), 5 m. wide,

2 m. deep and traced for 160 m. was dug parallel to Akeman Street between AD 40 and AD 80. A little later another parallel ditch was dug *c.* 25 m. to the south. Lack of evidence of occupation and the presence of patches of cobbling suggest that the area between was a roadway (the 'Back Lane'). In the mid 2nd century the areas north and south of the 'Back Lane' were subdivided into plots. The regular size (over 50 m. wide) and alignment of the plots to the north, perpendicular to the 'Back Lane', suggests a deliberate process of land division, although the plot boundary ditches were cut at different times. Perhaps the distribution of parcels was followed by a piecemeal delineation on the ground.

The principal evidence for occupation post-dated the establishment of the plots by up to a century and thus also post-dates the building of Alchester's walls in the late 2nd century. The dwellings and agricultural buildings distributed among the plots were mostly one-room, timber built, rectilinear and circular structures, with little evidence for architectural pretension. The circular structures demonstrate the persistence of a pre-Roman building style into the late Roman period. The most striking find is part of an inscription on Purbeck Marble. Too few letters are preserved to interpret the fragment, but inscriptions from small towns are very rare and it might derive from a public building in the centre of Alchester or at the road junction nearby. Presumably this remnant reached the site with rubble for levelling or consolidation. Also worth drawing to wider attention are the 'structured deposits', assemblages of everyday items that by their condition or combination stand out from the background pattern of rubbish deposition. These may be the residues of household rituals, set within the routines of daily life and farming. Most striking is deposit 3115, comprising partial and complete ceramics, especially drinking vessels, as well as articulated horse limbs. On the northern margins of the site a small inhumation cemetery was established in the early to mid 4th century, the first well-documented cemetery from Alchester.

The buildings, along with plant and animal evidence for small-scale arable and pastoral production, seem typical of rural sites in the region. This is unsurprising for a site on the margin of a small town but the presence of traded items in number, for example amphorae, glass, whetstones and oysters, plus the high levels of coin loss, are more characteristic of urban assemblages. A close integration into the regional and wider economy is indicated. The authors seem unduly worried by these apparent contradictions. There is still a dearth of evidence for 'small town' economies and societies and we should anticipate a great deal of variation both within and between them. This report supplies exactly the type of evidence that will allow more nuanced interpretations.

For the first time in Alchester the excavation also revealed traces of post-Roman activity, stratified above deposits containing Anglo-Saxon ceramics. Ten burials had been interred according to rituals similar to those of the late Roman cemetery, while a deposit of carbonised plant remains indicates the continued cultivation of spelt, in contrast to Anglo-Saxon sites where free-threshing wheats dominate. Thus the site contributes to the accumulating evidence for some continuity of Romano-British culture into post-Roman Oxfordshire.

The report is very well organised and presented, although the summary chapter requires constant recourse to the period plans in the body of the stratigraphic report. There is no explicit cross-referencing in the text to assist. A general illustration of the development of sites B and C over time would have spared the reader some of this. Some 'small finds' categories are also not fully exploited or integrated in discussion. For example Mould notes a seal box among the bronze finds as evidence for literacy, but other evidence that pertains to this topic is ignored, for example the iron styli and graffiti on ceramics. The treatment of different artefact types also varies: some specialists explore the wider economic significance of their material (e.g. Evans on ceramics, Roe on worked stone), others limit their discussion to typology (e.g. Allen on glass). With the exception of the ceramics, there is little attempt to

explore how the distribution of different materials and artefacts across the site might inform interpretation of the status or function of different areas.

Nevertheless the A421 excavations, together with those of the OUAS directed by Eberhard Sauer on military sites south and west of the town and mapping of aerial photographs by the former RCHME, have allowed a much more complex picture of Alchester's development to emerge. As the authors of this report argue, it is now time to re-visit the walled area of the town, since the opportunity exists to make Alchester one of the best-studied small towns within its setting.

JOHN PEARCE

R.H. Darwall-Smith (ed.), *Account Rolls of University College Oxford*. Oxford Historical Society, n.s. xxxix-xl, 1999-2001.

These two volumes consist in the main of 185 account rolls dating from between 1381 and 1597. They were copied from the original rolls in the archives of University College by A.D.M. Cox and edited by R.H. Darwall-Smith.

The colleges of Oxford University are not easy subjects for the historian. Towards the end of the 19th century an attempt was made to write a history of each of them; with the exception of the period of the Civil War, when briefly Oxford played a major part in national history, they are histories of famous alumni and of standing buildings, studies of a past whose only object was to produce the present. Since the appearance of the *History of the University*, which revealed for the first time a medieval and early modern university that was no mere primitive form of the institution that now exists, a few colleges have been treated to new histories. Those of Balliol and Merton make fascinating reading. Yet at the moment two of the colleges with the most eventful histories, University and Christ Church, have had no general histories since the volumes of the college history series.

University College is interesting in many ways. It was one of the earliest foundations; but the terms of its foundation were sufficiently vague to allow later generations of fellows to create, and indeed to go to law in defence of, a wholly fictitious account of the college's early years. It was a poor foundation, by Oxford standards, and the present imposing set of buildings belies its origins in partially converted town houses. Merton was the richly-endowed wonder of medieval Oxford, and we are fortunate to have an excellent history of it as well as many volumes of archival material, but the records, such as they are, of less fortunate institutions are the more valuable for the contrast they provide.

Darwall-Smith does not offer us a history of University College but he has assembled a remarkable collection of source documents in the best tradition of the Oxford Historical Society. They show in great detail how the finances of the college were managed over a period of 200 years, and unlike the modern volumes of college accounts that the university publishes they give a complete account, year by year, of the college's fortunes. The rolls are in Latin, but Latin of a straightforward and repetitive kind, and the reader with only a smattering will find that, relying on the extremely helpful glossary, a great deal may be learned from them.

Endowment required a quantity of money to be converted into a regular income stream, and a simple way to do this was to buy a collection of rents. Wealthy townspeople did the same; it was not a privilege of institutions. Rent collection was more easily achieved at close quarters than at a distance, and it is not surprising that both Wykeham and Chichele opted to endow their foundations by purchasing a major set of rents in Oxford itself. William of Durham had not left the college any endowments, and indeed such cash as he entrusted to

the university had somehow been loaned to Simon de Montfort; but when some of the cash was retrieved it was natural that the fellows should go shopping for some Oxford rents, settling on the rents that had been accumulated by the Aurifaber family. Unfortunately the title that they purchased was not a sound one – the seller had but a life interest in some of the rents he sold outright – and for many years all or part of the college's income could not be collected.

Let us look at a single roll in more detail. Roll UC:BU1/F/14 is dated from Whitsun 1400 to Whitsun 1401. The bursar is John Fayt. He starts by writing down the arrears of rent owed to the college from previous years, copied from the previous roll. The college is owed £17 6s. Now he adds all the rents owing for the current year. These are divided into rents from tenements (£20 7s. 6d.), rents from academic halls (£13 0s. 8d.) and rents from rooms in college not needed by the fellows (£10 11s.). The rents of halls are quite different from the figures for the previous year; maybe the rent was renegotiated each year. There is also £1 14s. 10d. income *praeter sortem domum* (?-us). If he can collect all of this income Fayt will have £62 19s. 10d. (Darwall-Smith's note).

Against this we must start to set the college's expenses. The purpose of the college is to maintain the fellows, and this expenditure is set out first, week by week. After Whitsun there are 5 or 6 fellows – the number falls as low as one later in the year – and their commons for a week cost about 1s. 6d. per fellow. In addition the bursar allows a weekly sum for battels. This is something of a surprise because we are used to battels being paid to, not by, the college. Unlike commons, the figure for battels does not appear to depend on the number of fellows. Finally in each accounting period a sum is paid for contributions. Later these vanish from the accounts when the stipends of the fellows are listed, so we may assume that they are the same.

The cost of commons for the year is £18 6s. We can summarise the remainder of expenditure more briefly:

Rents payable	£4 11s. 8d.
Servants' wages	£1 4s. 4d.
Expenses	£4 4s. 10½d.
Repairs	£13 7s. 8½d.

Fayt also claims his salary as bursar (10s.).

To complete the account at the end of the year, the bursar asks for allowances for income he was unable to collect, to be carried forward as arrears. Fayt asks for £20 9s. 1d. of allowances. His total outgoings are therefore £62 13s. 8d. as against £62 19s. 10d. income.

Though this accords with Mr Micawber's definition of happiness, it is not hard to see that all is not well. Receipts from rents, after deduction of rents payable and repairs, is a mere £24 3s. 4½d. Even if all this were available for commons it would barely allow for the maintenance of 6 fellows for a year. There is no reference to a chest this year; we must assume that the college had no cash reserves. Rents will be payable, usually on quarter days, but on different quarter days for different properties; we do not have enough leases to allow us to work out what the quarterly flow of income would be. However, we know that many rents are paid at Michaelmas, and closer scrutiny of the payments for commons tells the sad story: from midsummer to Michaelmas there are only two fellows. Many rents are paid at Michaelmas, and the number of fellows rises to 4 or 5, and this is maintained until the next Whitsun.

One of the things that the accounts make plain is that the college was in the business of renting out rooms; it had more space than it needed and used what was spare for revenue. The people to whom the rooms were rented were not the gentlemen commoners of later generations but mere tenants, students or even the proprietors of halls who would in turn rent out the space to students.

It is instructive to look at how this material relates to other surviving Oxford rentals and accounts. The rentals of Oseney Abbey and of the Hospital of St. John have been published in the same series, as have such early rolls of Merton College as survive; these have accounts but no rentals. We might suspect that in these better endowed foundations, the job of bursar was distinct from the job of rent collector. What we have at Oseney is the collection of rolls used by the rent collectors (and occasional records of rent payable), the balance of which would be transferred to the main accounts. Similarly at Merton we have bursars' accounts. But at University College, a poor foundation whose finances did not justify such a division of labour, a single roll sufficed for a whole year's transactions. Whether or not this speculation is justified, the completeness of these accounts makes them very useful.

I hope I have said enough to indicate the importance of this material to anyone who wants to understand the history of University College. There are, however, other ways in which these volumes enhance our understanding of medieval Oxford.

Firstly, the topography of medieval Oxford is built on records such as these. Ostensibly a rental merely tells how much rent was paid for a property. But it may well add the name of the tenant and a brief description of the property. Either of these may help locate the property, and may help locate other properties nearby. For example, if the rental records that the tenant is called John the cordwainer, and if a hitherto unlocated Oseney property in the same parish is described as 'next to the messuage where John the cordwainer dwells' then we have fitted another piece in the jigsaw of medieval topography, a piece that did not originate at University College at all. These rolls contribute plenty of new information of this kind; the messy area between Queen Street and Sewy's Lane is one quarter that can be mapped more accurately as a result. In his introduction Darwall-Smith provides a useful and accurate reading of the topography of University College properties; readers will welcome his very thorough summary of property details (though this reviewer confesses to a feeling akin to that of a crossword enthusiast who finds a puzzle with the solution already written in – the fact that he got it all right only makes it worse). He has not only identified the properties but compiled a list of all tenants by property, so that anyone adding this book to their collection of references when searching for names that occur in charters need only refer to this list. It may be worth adding that in my opinion the Revd. H.E. Salter never gained access to the deed room of University College, and his records are copied from a volume by Smith now in the library of the Society of Antiquaries. Anyone who works with college records will have suffered from the 'Salter was here' feeling, the sense that all these documents have already been read and summarised by someone who understood them far better. University College is an exception.

Secondly, this collection has valuable details of buildings and of the building trade. In many collections, details such as these have survived only if there was a dispute with a neighbour or a tenant, so that, for example, from the Oseney volumes one might easily form the opinion that medieval buildings consisted entirely of gutters and latrines. The present collection is valuable for recording the routine attention the fellows paid to the condition of their properties for some years.

Thirdly, historians of Oxford are extraordinarily well served by the existence of a full list of names of people associated with the medieval university, Emden's *Biographical Register*. Any new source of names adds to this already very considerable record. So far as this reviewer is aware there is only the most elementary online version of Emden's *Register* and no attempt has been made to keep the register up to date beyond the specially bound copy in Duke Humfrey's in which the author and other readers more intrepid or less heedful of the library regulations than this reviewer have made manuscript additions. It is clear that these rolls are a source that were unknown to Emden, and as such they deserve addition to the register.

It is very much to be hoped that this will not be the end of Darwall-Smith's researches in the University College deed room. He has already produced in typescript a very detailed catalogue of the deeds of the college, showing that it is a collection every bit as interesting as the other published catalogues of college and monastic deeds, enlivened by the occasional forgery and by more litigation than the most voracious reader of medieval court rolls could desire. An edition of these deeds would be a really welcome addition to the Salter volumes already published by OHS.

TONY DODD

John Goodall, *God's House at Ewelme: Life, Devotion, and Architecture of a fifteenth-century Almshouse*. Ashgate, 2001. Pp. 361, vii plates, 89 figs.

The author of this splendid book is a freelance architectural historian, educated at Durham University and the Courtauld Institute. It was launched in Ewelme church at a meeting of the Monumental Brass Society in the summer of 2001. It is substantially the author's Ph.D. thesis and is an outstandingly worthy and innovative contribution to our understanding of late medieval religion. The first chapter sets God's House in the context of other chantry foundations. The second deals with the founders, the de la Pole family; it also describes the history and buildings of Ewelme Palace. The institution and its statutes constitute a third chapter. The fourth is concerned with the architecture of the buildings. The next three chapters describe the institutional life of the almshouse, and the eighth looks at the chapel of St. John the Baptist which the author recognises is the focal point of the community's devotional life and serves as the mausoleum of the Chaucer family. Particularly valuable is a text and commentary on the 10,000-word statutes: these are seen as a species of contract between the donor and the beneficiaries.

James Bond and I looked closely at the Ewelme complex in the 1980s when we were carrying out a county-wide survey of early brickwork in Oxfordshire, so it was surprising to find (p. 13) that Goodall claims that there has been no survey of the Ewelme Palace site. *Au contraire*, a beginning was made as seen in *South Midland Archaeology* (1983), 68. Nor is it true to say that 'little external evidence survives' of the truncated remnant of Ewelme Palace. There are blocked windows and putlog holes but they have to be searched for: see M. Airs, 'Ewelme', *Archaeological Journal*, cxxxv (1978), 277-80.

Goodall has noticed in this book that the church of St. Mary is the result of three major building campaigns. The tower and the south aisle are earlier than the nave, chancel and north aisle. He attributes the south aisle to Sir Thomas Chaucer, Alice Chaucer's father, and asserts that the chapel of St. John the Baptist is earlier than the chancel. Why shouldn't it be later? Its windows could well have been bodily moved from Thomas Chaucer's earlier work and been re-used. One curious *lacuna* is that there is no discussion of the carpentry of the roofs, nor mention of *aumbries* or *piscinas*. Is this because the book is a shortened version of the Ph.D. thesis?

The drawings in this book are poor and diagrammatic. Photogrammetry or rectified photography could have been used to get a better record; in general there is an over-reliance on the drawings by Dollman in 1858. Further, the bricks which James Bond and I noted in our survey of the 1980s were of 23 varieties; they were moulded not cut. Another strange blank is that despite the profusion of photographs there are no illustrations of brasses commemorating the 15th-century masters of the foundation.

The claim that the school is one of the oldest continuously used for educational purposes is belied by the fact that it was in a lamentably disused and broken down state in the 1830s

(p. 106). It is good to know that the grammar master was empowered to discipline those children 'who were tedious, noisome or troublesome to the said place or any of the inhabitants therein' (p. 111). An analysis of what is known about the almsmen suggests that they were genuinely poor. Nothing emerges about why they were chosen. Were they old retainers living out their time after a life of service to the de la Poles or were they locals who had simply fallen on hard times?

There was much reconstruction of the hospital in the 1970s that was unrecorded archaeologically. It is not apparent consequently how the almsmen climbed into the upper rooms of their two-room cottages – maybe spiral wooden stairs, or perhaps more likely, wooden ladders. Their 'flats' were well heated with a fireplace in each room.

Goodall suggests that William de la Pole may have originally visualised the school as a feeder for an undefined Oxford or Cambridge college (cf. Winchester and New College, Eton and King's), but subsequently was cut down to size by his widow. Ewelme was, in fact, only one among a plethora of de la Pole charitable institutions. During the period 1437–50 the family supported charities at Hull, Kingfield, and Ewelme, as well as guilds in Abingdon and Thame. In his conclusion he praises (rightly) 'the immense value of physical remains in their own right as historical evidence', a value which is still too often ignored or even disdained by historians (p. 205). He thinks that chantries served the living as well as memorialising the dead, 'a living celebration of familial pretension and power set within the context of a great dynastic residence'. Goodall has made a notable contribution to the history of the county and to our understanding of the place of hospitals, almshouses, and schools in late medieval society.

JOHN STEANE

Paul Hayter (ed.), *King's Sutton Churchwardens' Accounts, 1636–1700*. Banbury Historical Society, vol. 27, 2001.

The parochial boundaries on the reproduced tithe map might stand out more clearly, but the introduction to these churchwardens' accounts is informative and relatively full for the series. It would, however, have been worth imitating other volumes in explaining the status of the Banbury peculiar beyond 'a peculiar or exempt jurisdiction within the diocese of Lincoln' (p. 4), especially since by the closing date of 1700 one is approaching the ultimately successful assertion of its claims by the see of Oxford. It is worthy of more remark, then, that the King's Sutton churchwardens attended visitations in the archdeaconry of Buckingham (part of the diocese of Lincoln): was this different from Banbury, because 'the Archdeacon of Buckingham was usually also the Rector of King's Sutton' (p. 3)?

The accounts provide many interesting lights on the troubled history of the period. There seems little sign of proverbial Banbury puritanism spreading to King's Sutton – as the editor observes, 'the New Communion Table and the Raill' put in quite an early appearance, in 1636 (p. 5). On the other hand, King's Sutton was quicker than South Newington to restrict communion to Easter (1644) and slower to restore it at Christmas (1682). During the Interregnum, the apparent steadiness of communion consumption but appearance of 'many privat communions' (p. 60) is interesting. In view of their general rarity according to W.P.M. Kennedy, some speculation might be apposite – were disagreeable modifications in the public service undermined in private?

The pressures of the Civil War disrupted the succession of churchwardens so that single accounting periods stretched across 1641–8 and 1648–51. Despite subsequent recovery, in 1655 'there is behinde for the Church barne we know not what, and there wilbe a true Accompt made of all particulars wee know not when' (p. 68). Diversion of parochial

expenditure appears at the Restoration; on charitable payments in response to multiplying 'letters of request', an apparently increasing number of travellers 'that had a pas' to be resettled in their parishes of origin, and bounties for the killing of hedgehogs. The great structural undertakings of 1698, involving at least twenty times the normal expenditure on the fabric were, however, in their own way, a worthy contribution to the period of the Church of England's reconstruction of buildings and finances.

There are intriguing details about costs. Communion expenses, it seems, indicate that early 17th-century communicants probably partook of 'a glassful' (p. 14). The editor implies a bibulous orgy in 1638 when £10 2s. was spent on Easter wine rather than the customary £2 or so; he could however have qualified this by noting that the figures have probably been transposed, since – though missing figures introduce an element of uncertainty – there is only the usual £2 odd left as difference between the other figures given and the sum total (p. 14). The excesses of 1637-8 are, I fear, chimerical. The Easter collections from the congregation customarily amounted to 10s., while the cost of providing communion was always much greater – there may be no such thing as a free lunch, but there can apparently be a cheap drink. The churchwardens meanwhile consoled themselves for the obligation to attend archdiaconal visitation with a dinner whose cost moved up over £1; in 1640-1 the parish curiously 'disallowed' the modest sum of 3s. for this purpose. Bishops' visitations were worse, but it took an especially burdensome one to cost £3 6s. 8d. out of a total of £11 17s. in the (problematic) 1637-8 figures. Instances could be multiplied, for this volume is a rich source on the multifarious financial demands on the early modern parish and the often heroic efforts that must have been required to meet them.

JULIAN LOCK

Roger White (comp.) with the assistance of Robin Darwall-Smith, *The Architectural Drawings of Magdalen College, Oxford: a Catalogue*. Oxford University Press for Magdalen College, 2001.

The collection which is here catalogued is claimed to be 'probably the biggest and most important at either Oxford or Cambridge' (p. ix), and even (by the President in his Foreword) 'possibly the largest consistent record in the country of past attempts to develop the fabric of a single institution continuing to fulfil the same purposes for which it was founded' (p. vii). These are grandiose claims, and may perhaps be justified, though as so many colleges have never made the attempt to bring together all their architectural drawings, let alone catalogue them, they cannot be tested. The closest comparison is with King's College, Cambridge, which published in 1979 *The Architectural Drawings Collection of King's College, Cambridge: a catalogue and historical synopsis of the major project drawings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*, edited by Allan Doig. Since this catalogue was professedly incomplete, it is impossible to know whether that college's collection is indeed smaller, though it is certainly comparable in quality. There is also the catalogue of drawings for Downing College, Cambridge (Cinzia Maria Sicca, *Committed to Classicism: the Building of Downing College*, Cambridge (1987)). 'Odorous comparisons' apart, Magdalen deserves congratulation for producing this handsome volume.

The cream of the collection is the remarkable series of schemes for the enlargement of the college, all more or less abortive, made between the 1720s and the 1820s. These are not unfamiliar, having been published first by T.S.R. Boase in 1955 in the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, and then by Howard Colvin in his *Unbuilt Oxford* (1983) – both omitted from the incomprehensibly (and ominously) brief bibliography.

The catalogue is preceded by an introduction, usefully illustrated with photographs (mostly historic), engravings, and two drawings for Magdalen by Hawksmoor in Worcester

College Library. It gives a succinct account of the college's architectural history, though by no means a complete one. The appendix 'Chronology of Building Activity' usefully supplements it, but that too is incomplete, omitting, for example, the college pavilion of 1904 by Ronald Potter Jones (*Builder*, 86 (1904), p. 198). Some basic information which would be helpful to those unfamiliar with the situation is absent: there is no indication of the fact that Magdalen Hall was a separate institution until p. 63, and even there it is not clearly explained.

White reveals a regrettable lack of sympathy with Bodley and Garner's wonderful St. Swithin's Quadrangle, dismissing it as 'not a bad design in elevational terms': one would never guess that this was one of the few modern buildings admired by William Morris and that even R.T. Gunther (later to be a thorn in poor Bodley's side) said that they were 'generally stated to be the best new collegiate buildings in Oxford'. In 1935 H.S. Goodhart-Rendel (called by Sir John Summerson 'the father of us all') wrote 'looking at Garner's buildings, one might fancy that the Gothic style had never died, and to Garner I do not think that it ever had' (see *History of the University of Oxford* [hereafter *HUO*], vii, 752). White is equally unappreciative of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's continuation of Bodley and Garner's buildings, which is at once tactful and genuinely individual. Nothing could prove the merits of both sets of buildings more conclusively than a comparison with the feeble pastiche of Demetri Porphyrios, about which White is discreetly reticent, let alone the hard banality of the Holywell Ford buildings. These are considered to deserve colour illustration, but yet poor Clapton Crabb Rolfe, the distinguished architect who rebuilt Holywell Ford for his own occupation in 1888 (Andrew Saint, *Oxoniensia*, xxxv (1970), 101), does not even get mentioned, though the house is shown on the drawing reproduced on p. 218.

The meat of the book is, of course, the catalogue. This is arranged by architects, which was probably the most reasonable system: those wishing to pursue the history of individual parts of the college can make use of the index. However, it is regrettable that the opportunity was not taken to arrange the drawings in a more comprehensible order, rather than listing them in the order in which they happen to have been found in the archives. For example, welcome as is the inclusion of Pugin's designs for Magdalen College School, despite the fact that they belong to the school's archives rather than to the college's, some attempt should have been made to sort out what were apparently six different schemes. No drawings are listed here for the fourth and fifth but, according to Timothy Brittain-Catlin ('It all melts away: A.W.N. Pugin in Oxford', in *True Principles: the voice of the Pugin Society*, ii (4) (2002), 32-4), only the first three were for the complete school, while the others were for its hall. The same problem recurs with the drawings by Thomas Harrison of Chester, of which it is extremely hard to make sense.

One architect seems to have dropped out: the archives include a drawing for additions to the Chemical Laboratory at the Botanic Garden by A. Mardon Mowbray, of 40 Queen Street, Oxford, dated 26 February 1902. There is also a 'design for border to Edw. Chapman brass executed by Sabattino de Angelis of Naples in repoussé copper as a border for the inscription by Gawthorp of Long Acre' (i.e. Messrs Gawthorpe) in R.T. Gunther's Scrapbook.

Sometimes the catalogue's basic principle is ignored, when drawings are included within an architect's entry although they are not in any sense 'by' him, but merely relate to his work: examples are No. 318, attributed to Buckler, and Nos. 321-2 ('probably work for Bodley and Garner?'), all catalogued under Pugin; also Nos. 421-3.

The deficiencies of the Bibliography turn out to have unfortunate consequences for the scholarship of the catalogue entries. It is particularly surprising that no use has been made of the architectural chapters in the *HUO*. The 19th-century volume would have supplied much relevant information. Matters of detail will be dealt with *seriatim*:

xxxix: re Richard Paget's Gothic 'throne', reference should be made to Paget's drawings, presented to the college in 1954. One was reproduced by Boase (plate 42a - see p. 148, n.4).

xlvi: the demolition of Pugin's gateway is described as 'quite unnecessary', but, as the college had decided that it wanted a gateway directly onto the High Street, it would at least have had to be moved. Fortunately, Pugin's statues were saved, and stored safely. The one of Mary Magdalen now occupies a niche at the north end of the Grove buildings, but the canopy of the niche is too shallow and the statue is likely to deteriorate. At least its fate is better than that of the Magdalen on the bell-tower, for which E.P. Warren laudably gave the commission to the accomplished young sculptor Conrad Dressler (*Building News*, 60 (1891), 509): replaced when the tower was repaired c. 1980, it was put on a dump on the college playing-field.

li: similarly, the project for a new gateway by Giles Gilbert Scott was motivated by the college's thought of reverting to the previous site.

lii: 'Nicholas Stone's Botanic Garden gate': although Stone certainly built the gate, Inigo Jones attributed its design to 'sum mathematicians of Oxford that desined for a gate for ye garden of simples, lamly' (*HUO*, iv, 170).

liii: in the quotation from the RH Partnership, the first '1990s' should read '1920s'.

30: on A.C. Pugin, see Rosemary Hill, *Burlington Magazine*, Jan. 1996, pp.11-19.

55: no explanation is given here or elsewhere of 'the Gravel Walk'.

58, No. 128: 'Hall extension' must surely be an error (for 'Library'?).

64: the rusticated ground floor is not the only difference from the new Magdalen Hall as built.

91, No. 224 (Fig. 59): it should be made clear that this drawing only shows the centre and eastern part of the New Building. This must be the design referred to in the letter quoted on p. 95.

93, No. 230: for 'alternate ground-floor windows', read 'first-floor'.

100, No. 245: this drawing cannot possibly be earlier than the 1850s, and is presumably by J.H. Parker (*HUO*, vii, 742). Although not an architect, he would have been quite capable of making such a design.

117, No. 301 (Fig. 73): the Botanic Garden buildings are not shown 'as executed'. Apart from other differences, the western block was not built to this design.

120, No. 314: the fireplaces in Exeter College Hall are by Sir Reginald Blomfield, 1904 (*HUO*, vii, 758).

121: only one of the stained glass windows designed by Pugin for St. Mary the Virgin is by Hardman. The other is by William Wailes (*HUO*, vii, 736, n.22).

148-9: on Charles Buckeridge, see A. Saint, *Oxoniensia*, xxxviii, (1973), 357-72. Other work at Magdalen is recorded on p. 368, and for Brackley see p. 366.

152, No. 427: the design by George Gilbert Scott for a 'doorcase for the President's Lodgings' should be related to his restoration of the Founder's Tower in 1856, when he decorated the State Rooms which formed part of the Lodgings (*Builder*, 14 (1856), 586). Some of the decoration was by the Crace firm. All has now disappeared.

152, No. 428: the plan by Scott was made for the Report of a committee on college improvements printed in 1875: it quotes the opinions of Scott on possible sites for a new residential building.

154: in 1881-2 Wilkinson and Moore also made alterations and improvements to the kitchen, and did some structural work (*HUO*, vii, 771; A. Saint, *Oxoniensia*, xxxv (1970), 78). The archives contain some unsigned drawings dated 1880 and 1881 for alterations to the kitchens and offices.

161: 'it is thought that Garner played a major role in the Magdalen College design' (by Bodley and Garner): 'the Building Committee minutes would seem to bear this out' (*HUO*, vii, 752, n.76). The attribution of no other quality than 'self-effacement' to their work at Oxford is highly unjust.

167, No. 469: on 4 August 1886 the Building Committee requested another design for chimneystacks, like those on St. Swithin's Quadrangle. No. 476 must be the result.

169-70: there should be some mention of the extensive documentation relating to the Chapel porch in R.T. Gunther's papers: there is also a photograph in 'Edward Chapman, vol. II', 1901.

170-4: there is much material relating to the Hall roof in R.T. Gunther's Scrapbook. A perspective view of the Hall was published in the *Building News*, 86 (1904), 619.

177-9: measured drawings by R. Wynn Owen were published in the *Building News*, 5 July 1907. There is a letter from him in R.T. Gunther's Scrapbook.

180: the design for the barge was approved on 12 November 1886, but E.P. Warren's first work for Magdalen in fact dates from 1885, when he designed some bookshelves for fellows' rooms in St. Swithin's Quadrangle (*HUO*, vii, 758, n.88).

181-2: there are letters from George R. Kett dated 1921 concerning the Library roof in R.T. Gunther's Scrapbook.

183: one would like to know why the War Memorial in St. John's Quadrangle, dedicated in 1921, was moved to Wheatley in 1940 (of all years).

203: 'Linacre College (originally St. Catherine's Society)': Linacre moved out, and the building became the Faculty of Music in 1981.

It is a pity that more effort was not made to refer to drawings for Magdalen in other collections. Once or twice there are cross-references to the RIBA Drawings Collection, for example in the entry on Oliver Hill, and once (but once only) for drawings for Tubney church by Pugin (no. 339), but there are other drawings at the RIBA and elsewhere relating to the college. There are four surviving designs by Anthony Salvin for the chapel competition of 1828, three at the University of Toronto (two of which are illustrated in Jill Allibone, *Anthony Salvin* (1987), 17), and one in a private collection.

The book is generously illustrated in black and white and in colour. The last of the latter descends into bathos, showing the rather fey repaving of St. John's Quadrangle on a wet winter evening with a Christmas tree in the middle and a parked car to one side.

PETER HOWELL

Ann Spokes Symonds, *Oxfordshire People and the Forgotten War: the Anglo-Boer Conflict, 1899-1902*. Robert Boyd Publications, Witney, 2002. Pp. ix + 179. £12.95

The impact of a great historical episode, such as the Second World War, on a particular locality has long been a favoured and fruitful subject for local historians. Eschewing the familiar A.R.P., allotments and evacuees, the Oxford local historian Mrs Ann Spokes Symonds has chosen the impact on her own city and county of an earlier, and she claims 'forgotten', war as the subject of her new book. This covers both the war's impact on the home communities and the experiences at the war of Oxford and Oxfordshire men and women. A profusely illustrated paperback, the book has a brief historical introduction, then covers farewells, funds and comforts for the troops, Imperial Yeomanry, the university, celebrations at home, military action, concentration camps and farm destruction, prisoners of war, hardships and privation, disease and the wounded, the fallen and their memorials, some Oxfordshire men, and homecomings and rewards. There are an appendix of dates, a one-page bibliography, and an index, but regrettably no references. The book is excellently illustrated with an interesting photograph or drawing on almost every page. Mrs Spokes Symonds has drawn on a range of sources including the local press, archives, museums,

colleges, schools, and the private holdings of descendants. The book is packed with interesting, significant, and sometimes tragic information.

It is a cliché that wars are mostly fought by the young, and the book sadly illustrates this with, for example, its accounts of the short lives of Edward Brooke and Frank Twiss. Brooke of Magdalen College, an athletics blue, served as an infantry lieutenant and was killed aged 23. Twiss, aged 16, left Magdalen College School in February 1900, served as a bugler in the Imperial Yeomanry, and died of enteric in May 1900.

Some years ago there was a vogue among some historians for calling the Boer War 'Britain's Vietnam' and minimising popular support for the war. Such views are no longer accepted by historians, and in Mrs Spokes Symonds' book can be found further evidence against them. The 'Britain's Vietnam' hypothesis is untenable if only because, unlike the Americans, the British fought a successful anti-guerilla campaign and won their war. There were numerous other differences. The Vietnam War was fought by conscripts, and the rich, privileged and influential evaded service there. The Boer War was fought by volunteers (except on the Boer side, with their compulsory commando system) and all of those named in the book – with the arguable exception of some regular soldiers, who enlisted from poverty – chose to serve. As the book shows, men from all strata of society – from Prince Christian Victor, the duke of Marlborough and Viscount Valentia to Ernest W. Moss, railway labourer, and Walter Allsworth, brewery worker – volunteered. University and public school men left comfortable lives for the war. Some 69 old boys from St. Edward's School served, and 50 from the Dragon.

The extent of public support for the war was shown not only by the volunteering, but also in many other ways described in the book: the funds raised for the troops and their families, the 'comforts' and other supplies donated, and the mass, enthusiastic farewells to departing soldiers and welcomes to returning soldiers – with crowds, flags, brass bands, bell-ringing, dinners, and presentations – and the popular, sometimes riotous celebrations of British successes, including the relief of Mafeking, in which bonfires were prominent and sometimes dangerous.

An author more familiar with military and Boer War history might have taken a slightly different approach to some aspects of the subject, and avoided one or two minor errors. For example, in 1881 the Transvaal was not granted independence but rather a form of self-government under British suzerainty; the photograph of an Oxfordshire Light Infantry private in the chapter 'Farewells' shows not the uniform worn to South Africa but an early version of postwar home service dress; and the vehicle portrayed on p. 42 was not a steam roller but a traction engine. There is also sometimes a failure to contextualise and connect. For example, the book states that Lionel Curtis liked the Boers and disliked the Uitlanders, but does not mention that this was fairly common among British officers, who loathed the money-grubbing Johannesburg mine capitalists and were relatively sympathetic to the Boer farmers, as Dr Keith Surridge showed in his article in *History* (October 1997). One questionable feature of the book is its insistence that the Boer War is forgotten. In fact the recent centenary occasioned television programmes, exhibitions (including one at the Bodleian Library), international conferences (including one at St. Edmund Hall) and numerous books, both academic and popular. Moreover, a specialist journal, *Soldiers of the Queen: the Journal of the Victorian Military Society*, has a Boer War article in almost every issue.

Nevertheless, despite some limitations, Mrs Spokes Symonds' book is a welcome addition to recent literature on the war and on Oxfordshire local history, and is well worth reading.

ROGER T. STEARN

