REVIEWS

R.H. Darwall-Smith (ed.), *Early Records of University College, Oxford* (OHS, ns, 46), The Boydell Press for OHS (Woodbridge, 2015). Pp. xxvi + 414. £35. ISBN 978-0-904107-27-2.

Early Records of University College, Oxford complements both Robin Darwall-Smith's edition of the University College account rolls (OHS, ns, vols. 39, 1999; 40, 2001) and his splendid history of the college (2008), to provide with these other volumes a more complete and accessible coverage of the sources for this college's medieval and early modern history than is available for any other college. The book's first part is divided into discrete documentary sections, dealing with governance (mainly comprising the statutes), masters and fellows, fabric, benefactions, and the college's fictitious history. A second part, comprising over half the book, calendars and comments on the college's title deeds. The only major omission concerns estates owned by the college outside Oxfordshire. With the exception of calendared items, documents are presented both as original Latin texts and as translations on facing pages – a necessary aid in an increasingly Latin-less age.

For those engaged on the history of the wider university or of other colleges, the edition of the college's eight sets of statutes is likely to be of most value, and not only because it contains one or two regulations which go beyond the ordinary and predictable. Did any other college, for example, forbid its fellows to listen to 'songs or tales about mistresses [*de amasiis*] and the loose-living' (p. 17)? The many property deeds are equally valuable, augmenting and sometimes correcting as they do the material brought together in H.E. Salter's *Survey of Oxford* (OHS, ns, vols. 14, 1960; 20, 1969). Anyone wanting to reconstruct the tenement pattern of early Oxford will need to look here.

The edition raises many points of individual interest, both small and larger. The detailed regulations in the 1292 statutes for the borrowing of books by the fellows (p. 15) make possible comparisons with similar practices at other colleges. The fifteen maps described and listed in a 1587 inventory of the master's lodgings (p. 105) bear witness to the growing role of geography in the university's informal curriculum – but were they decorative rather than pedagogic? The direction in the 1576 will of William Holcot that his name should be 'weeklye entrede' into the college buttery book (p. 139), presumably as a form of remembrance, confirms what has sometimes been said about the unreliability of buttery books as a record of those in residence. St Mildred's Lane, later Brasenose Lane, appears as 'Schools Street' in deeds of the 1350s: an appellation unknown to Salter and usually restricted to the street running north–south which joined St Mildred's Lane at its east end (pp. 204–5). The rental of 1422/3, which records the rent paid for his room by the abbot of Sulby, Northamptonshire (p. 97), shows the presence of one of those external sojourners who appear in most colleges in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries (it might have been worth an editorial comment). The 1485 survey of land at Hailey, near Witney, prior to its coming into the college's possession in 1540/1, throws light on the agrarian history of the village – one of the college's very few rural properties – and the pattern of its fields (pp. 374–80). These miscellaneous *trouvailles* add to the interest of a read through the whole book. The reader never knows what may turn up.

There are parts of the text where the attention of even the most alert and assiduous reader may flag. The account, with very extensive documentation, of the college's dispute with the heirs of John Gonwardby (1362–90), which takes up more than a third of the entire book, is the leading case in point. The dispute is important because it gave rise to the college's claim to have been founded by King Alfred and because it nearly broke the college financially. Even so, some of the documents printed in full could perhaps have been calendared, and some of those listed seem more suited to an archival handlist than a printed edition (for example,

pp. 314–16). Mistakes are few and slight: the editor rarely nods. Exeter College was not, as he claims (pp. xiv–xv), among the colleges open only to BAs intending to read for a higher degree; it was open only to those reading arts. Sheld Hall, in St Mildred's Lane, is said to lie both west and east of the college's Olyfaunt Hall, when 'east' is clearly meant (pp. 205–6). And 'mobile' and 'immobile' seem odd translations of the Latin *mobiles* and *immobiles* when applied to goods (pp. 13, 359); 'movable' and 'immovable' would be more conventional. But compared to the editor's achievement, in what must often have been an exceptionally laborious task, these are the merest trivia. Robin Darwall-Smith has once again put all historians of medieval and early modern Oxford and its colleges in his debt, and has confirmed his position as the doyen of Oxford archivists.

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Mark Bailey, *The Decline of Serfdom in Late Medieval England: From Bondage to Freedom*, The Boydell Press (Woodbridge, 2014). Pp. xii + 374. 5 maps, numerous graphs and tables. £60. ISBN 978-1-84383-890-6.

This large-scale work seeks to re-examine and re-assess aspects of a fundamental change in English society which occurred in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, namely the ending of the condition variously known as villeinage, bondage or servage. (The term 'serfdom' has been applied only since the nineteenth century.) Before then it had been the lot of about fifty per cent of the rural population, who were burdened with economic dependence, explicit social inferiority, and legal unfreedom, though many 'villeins', 'bondmen' or 'serfs' held land (usually by inheritance). Families were regarded as belonging to a particular manor and its lord; thereby they experienced a compound of tenurial, monetary and legal impositions and restrictions. Men and sometimes women were normally required to do weekly 'labour services' on their lord's reserved land (or 'demesne'). Both villein tenants and landless residents of servile status were liable to various exactions or 'incidents', such as chevage (a head tax) and merchet (a fine for permission to marry). Services and exactions amounted to a form of rent. Though labour services had existed for several centuries, many 'incidents' are thought to have been imposed from the late twelfth century – at roughly the same time as many manorial tenants were excluded from the expanding operation of royal justice and common law, a situation sometimes termed 'legal villeinage'. A large proportion of rural people were deemed as unfree – slightly above the status of slaves – and for most legal matters were restricted to the court of their own manor.

Bailey's investigation seems to have been motivated by dissatisfactions arising from his work in medieval history: the meagre interest in the decline of serfdom shown by current medieval historians; the scant treatment provided in recent general surveys of late-medieval England; the disagreement between earlier historians about the chronology and causes of the decline; an alleged failure of historians to correlate the decline with other trends; and a want of rigour in previous accounts. He also notes that inadequate understanding of the decline of serfdom, and of its short- and long-term consequences, hinders comprehension of other crucial subjects, such as the early emergence in England of agrarian capitalism (agricultural production primarily for the market), and of the longer-term transition from feudalism to mercantile and industrial capitalism.

It is normal for any reconsideration of a historical topic to commence with a survey and appraisal of previous studies and findings. Bailey's replication of this familiar course is, however, unusual. Whereas many authors provide a brief introduction, his introductory section (Part I) amounts to almost a quarter of the text (about 80 of 335 pages). But this expansive approach enables him to provide discussions of serfdom's components (divided into tenures and incidents), of proposed causes of decline, and of the significance of the decline. Overall Bailey gives the impression, perhaps unwittingly, that existing knowledge

and understanding were not grossly deficient – after all, pre-eminent historians such as M.M. Postan and R.H. Hilton developed powerful arguments about the subject – and leaves the reader wondering if anything more than minor modifications are required, or can be achieved.

Bailey's assault on the subject turns out to be based on a new methodology. It has two key features: first, the creation of a more representative sample of manors; secondly, a self-consciously systematic and sensitive reading and interpretation of the documentary evidence. Earlier historians tended to concentrate on the big estates and large manors of major lords, on which high proportions of land were held by villein tenure. To redress such bias, Bailey has examined the estates of 'a good cross-section of landlords' (p. 98), and has given attention to small manors, which were predominant nationally and had lower proportions of villein land. He has also sought out manors for which there are substantial collections of documents, especially court rolls, and has carefully defined the elements of servile status as the starting point for analysis. Another concern was to deal with more than a single region. Inevitably he has included East Anglia (mostly Suffolk), which has been the focus of some of his earlier publications. But manors there were often very small (sometimes with several to a village) and villeinage not especially prominent *c*.1300. So it was important to examine 'classic' manorial organisation where a manor often equated to a parish and village. To this end, he resorted to the south Midlands (Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire), fortified partly by the hospitality of All Souls College, where he was a visiting fellow.

Bailey's sample consists of thirty-eight manors, fifteen with good documentation, twenty-three with lesser coverage. His analysis of them is presented in Part II, entitled 'Case Studies'. Well-documented manors receive extensive consideration, though chapters jump between East Anglia and the Midlands, while less well documented manors are gathered into a single chapter on 'Miscellaneous Manors' and grouped into types, intermixing the two areas. (Part III, 'Conclusions', is similarly not based on distinct comparison between the two areas.) Given the author's desire to compare East Anglia with another area, the mixing of material is strange, as if he is prejudging regional differences to be of less importance than other factors, such as status of lords, size of estates and varying economic experiences. The well-documented manors in the south Midlands are the Oxfordshire manors of Cuxham, Holywell (now within Oxford) and Upper Heyford, together with Tingewick in Buckinghamshire. Bailey also includes Kibworth Harcourt (Leics.), which like Cuxham and Holywell had previously been studied. Among the 'Miscellaneous Manors' are four in Buckinghamshire: Hardwick Russells and Weedon Vale near Aylesbury, Akeley and Radclive near Buckingham. All of these south Midlands manors were held by 'gentry-level' individual and institutional lords.

The large-scale changes investigated by Bailey were initiated by the 'Black Death' of 1348–9, which killed roughly 40 per cent of the rural population and left numerous landholdings vacant. Suddenly lords needed tenants: a competitive situation broke out. The well-documented manors in the south Midlands exhibit similar trends but with varying paces of change, seemingly often related to the difficulty of re-letting land in a particular locality. Immediately after the plague there was usually a period of 'fluidity' as lords introduced new, experimental terms of land tenure to attract tenants, sometimes short-term leases for cash rent. In the longer run, hereditary tenancies were reinstated, although without labour services and most incidents. Servile terminology was also abandoned. New hereditary tenancies were primarily for cash rent, and had a quasi-contractual quality. They were soon said to be held 'at the will of the lord' and 'according to the custom of the manor', implying tenure through the manor and the operation of norms and protection. Bailey suspects that it quickly became common for lords to issue new tenants with a 'copy' of their admission, which led to such tenancies becoming known as 'copyholds'. Villeinage largely disappeared at Cuxham by the 1360s, at Upper Heyford by the 1370s, and at Tingewick by the 1380s. At Tingewick, the relative lateness of change appears to be related to a lack of difficulty in recruiting tenants. Similar developments seem to have occurred on the other Buckinghamshire manors, except

that at Akeley in the 1390s there was a shift from hereditary tenure to life-time tenure, which Bailey suspects may reflect Akeley's association with a region in which a different tenurial norm became established. Some incidents continued to be levied mainly on a few inhabitants until *c*.1400 with sporadic instances thereafter. In sum, Bailey argues that villein terms of tenure and servile incidents and terminology generally disappeared earlier than other historians had previously suggested.

Bailey's book purports to offer a new general account of its subject, as is indicated by its title and by its premise that intermixed specimen manors from two areas constitute a representative sample. But it perhaps underestimates limitations of its methodology and claims too much. The study is valuable for its interest in the manors and policies of lesser lords, and for its careful selection and use of documentary sources. It certainly provides a new base chronology and understanding for lords' abandonment of villein tenures and of servile incidents and language. However, as Bailey shows through inclusion of Kibworth Harcourt, servile terminology and incidents could survive into the fifteenth century, which implies that the south Midlands and East Anglia cannot be presumed to represent all regions; and the findings ought to be tested even within Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, given that relatively few manors were considered (far fewer than for East Anglia). As a study based on lords' documents, Bailey's approach inevitably inclines towards a lord's perspective, in that it emphasizes lords' changes of policy. It does not show, or pretend to show, how these changes affected rural communities as entities, and how people were able to be rid of servile status. The abandonment of villein terms of tenure enabled free men and women to take on former villein holdings without the risk of being treated as villeins. But what happened to villein tenants who survived the Black Death and their offspring? Did they automatically become free when they moved to new landholdings which were not held on villein terms? And exactly who were the serfs 'by blood' who continued to be identified by some lords well into the fifteenth century and even later? Might they even have been the descendants of former slaves? Bailey also tends to assess serfdom in monetary terms, as lords undoubtedly did, yet this may be an overly simple view as social attitudes can take a long time to change. Bailey's book is an important contribution, and it is difficult for a short review to do justice to the range of matters it addresses, which include the Peasants' Revolt, a putative 'Seigniorial Reaction', the long-running 'Brenner Debate', and the emergence of new kinds of tenure. But it should be read alongside other approaches to late-medieval rural society, and further documentary research to Bailey's rigorous standards is certainly required.

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Sally Badham, *Seeking Salvation: Commemorating the Dead in the Late-Medieval English Parish*, Shaun Tyas (Donington, Lincs., 2015). Pp. x + 278. 188 plates, most in colour. £39.95. ISBN 978-1-907730-47-4.

Sally Badham's *Seeking Salvation* is the work of an independent scholar who has already written extensively on the commemoration of the dead in late-medieval England – the book's bibliography lists over twenty of her publications, produced during the last fifteen years. It is the culmination of prodigious effort by its author. The book covers in just under 250 pages of main text a great deal of territory. It is nothing less than a comprehensive survey of its subject, concentrating on the period from the late fourteenth century to the early years of the English Reformation, and is based on a wide range of sources – manuscript as well as printed, primary along with secondary.

Sally Badham's approach is 'to focus on the memoria [forms of commemoration] and related medieval religious practice in a parish context, by explaining the theological underpinnings of the perceived need for prayers for the soul and the many ways in which the medieval faithful sought to attract them' (p. 1). She begins by outlining clearly and accurately the medieval

understanding of purgatory and religious philanthropy before examining expressions of medieval memoria for the dead in the forms of church fabric, funeral monuments and brasses, wall paintings, service books, vestments and altar cloths, as well as the roles played by chantry chapels, collegiate churches and parish guilds. Funeral and burial rites are also considered. The book deals with England as a whole, but the regions of particular interest to readers of *Oxoniensia* do not go unmentioned. Just a few examples must suffice. The book considers the role of guilds in the Oxford area and especially at Oxford itself (pp. 166–7), and also the foundation at Ewelme (almshouse, chapel and school) of Alice de la Pole, duchess of Suffolk (p. 54). The various Oxford monuments of Ralph Hamsterley (d. 1518), a fellow of Merton College and master of University College, are also discussed (pp. 222–3).

The Reformation-era reformers' objections to, and destruction of, the artefacts of late-medieval commemoration form the subjects of the book's last chapter. One earlier reference casts a telling light on the uncertainty of religious practice amidst the theological and liturgical changes of mid Tudor England. In the 1540s Stephen Bolte of Sco Ruston in Norfolk bequeathed a quarter of wax to be burned at services 'as long as the kyngs laws will suffer' (p. 184).

In addition to Sally Badham's detailed survey of her subject in the main part of the book, *Seeking Salvation* provides the reader with a profusion of illustrations in a section of their own, all but a few in colour. These are of paintings, tombs, brasses and churches. Examples from Oxfordshire and Berkshire include a brass from Brightwell Baldwin, the Wilcote chantry chapel at North Leigh, the Ewelme almshouses and the Estbury almshouses at Lambourn, the Cornwall chapel at Asthall and Shottesbrooke church.

The purpose expressed in the book's conclusion, that by examining memoria 'it is possible to re-enter the mindset of medieval men and women and listen to their expressions of hope and fear, of duty and devotion, and understand more deeply their commemorative strategies' (p. 249), is one that Sally Badham has fulfilled admirably. The sole major defect of her work is that its ambitions of scope and research are not quite matched by an ambition of argument. *Seeking Salvation* is clearly a contribution – and an important one at that – to the revisionist debate on the relationship between late-medieval Catholicism and the origins of the English Reformation, a debate which began over thirty years ago with J.J. Scarisbrick's *The Reformation and the English People* (1984) and which has continued in works such as Eamon Duffy's *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580* (1992) and *The Voices of Morebath: Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (2001). In her emphasis on the material context of late-medieval commemoration of the dead and related expenditure, Sally Badham strengthens the case for the vitality of late medieval religiosity which was made before her by Professors Scarisbrick and Duffy. It is a pity that she herself did not do a little more to place her work in its proper historiographical context.

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Simon Townley (ed.), *A History of the County of Oxford*, vol. 18, *Benson, Ewelme, and the Chilterns (Ewelme Hundred)* (Victoria History of the Counties of England series), Boydell and Brewer (Woodbridge, 2016). Pp. xvi + 484. 15 colour plates, 94 b&w photos and drawings, 26 maps and plans, 3 tables. £95. ISBN 978-1-904356-47-9.

The ambitious national vision of the 'Victoria County History' – founded in 1899 to compile a history of every English county, city and parish – received substantial financial support in Oxfordshire from 1965 from the County Council. Because of increasing pressures upon local authority resources, the Oxfordshire VCH Trust was created in 1997 to assist the financing of research, and has been the leading funder for vol. 18. This new instalment in the Oxfordshire series provides such wealth of interest that selecting details for comment is challenging. It covers the fourteen ancient parishes of the former Ewelme hundred, a compact area of over 25,000 acres (10,000 ha) extending from the Thames south-eastwards over the Chilterns.

To the north Great Haseley parish forms an anomalous projection; it was included in the hundred through estate connections.

Contrasts between the area's lowlands and uplands originated in prehistory, when land use and settlement were already more intensive in the vale. By the Middle Ages the vale was a classic 'Midland' countryside of nucleated villages and open fields. Despite localised early enclosures, extensive areas of open strip fields survived into the nineteenth century. In the Chilterns population density remained lower, medieval settlements were smaller and more dispersed, and land use was more varied – with extensive woods, wood-pasture, irregular hedged closes and several deer parks. Because the resources of the vale and the Chilterns were complementary, routes spanned and connected them, used at various times for transhumance, carriage of timber and fuel, and transport of grain from the vale over the hills to Henley for shipment by river to London. Several vale parishes long retained detached upland outliers. A common vernacular building tradition, employing timber, clunch, flint, brick, thatch and clay tiles, spans both zones. Stone buildings predominate only in the northernmost parish of Great Haseley, where Portland limestone outcrops were exploited over many centuries.

The earliest post-Roman focus of territorial organisation was Benson, located near the former Roman town and first West Saxon episcopal see at Dorchester. The centre of a large royal estate, Benson acquired strategic importance in the borderland between Wessex and Mercia. Despite archaeological evidence for early- and mid-Saxon rural settlement, no high-status complex has yet been located there, though the place-name Kingsbury in Newington may indicate a satellite royal residence. Remnants of Benson's former pre-eminence – jurisdiction over the Oxfordshire Chiltern hundreds and ecclesiastical supremacy over the chapelries of Warborough, Nettlebed and Henley – endured into the thirteenth century. Although piecemeal grants after the ninth century fragmented the royal estate into separate holdings, remarkably late survivals of intermingled open-field parcels reflected their former unity. By the twelfth century many churches had been founded on these new holdings, but Benson's own church suffered downgrading to a chapel when acquired by Dorchester abbey in the 1140s. Although Benson manor remained in royal hands until 1627–8, the decline of Benson as an administrative centre was signalled after 1230 when Ewelme gradually replaced it as the hundredal centre.

The area's larger lowland parishes – Great Haseley, Newington and Benson – included several townships; others, such as Easington (Oxfordshire's smallest rural parish), contained only one settlement. The pattern of nucleated villages in the vale was fully established by the thirteenth century. In some cases planned elements are evident. Great Haseley's main street shows signs of being realigned and widened, probably to accommodate its chartered market. Following Chalgrove manor's partition in 1233 the two manorial centres formed separate settlement nuclei, the present High Street apparently being laid out along an open-field headland between them. Cuxham has a zonal distinction between larger villein plots and cottagers' holdings. Large village greens survive at Little Haseley and Warborough, smaller examples elsewhere.

An outstanding medieval survival in Ewelme hundred is the complex of buildings at Ewelme itself, comprising church, cloistered almshouses and school. They were constructed between the 1430s and 1450s for Alice Chaucer, heiress of the manor, and her husband William de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, and continue to serve their original functions. Their early use of brick reflects the de la Pole connections with Hull and East Anglia. The manor house was also rebuilt at the same time; though demolished after 1612, part of the lodging range from the former base court survives. The quality of the surviving mid fifteenth-century chantry chapel at Rycote hints at another former grandiose late-medieval manorial complex. Haseley Court in Little Haseley, though rebuilt in the eighteenth century, retains part of a medieval house, and a fifteenth-century barn survives nearby. Great Haseley's former rectory house, much altered in 1846, incorporates a fifteenth-century hall and cross-passage. The finest surviving medieval agricultural structure is the arch-braced base-cruck barn at Great Haseley, which

was built for the manorial demesne in 1313, partly rebuilt as an aisled structure in the 1490s, and further altered and reduced in length in 1811. The characteristics of lesser manorial domestic and agricultural buildings are well documented at Cuxham, and illuminated by archaeological excavation of the Barentin's Manor moated site at Chalgrove.

Attempts to promote local markets and fairs in the Middle Ages were unsuccessful. Great Haseley's market, licensed in 1228, proved abortive. A chartered fair at Swyncombe, acquired in 1203, was initially suppressed because it conflicted with Wallingford's fair held over the same days. Despite two subsequent changes of date, it was in terminal decline by 1324. Another fair promoted in Nuffield in 1336 also failed. The volume also provides vivid evidence for the impact of late-medieval population decline. At Cuxham a dozen houses and cottages were abandoned between 1349 and 1513. Warpsgrove was reportedly entirely deserted by 1453 and its church was abandoned. Cadwell was reduced to a single farm by the sixteenth century. Fifield had up to 19 households in the 1270s, but by 1638 its manor house stood alone, and its parochial chapel had long vanished. Tudor enclosure further reduced Rycote and nearby Latchford. Rofford, diminished after the Black Death of 1348–9, continued to decline gradually into the eighteenth century. A post-medieval emergence of modestly prosperous yeoman farms was based upon increased wheat and barley production (the latter for malting), larger-scale sheep-keeping for wool, and the rising importance of dairying. Between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries a few new isolated farmsteads appeared in the vale, the later examples following parliamentary inclosure. Expansion of the railway network in the nineteenth century further tilted production towards dairying, and also assisted Ewelme's speciality in watercress production.

Grander houses surviving from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries include Newington House, Great Haseley Manor, Haseley Court and Britwell House at Britwell Prior. The volume reveals others that have been lost. Rycote's great Tudor house, restored and remodelled after a fire in 1745, was demolished in 1807. The Elizabethan Swyncombe House was destroyed by fire in 1814. Ewelme Park's brick mansion, built before 1649, was pulled down early in the eighteenth century. Brightwell Baldwin's manor house was burned down in 1788, and its replacement, Brightwell Park, was demolished in the late 1940s. Rycote's Tudor deer park and seventeenth-century formal gardens were transformed in the early 1770s by Capability Brown, and Humphry Repton probably contributed to the design of Brightwell Park. Settlements at Rycote and Brightwell Baldwin, dominated by resident lords, acquired the character of 'closed' villages, contrasting with 'open' villages such as Benson, Warborough, Chalgrove and Great Haseley, where larger, more varied and more independent communities were allowed to develop. In the Chilterns gentry houses such as Soundess and Joyce Grove at Nettlebed were built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nuffield Place, originally built for a shipping magnate in 1914, was modernised after 1933 for William Morris, the Oxford car-manufacturer.

Benson and Nettlebed prospered from their position on the important road connecting Oxford with Henley and London, acquiring coaching inns and related trades. Improved under a Turnpike Act in 1736, the route was further modified in the 1820s. Other local turnpike-related ventures included a new timber bridge over the Thames at Shillingford, built in 1764 and later replaced in stone, which was constructed near the site of a long-vanished medieval bridge. The Thames had been an important trade artery in the Middle Ages, until navigation above Henley ceased in the fifteenth century. Reopening of navigation up to Oxford in the 1630s and demand from London caused new wharves to appear at Shillingford and Benson for shipment of grain, malt, timber and, increasingly, coal. The range of rural industries represented in the area is generally unexceptional, but Nettlebed was already a centre for brick- and tile-making by the mid fourteenth century, and pottery and brick production there expanded considerably in the nineteenth century. Shillingford had a commercial brewery between the 1840s and 1890s, later superseded briefly by a brass foundry and electrical engineering works. Recreational, military and housing demands became influential through

the twentieth century. Nuffield Common was converted to a golf course in 1901. RAF airfields were laid out at Benson in 1937–9 and at Chalgrove in 1943 – the former was still operational in 2017, the latter had become an industrial estate. Much new housing has appeared since the 1950s in Benson, Chalgrove, Warborough and Shillingford.

Some details given here diverge from previously published accounts. The fair at 'Thuffeld' granted in 1336 is reinstated at Nuffield (p. 352), in accordance with the published calendar index, but against a recent identification with Thelsford (Warwickshire). Sir John Williams (d. 1559) is preferred to Sir John Heron (d. 1552) as builder of Rycote's Tudor mansion (p. 247). While one can have confidence that such corrections will have been made only after due consideration, brief explanations of the reasoning would have been helpful. Newington House is redated to *c.*1679 (p. 312), some fifteen years later than Nikolaus Pevsner's estimate (in *Oxfordshire*, 1974, p. 716), but, although citing a reference, the text does not identify the evidence as dendrochronology.

This is the second Oxfordshire VCH volume to include a small block of colour plates. They invaluably reproduce details from five early estate maps, and show landscapes and buildings. Monochrome illustrations include engravings, old photographs, aerial views and parish maps incorporating land-use details from estate, inclosure and tithe maps. A 1943 air photo showing earthworks of the moated manor and deserted medieval hamlet of Cadwell is particularly striking.

In times of austerity we are fortunate in the continuing commitment and fundraising expertise of the Oxfordshire VCH trustees, and in the dedicated scholarship of the editor (Simon Townley) and other authors (principally Simon Draper, Stephen Mileson and Mark Page), which enable us to enjoy continuing progress by the Oxfordshire VCH and envisage completion within the relatively near future.

James Bond, Walton-in-Gordano, Somerset

Sabina Sutherland (ed.), *The Church Inspection Notebook of Archdeacon James Randall, 1855–1873, and other Records* (Berkshire Record Society, 21), 2015. Pp. xlviii + 262. Paperback, £25 (plus £2.50 p&p in UK). ISBN 978-0-9573937-2-1. Available from: Berkshire Record Society, c/o Berkshire Record Office, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 6AF. P.S. Barnwell, Geoffrey Tyack and William Whyte (eds.), *Sir George Gilbert Scott, 1811–1878* (Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment, 3), Shaun Tyas (Donington, Lincs., 2014). Pp. viii + 248. 84 b&w illustrations. £40. ISBN 978-1-907730-37-5. Gavin Stamp, *Gothic for the Steam Age: An Illustrated Biography of George Gilbert Scott*, Aurum Press (London, 2015). Pp. 208. 132 b&w, 101 colour illustrations. £30. ISBN 978-1-78131-124-0.

Born in 1790, James Randall trained as a lawyer before becoming a priest. He began his first major clerical post, as rector of Binfield in Berkshire from 1831, by prioritising improvements to the church building and liturgical reforms. A new school followed in 1853. Samuel Wilberforce, who became bishop of Oxford in 1845, took note of Randall and his approach to parish life. In 1846 Wilberforce appointed Randall as one of his chaplains, describing him in his diocesan clergy notes as 'a clear headed sensible man, very active in parish & in talent one of the ablest men we have' (R. and M. Pugh (eds.), *The Diocese Books of Samuel Wilberforce*, BRS 13, 2008, p. 60). In 1855 Wilberforce raised Randall to archdeacon of Berkshire, a post he retained until 1873. Randall was a meticulous record-keeper, which makes his 'Church Inspection Notebook' a revealing source for the ecclesiological landscape in a fascinating region of the Church of England. Sadly, its publication by the Berkshire Record Society occurred posthumously, following the untimely death of its editor, Sabina Sutherland.

The volume reveals Randall's reforming attitude to the provision of free seating and the placement and care of church furnishings. It shows that Randall attempted to inspire priests and key laypeople to be mindful of their roles as stewards of the diocese's buildings and

their contents. His criticisms and praise of the hundreds of places he visited were made against various backdrops: the rise of ritualism; the complexities of intersections between the church and local as well as national politics; and the changing roles of clergy in the social fabric. Sutherland's book penetrates the heart of Berkshire church life. A typical snapshot from Windsor in 1865 illuminates challenges faced by Randall: 'the church sadly requires painting and year after year the churchwardens let it go on pleading want of funds as an excuse for the neglect. It is I should think 6 or 7 years since the church was visited by an ecclesiastical inspector' (p. 105). In 1855 Randall visited Clewer and found that 'this church, the main structure of which is Norman, has been sadly mauled. . . Galleries, of the most abominable construction, have been erected in all parts.' By 1859, after a sensitive ecclesiologically minded intervention, Randall could append his entry thus: 'This church has been admirably restored and is now in as beautiful condition as any in the diocese' (p. 3).

It was in this atmosphere of 'High Victorian' restoration and changes in religious culture that George Gilbert Scott, a giant among the Gothic Revivalist architects, truly thrived. With a vast office in which many young architects were trained, projects in many parts of the British empire, and a style that seemed to fit the ambitions of many Anglican patrons, Scott is a major figure in Victorian history even beyond the boundaries of religion and the built environment. As is well known, Scott was involved in several Oxford projects, chief among them work at Christ Church and Exeter College and the Martyrs' Memorial. A recent multi-author volume on Scott, derived from a conference in 2011, offers a range of in-depth essays illuminating the career of an architect who was impactful and controversial, and who for much of the twentieth century was either forgotten or reviled as creator of the worst Gothic Revival strident kitsch.

Scott's reputation certainly fares better now, in a generation that enjoys rather than deplores the sheen of the Albert Memorial and the bold bricks of what is now the St Pancras Hotel, both in London. In Oxford, too, there are no doubt very few undergraduates who would spurn the French-style Gothic of Exeter College chapel or the Victorian aspects of the interior of the cathedral. Works of scholarship by many contributors to this volume – including key Oxford historians Geoffrey Tyack and William Whyte – have been important in the gradual acceptance of Scott's work as worthy of serious study. This well-produced book includes new research on Scott as a country house designer by Peter Howell, on Scott's monumental designs for the University of Glasgow by Kimberly Frost, and on the architect's importance for developing imperial cathedrals, outlined by G.A. Bremner.

Tyack's essay on Scott's work in Oxford also offers new insights. He argues that the Martyrs' Memorial (built 1841–3) is a kind of architectural hinge, marking a threshold between the 'Classical Oxford' of C.R. Cockerell's nearby Ashmolean Museum and Taylorian Institution and the 'Gothic Oxford' that would dominate city and university for the next three decades (p. 113). Exeter College chapel was a turning point for Scott himself, as he moved from an English Gothic towards a French Gothic phase in his career following extensive travels. For Scott in the 1850s, French Gothic was 'the point of highest perfection in the style', and Tyack points out that despite frequent comparisons with the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, Exeter College chapel's interpretation of medieval French architecture is closer to the abbot's chapel at the Cistercian monastery of Chaalis, Fontaine-Chaalis (p. 115). Scott also produced a new library for University College, and provided stalls, roof restoration work, and a new organ case for the chapel at New College along with a range of new buildings for undergraduates. Tyack points out that despite Scott's persuasive attempts, the fellows of New College refused to let him paint and gild the new chapel stalls following the discovery of paint traces on the chapel's medieval furniture (p. 124) – would that the fellows had been more courageous and imaginative. At Christ Church cathedral, Scott's work was both bold and complex, and not without controversy. However, the cathedral's condition could not have been much worse in the nineteenth century, and *The Ecclesiologist* complained in 1847 (in issue no. 47, p. 47) that its services were 'the most slovenly and irreverent that we have ever witnessed in any English

cathedral'. Scott's approach was initially cautious and he was keen to retain as much historic material as possible; eventually the decision was taken to redesign the east end and restore the south transept. The present cathedral is as much Victorian as it is medieval, about which Tyack is generally positive.

The pressures upon Scott and his contemporaries to improve as well as to preserve medieval sacred architecture were immense, and this volume demonstrates that in Oxford as well as elsewhere Scott was nuanced, informed and rarely hasty in his work – views that counterbalance older perceptions. This change of view has come about partly through Gavin Stamp's strong and steady scholarship. In addition to contributing to the recent collection on Scott, he has now published *Gothic for the Steam Age*, a sumptuous illustrated biography and gazetteer highlighting the architect's key works and offering insights regarding lesser-known projects. Taken together, these recent additions to Victorian architectural scholarship provide ample evidence that there is still much to learn in this growing and vibrant field.

Ayla Lepine, Westcott House, Cambridge

Rob Woolley, *Brewed in the Traditional Manner: The Story of Hook Norton Brewery*, Brewin Books (Studley, Warwickshire, 2015). Pp. xviii + 246. 73 b&w illustrations (inc. tables and maps). Paperback, £14.95. ISBN 978-1-85858-539-0. Dave Richardson, *Oxford Pubs*, Amberley Publishing (Stroud, 2015). Pp. 96. 76 colour, 12 b&w illustrations. Paperback, £14.99. ISBN 978-1-4456-4728-9.

As a long-term frequenter of local pubs who invariably has a stock of Hook Norton ales at home, this reviewer should perhaps begin by declaring a special interest in the topics covered by Dave Richardson's *Oxford Pubs* and Rob Woolley's history of Hook Norton Brewery. Woolley's book is the product of many years of research which he began as an interested local resident and continued as a postgraduate student, studying the brewery's history to 1913. After completing his thesis in 2005, he set out to bring the story up to date and publish his findings.

Anyone who has visited the splendid Victorian brewery deep in Oxfordshire's ironstone country, near Chipping Norton, will be aware that the buildings themselves are a rich source of evidence for the development of the business. The company has been equally good at preserving its records, and Woolley has made extensive use of them to establish how the brewery has successfully adapted to changing circumstances over the years. During difficult times in the First World War, for example, the company secured contracts to supply beer to several working men's clubs in Coventry, and this trade proved crucial until the 1960s. The brewery then resisted the drift to keg beers, and has, since the 1970s, tapped into the growing demand for real ale.

Woolley tells this engaging story in four thematic chapters, covering the history of the business, brewing, distribution and retail; a fifth chapter summarises the history of the brewery since 1951. The reader might have been better served by a straightforward chronological account because the thematic approach inevitably leads to repetition as the same factors – for example, the declining demand for beer or the effects of the two World Wars – affected every aspect of the business. The brewery's relationship with the Coventry clubs also crops up from a slightly different perspective in every chapter.

The account usefully sets the story of Hook Norton Brewery in a national context and draws comparisons with other local breweries. It is meticulously footnoted, and an expansive bibliography indicates the wide range of sources that Woolley has used. The book is well produced with many illustrations, most of which are well reproduced, though the index is disappointing with personal names, place names and subjects grouped in no apparent order under each letter of the alphabet. References to Chipping Norton are indexed, but not significant ones for Banbury and Birmingham; some Coventry references are in the index while others are not.

Whereas Rob Woolley's volume evolved out of postgraduate study, Dave Richardson's is avowedly a popular guidebook liberally illustrated with colour images and some older black-and-white photographs. As a supporter of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA), Richardson wants people to use and enjoy traditional pubs, and he chooses forty or so located within the Ring Road 'on the basis of their historic interest'. He arranges the hostelries in four groups, beginning with city centre pubs and then moving on to Jericho and North Oxford, the area around The Plain, and finally to those 'well worth making a trip out of the city centre to visit'. The last section features some of Oxford's best-known pubs, but there are surprising omissions, such as pubs at Iffley and North Hinksey; and few locals would expect The One (the former Old Gatehouse) in Botley Road to feature in the 'out of town' category.

Richardson provides a lively coverage of each pub's history, and relates associated stories and traditions. But there is no scholarly apparatus, and the reader should treat many factual statements with caution. In relating the history of the Mitre, for example, Richardson praises Lincoln College for resisting plans to demolish the hotel in 1890 when the college was in fact plotting to erect new buildings on the site. At the Royal Blenheim, he tells us that the date of construction appears on the stonework, then provides the wrong date (1889, rather than 1898). He does, however, display encouraging scepticism in refuting the Bear's claim to be Oxford's oldest pub, and he doubts North Parade's Civil War origins, suggesting instead that the name derives from people parading up and down the street. 'Parade' was not of course an unusual street name in the nineteenth century, and old maps reveal the prosaic truth that North Parade lay to the north of a now-vanished South Parade near Woodstock Road.

Of these two books, there is no doubting the value of Woolley's in-depth study of Oxfordshire's only surviving traditional brewery. Since Richardson's book was published, one of his pubs, the General Eliot, has closed (again) and the Grapes has been re-named Beerd. For future historians, his book will prove most valuable for its wealth of information about the Oxford pub scene in recent decades, which may otherwise prove elusive.

Malcolm Graham, Oxford

Martin Greenwood, *The Real Candleford Green: The Story of a Lark Rise Village*, Robert Boyd (Witney, 2016). Pp. 160. 75 b&w illustrations (inc. maps and tables), 20 colour plates. Paperback, £12 (inc. p&p in UK). ISBN 978-1-908738-22-6. Available from the author at 'Sarnen', Main Street, Fringford, Oxon., OX27 8DP. Martin J. Elson, *The Richardsons at Chastleton*, Choir Press (Gloucester, 2016). Pp. xii + 92. 48 illustrations, most b&w. Paperback, £9.99 (plus £2 p&p in UK). ISBN 978-1-910864-34-0. Available from the author at 26 Little Lees, Charlbury, Oxon., OX7 3HB.

No piece of writing on the history of Oxfordshire has received the amount of critical attention that has been lavished on the trilogy *Lark Rise to Candleford* by Flora Thompson (1876–1947). Chris Hall, in *Oxfordshire Local History*, vol. 10, no. 1 (Winter 2015–16), devoted ten pages to a review of *Lark Rise to Candleford, Dreams of the Good Life* by Richard Mabey (Allen Lane, 2014) in which he analysed the use of Thompson's work by Alun Howkins, Pamela Horn and Kate Tiller, and the critical response by Margaret English. Hall could also have examined books by Christine Bloxham, Margaret Lane and Gillian Lindsay. Martin Greenwood, who lives in Fringford (Thompson's Candleford Green), three miles south-east of Juniper Hill (Lark Rise), published *Fringford through the Ages* in 2000 (Alden Press) and two other books that feature Flora Thompson's work in 2006 and 2009. This new work inevitably covers the same ground, but includes significant new evidence.

Lark Rise, the first part of the trilogy, was originally an attempt by Flora Thompson to develop a novel from articles about country life during her childhood. Sir Humphrey Milford (1877–1952) of the Oxford University Press enthused about it, but because the Press did not publish fiction, it appeared in 1939 as autobiography. It is often difficult to distinguish in the

work between precise recollections and semi-fictionalised characterisations. Chris Hall points out that Flora Thompson could not have had personal experience of evenings at the Wagon and Horses. The problems become more acute in the second and third parts of the trilogy, *Over to Candleford* (1941) and *Candleford Green* (1943). Scholars who have attempted to place Thompson's writing in its setting have often been confused by her descriptions of the places in which she worked after she left home. Greenwood reproduces a letter written by Thompson on 28 January 1944 to Muriel Eagle (1916–2007), an Oxford teacher, in which she confesses that Candleford had 'something both of Banbury and Bicester and more of Buckingham'. Candleford was a composite, as indeed were some of the village 'characters' described elsewhere in her writings.

Lark Rise to Candleford should perhaps be seen as belonging to a *genre* of writing on the borders of fiction. The most telling comparison is with *The Flower of Gloster*, E. Temple Thurston's account, published in 1911, of a canal journey from Oxford to the Severn and back. Transport historians once regarded this as an original source but several authors have shown that it cannot be a factual account although it does contain some first-hand observations. Thurston's decision at Solihull not to proceed through the Black Country but to make his way to the Severn at Tewkesbury, via the Stratford Canal and the River Avon, may be fictional, but it provides profound insights into British attitudes to the industrial past. The importance of *Lark Rise to Candleford* lies not in the way it illuminates the history of Cottisford and Fringford parishes, but in the accuracy with which Flora Thompson reflects the language and deferential attitudes of the later nineteenth century.

Greenwood's new material on *Lark Rise to Candleford* occupies seven pages, after which forty-three pages are devoted to descriptions of the houses in Fringford, with subsequent sections on the roll of honour, the church, schools, the business records of the Price family plumbers at Fringford between 1852 and 1953, and on changes in village life. Recent events mentioned include the television series based on Flora Thompson's writings, for which Martin Greenwood expresses a level of admiration that many historians do not share. The book would have benefited from more rigorous editing – we are told three times, for example, that Alexander Whitton died at Accra (pp. 41, 52, 54).

Martin Elson, a guide at Oxfordshire's most northerly country house, the National Trust's Chastleton House, has written a book about the family of Charles Tanwell Richardson (1853–1920), which leased Chastleton from 1896 to 1933. The Richardsons prospered from their silver-smithing business in Chester and interests in lead mining. The son of a wealthy Anglican priest, C.T. Richardson grew up at Capenhurst, Cheshire, and worked as a tea planter in India. He settled into the social life of north-west Oxfordshire, joining the Heythrop Hunt, serving on the Chipping Norton board of guardians, and participating in services at St Mary the Virgin, Chastleton. The book includes details of some distant connections of members of the Richardson family, including Charles Richardson (1814–96), civil engineer and pupil of Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Elson is incorrect in claiming that he got into 'trouble with Brunel for organising cricket games among the Severn Tunnel workers' (p. 27) because the great Isambard died in 1859, fourteen years before the Great Western began to excavate the tunnel. Nevertheless, Elson's work is a well-researched volume based in part upon taped interviews. The accounts of the Richardson family's charitable activities during the First World War, and of the military airfield on Port Meadow where C.T. Richardson's daughter Rosemary served in 1918–19, notably have a relevance beyond Chastleton.

Barrie Trinder, Olney, Bucks.

Simon Haynes and Liz Woolley, *66 Men of Grandpont 1914–18* (documentary film on DVD). £5 (plus £3 p&p in UK). Running time approx. 39 minutes, with 25 mins. of extra features. Available from: Liz Woolley, 138 Marlborough Rd, Oxford, OX1 4LS.

Just fourteen minutes' walk south from the centre of Oxford is St Matthew's church, a focal point in the suburb of Grandpont. Grandpont's contribution to military forces during the Great War has been highlighted in a fascinating and thought-provoking way by the project '66 Men of Grandpont, 1914–18'. The '66 Men' are the deceased named on the First World War memorial in St Matthew's. In 2015, as part of the 125th anniversary of St Matthew's, Liz Woolley embarked upon a community project that brought together a team of local volunteers to research the commemorated men. The result has been an extensive website, a touring exhibition, a poppy trail around the streets of Grandpont and a documentary film. All of these complemented each other and gave excellent access to an aspect of Grandpont's and Oxford's history. They also brought the Grandpont community closer together.

The project's documentary film reveals the impact of the Great War on Grandpont's small community through photographs, re-enactments, stories, letters and on-location interviews. No item is more powerful than a street map which uses red and blue dots to show, respectively, the homes of servicemen who died and of those who served and survived. Very few of Grandpont's 600-plus houses lack dots. Of Grandpont's fighting men, 13 per cent were killed. This reflects the national average and thus gives the viewer an appreciation of the war's impact on the whole country. The stories of selected individuals are presented in subtle but also powerful ways, making the documentary not only a tribute to Grandpont's servicemen but also a recognition of the community's contribution and losses. It includes commentaries by local and military historians, and by relatives of the Grandpont combatants, to paint vivid pictures of both the area as it was a century ago as well as of many of the sixty-six men themselves. The documentary gives prominence to the pre-war employment of the Grandpont men within Oxford. Their employers included Salter's Steamers (the boat-building and -hire company), St Ebbe's gasworks, the Post Office, specified Oxford shops and Oxford colleges, notably Christ Church where some Grandpont men worked as college servants. The documentary therefore provides insight into Oxford's economic history, and demonstrates the interconnection of the city with the university, and the impact of the war on Oxford's industry and commerce.

The documentary also informs the viewer about the amount of research required for such a study, and where the necessary information can be found. It leaves the viewer wanting to research his or her own family story using the sources mentioned, such as lists of absent voters, parish records, census records, street records in directories, reports and obituaries in newspapers, and so on. Music has been used effectively to support the wartime stories, including poignant tunes and songs connected to the Oxford area. A suite specially arranged by Bruno Guastalla was recorded in St Matthew's, and bugle calls were performed by the bugle major of the Oxfordshire (The Rifles) Battalion Army Cadet Force. The song 'Every Man a Soldier', composed by local artist and photographer Henry Taunt, was also performed and recorded locally.

The film does not overpower viewers with detail, but is watchable and moving. It sensitises them to echoes of the past which still reverberate around our streets and walls, and creates awareness that we inhabit the same buildings and gardens in which wartime soldiers once lived and from which they departed, some never to return. In the film, Grandpont residents testify to a connectivity that they now feel to former residents, which is sometimes stronger than connectivity to relatives. Through the '66 Men of Grandpont' project, the present residents of Grandpont have acquired a better understanding of the Great War, and of its era and impact, than was available to some earlier residents. The project's achievement was aptly summed up by Dame Margaret Drabble, novelist and local resident, when she concluded: '[I]t moved me more than many grander monuments have done'.

David Bebbington, Magdalen College School, Oxford

L.W.B. Brockliss, *The University of Oxford: A History*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 2016). Pp. xl + 872. 111 b&w illustrations, 7 maps, 11 tables. £35. ISBN 978-0-19-924356-3.

This volume was commissioned even before the monumental, multi-authored, eight-volume *History of the University of Oxford* was completed in 2000; the idea was to provide a synthesis of that massive work for the general reader. Professor Laurence Brockliss, an established authority on the history of higher education, provides rather more than a mere synthesis by placing Oxford's history in a European and later a world context. The volume's long gestation enabled the author to draw on important recent research, notably the (gratefully acknowledged) work of Andrew Hegarty and Robin Darwall-Smith, and his own impressive history of Magdalen College (reviewed in *Oxoniensia*, 75 (2010), pp. 230–2).

Whereas authors in the eight-volume *History* concentrated perforce on short periods and narrow themes, this overview traces the university's history from uncertain origins in a provincial town to its present status, as one of the top ten among the world's 17,000 universities. As the author remarks, 'What makes [Oxford's history] worth telling is that it is an improbable story' (p. vii). He tells that story well, giving a particularly lucid account of the medieval, Catholic, university's transition into an Anglican stronghold, surviving the perils of the Reformation which saw martyrs burned in the streets, and state intervention become commonplace; he explains in detail how the university and colleges steered through the complex and dangerous political changes of the Tudor and Stuart periods; he examines in great depth the university's changing intake and teaching syllabus to explain how it became, in the eighteenth century, 'little more than a finishing school for well-heeled Anglicans' (p. vii). The author offers a new perspective on that decline, showing Oxford's lukewarm response to advances in scientific education and research, its remoteness from 'the burgeoning Republic of Letters', its failure to keep up with the changing times. William Cobbett's vilification in the 1820s (quoted on p. 329) was probably well-deserved: he saw 'masses of buildings. . . devoted to what they call "learning" [and] could not help reflecting on the drones they contain and the wasps they send forth'. The improbable story of the university's recovery from that low point takes up half the book, and makes compelling reading.

The author's ambitious plan has resulted in a long volume. It is divided into four chronological parts: 'The Catholic University' (to 1534), 'The Anglican University' (to 1845), 'The Imperial University' (to 1945), and 'The World University' (to 2015). The thoroughness of the approach is shown, for example, by the subdivision of the Anglican University section into chapters dealing with 'The University and the Colleges', 'Church and State', 'Students and Teachers', and 'Masters and Learning' – hardly a question is left unasked or unanswered, and complex information on all aspects of the university's life is presented in refreshingly vivid style, particularly in the final section of the book where the author draws on personal experience of the university's modern condition and recent developments. Other notably successful passages relate to the architecture of university and college buildings, which, though well-covered in several other books, seems to gain from the historical context provided in this account.

However, on rare occasions the author's enthusiasm leads to misjudgement of his audience. Pages which attempt to explain the ideas of Duns Scotus, William of Ockham and other scholastic thinkers will surely be incomprehensible to those who have not studied specialist works on medieval philosophy; indeed the unusual obscurity of some of the author's sentences suggests that he himself is unsure of his ground. By contrast (on p. 140) he seems to have in mind a schoolchild readership, and attempts to summarise, in a single paragraph and two lengthy footnotes, the entire political history of England from the early Stuarts to 1832. A recurring problem is the footnoting: since the main story is based so firmly on the eight-volume *History* it was decided (understandably) to reference only information derived from elsewhere, so even the general reader will sometimes be frustrated when wanting to follow up an interesting point. This reviewer has wondered about several small unreferenced

misunderstandings of town matters: if they derive from existing secondary sources there is clearly a need for a new, summary history of Oxford city, similar in scale and quality to this volume.

Much effort has been made to help the reader, with the inclusion of a useful chronology, maps, statistical tables (mostly, of course, relating to the modern university), and two fairly thorough, though (be warned) selective indexes. The suggestions for further reading have odd omissions, notably the outstanding contributions on architecture by Nikolaus Pevsner, Geoffrey Tyack, and Howard Colvin, and the two Victoria County History volumes on, respectively, the university and the city. The book's designers have fallen between several stools: by choosing a heavy paper to enable the printing of text and illustrations on the same page they have produced an excessively weighty tome, suitable only for reading at a desk with a book stand. Yet this is not a reference or coffee-table book and deserves to be read from cover to cover: our perhaps mythical general reader might have preferred to take this very readable book to bed, to the bath, or on country walks without a rucksack. Ironically, the illustrations which inspired the unfortunate choice of paper are uniformly dull and grey; some of the portraits are interesting but the reproduced documents are mostly illegible; and the amateur photographs of some of Oxford's finest buildings (several by the author) are worse even than the unsatisfactory, gloomy photographs of Oxford in Pevsner's 1974 *Oxfordshire* volume. Since few places have Oxford's wealth of fine, available illustrations, the only excuse for these choices is economy, and in this respect the book succeeds: this massive volume certainly represents remarkably good value for money.

Alan Crossley, Oxford

Other Publications Received:

Valerie Alasia, *Henley Union Workhouse: The Story of Townlands*, Brewin Books (Studley, Warwickshire, 2016). Pp. 222. 65 b&w illustrations (inc. tables and maps). Paperback, £14.95. ISBN 978-1-85858-540-6.

Angela Cousins, *Bread, Boots and Coal: Four Hundred Years of Charitable Giving in East Hanney, West Hanney and Lyford* (West Hanney, 2016). Pp. ii + 124. 10 b&w illustrations. Paperback, £8 (plus £1.30 p&p in UK). ISBN 987-1-326-79339-5. Available from the author at Carters Close, Main Street, West Hanney, Oxon., OX12 0LH.

Murray Maclean, *From Arrowheads to Irrigators: A History of Frilford and Collins Farm* (Frilford, 2016). Pp. 88. 47 illustrations, most in colour. Paperback £9 (inc. p&p in UK). ISBN 978-1-5262-0575-9. Available from the author at Collins Farm, Frilford, Oxon., OX13 5NX.

Margaret Yates et al., *People, Places and Context: Essays in Local History in Honour of Joan Dils*, Goosecroft Publications for Berkshire Local History Association (Purley on Thames, 2016). Pp. 76. 36 b&w illustrations (inc. maps). Paperback, £5 (plus £3 p&p in UK). ISBN 978-0-9566341-8-4. Available from: 80 Reeds Ave, Earley, Reading, Berks., RG6 5SR (payment to M. Simons). Includes 'Priests and People: Changing Relationships in South Oxfordshire, 1780–1920' by Kate Tiller.