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Society Pages

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Society Notes

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REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 1984

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Council House, Bristol, on Saturday, 24 March 1984, at 2.15 p.m. The President, Professor B.W. Cunliffe, M.A., Ph.D., F.B.A., F.S.A., was in the chair. 96 members were present and apologies were received from 17 members.

The Lord Mayor welcomed the members to Bristol. The Honorary Secretary presented the annual report of Council and the Honorary Treasurer presented the annual accounts, both of which were adopted. Mr. B. Rawes presented the report of the Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire.

The President proposed the election of Christopher R. Elrington, M.A., F.S.A. as President for 1984-5. In commending him, Professor Cunliffe said he was no stranger to Gloucestershire and was now General Editor of the Victoria County Histories. He was unanimously elected. The Officers and members of Council were duly elected. The President then moved the election of Mrs. H.E. O'Neil as an Honorary member. Mrs. O'Neil had been a member of the Society since 1933 and had made a great contribution to the study of archaeology in Gloucestershire. She was duly elected.

The President invited Professor Cunliffe to give his Presidential address, "The Iron Age in Gloucestershire". Afterwards tea was served.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1983-84

The Council has pleasure in presenting its annual report. During 1983 membership has decreased from 1097 to 961. This represents a loss of 136 which is partly due to the increases in subscriptions and the failure to recruit new members. Further resignations are likely to be received.

Transactions

Volume 101 was issued in time for the Annual Meeting. The Council is grateful to Miss P. Webster and her helpers who distribute by hand many volumes, thus saving the Society hundreds of pounds. The Society wishes to express its thanks to Dr. Nicholas Herbert for his work as General Editor during the past five years, and to welcome Dr. Steven Blake and Mr. Alan Saville as joint editors. Council is sure that they will maintain the high standard of editorial work achieved by their predecessors.

Newsletter

Two were issued during the period and with the publication of No. 12 Mr. Geoffrey Sanders resigned as editor because of ill health. The *Newsletter* was a new venture which Mr. Sanders ably launched, for which the Council is grateful to him. Mr. David Smith, County Archivist for Gloucestershire, has kindly agreed to take on the editorship.

Subscriptions

The annual subscriptions were increased from the 1st January 1984 as follows:

Ordinary membership	£5.00	Associate membership	£2.00
Junior membership	£2.00	Institutions in the U.K.	£7.50
Ordinary membership overseas	£6.50	Institutions overseas	£10.00

Membership and Subscription Secretary

Council is happy to report that Mrs. Joyce Morris has agreed to accept the office.

Library

The Council much appreciates the work done by Mr. G.R. Hiatt and his staff in maintaining the Society's library in Gloucester. After serving the Library Committee as chairman since 1970, Mr. Geoffrey Sanders had to resign because of ill health. He brought to the work of the Committee a wide and deep knowledge of Gloucestershire books. The Council welcomes Miss E.M. Markwick as the new chairman.

Council

Much of the work of the Society is carried out by the Standing committees under their respective chairmen. The Excavations and Buildings committee is concerned not only with excavation, much of which is dealt with by the Committee for Archaeology in Gloucestershire, but much time and effort is spent on conservation. However, the Society does make grants towards excavation work. During the past year the Council has examined in detail some 130 planning applications made to the seven District Councils. After investigation many were found acceptable, others were revised by the comments and suggestions made by the Society and some were refused by the Planning Authorities. Representations were made to two Public Inquiries and were presented by members. We were unsuccessful in the case of the Old Royal Hospital at Gloucester.

Meetings

Another important aspect of the Council's work is the arrangement of meetings and lectures. For these we are grateful to Mrs. Mary Campbell and the Revd Canon Eric Gethyn-Jones who arranged a delightful meeting to Burgundy. The summer meeting at Tenby was enjoyed by many members. The President guided the members round Bath at the Spring meeting, and Mr. Bernard Ashwell was the guide at the Autumn meeting when the Society visited churches in Somerset. In addition to the general meetings of the Society, Miss S. Coppen-Gardner and Mr. R. Knapp arrange meetings and lectures in Gloucester and Bristol respectively. The Council thanks everyone who helps.

Lectures in Bristol

- 'Roman mosaics in Tunisia' by Professor Bruce Perry
- 'The Bristol Mint, 1010-1698' by L.V. Grinsell
- 'Bristol Municipal Charities' by George Meade-King
- 'Heraldry of Somerset families' by Basil Cottle
- 'The church in Bristol in the 18th century' by Elizabeth Ralph

Lectures in Gloucester

- 'St. Oswald's, Gloucester - the history of a late Saxon Minster' by Carolyn Heighway
- 'Death in ancient Greece' by Dr. J. Musgrave
- 'Pigs and Palaces - an ancient monuments case book' by John Ashurst
- 'Gloucester in the century after the Black Death' by Richard Holt
- 'Romanesque in the West country' by Christie Arno

In conclusion, the Council wishes to thank those members who have retired from the Council and all members who give of their time to promote the well-being of the Society.

FRENCH MEETINGS 1980–1983

In May of each year from 1980 to 1983 the Society held a meeting in France. In 1980 it was in Normandy, based at Bayeux. Brittany was visited from Dinan in 1981 and in 1982 the Loire Valley explored from Amboise. The last of the series was in Burgundy, centred at Beaune. The meetings varied from five to eight days depending on distances and circumstance. Canon J.E. Gethyn-Jones F.S.A. devised the itinerary and acted as leader on all four occasions. Mrs. Mary Campbell dealt with the administration.

The programmes encompassed the principal antiquities of each area, be it the chateaux of the Loire or the megalithic monuments of Brittany, but there was a consistent theme which gave the whole series a seriousness of scholarly intent and interest. All meetings were primarily directed to an examination of the architecture and embellishment of 11th- and 12th-century Romanesque buildings with which the Normans and their successors would have been familiar and the comparison of these buildings with those of the same period in Gloucestershire and adjacent counties.

The abbeys, aux Hommes and aux Dames, at Caen were contrasted with the abbey churches of Gloucester and Tewkesbury, where the English buildings have a monumental quality that enables them to be read as one architectural unit, as against the severely compartmented bays of arcade, triforium and clerestory, each bay succeeding the other, that one sees at Caen and elsewhere in Normandy. The 1983 meeting studied the influence of the Abbey of Cluny on architecture and the associated decorative arts, which directed thought to Malmesbury where the great drum piers are surmounted by pointed arches and to its south porch, and also to the transitional Norman work at the east end of the nave at Worcester Cathedral. At Tavant on the Loire, for instance, the wall paintings in the crypt were compared with Kempley.

A list of the principal places visited is appended and it will be seen these include a number that are remote and comparatively unknown. It was perhaps two of such that made the greatest impression on members, both for their respective settings and the compelling interest of the buildings. In Normandy there was the church of the 12th-century leper hospital in the woods at Thaon and in 1983, the Cluniac grange and chapel with its impressive painted decoration, almost Byzantine in intensity, at Berzé la Ville near Macon. This latter had an additional reason for a visit, for it was put in good order and presented to the French nation by the late Dame Joan Evans, past President of this Society. Canon Gethyn-Jones conducted a short service in the chapel and a bunch of red roses in memory of Dame Joan was placed at the east end.

H.G.M.L.

<i>Normandy</i>	<i>Brittany</i>	<i>Loire</i>	<i>Burgundy</i>
Bayeux	St. Malo	Angers	Beaune
Cerisy la Forêt	Dinan	Amboise	Cluny
Caen	Josselin	Chenonceaux	Berzé la Ville
Falaise	Fougères	Azay-le-Rideau	Tournus
Rouen	Vitré	Tavant	Saulieu
Jumièges	Carnac	Fontevrault	Avallon
Fontaine Henri	Dol	Ussé	Vézelay
Thaon	Mont St. Michel	Blois	Auxerre
Balleroy		Chambord	Autun
		Chaumont	Dijon
		Villandry	
		Montoire	
		Chartres	

COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1983

Five meetings were held in different parts of the County at roughly regular intervals during the year. All were well attended, and the numerous matters debated covered many aspects of archaeology pertinent to Gloucestershire. As in previous years the meetings acted as a most useful forum for the interchange of information among the organisations and groups active within the County.

Archaeological work in Gloucestershire continued apace during 1983. The Western Archaeological Trust co-ordinated rescue work at Tewkesbury, Bagendon and Salmonsbury, and through a Manpower Services Commission scheme excavations took place at several sites in Gloucester City. Fieldsurvey was undertaken at Birdlip. The Oxford Archaeological Unit continued its programme of excavations in advance of gravel extraction at Claydon Pike near Lechlade. Research excavations continued at Crickley Hill, The Ditches, Vineyards Farm and Frocester Court, while new projects began at The Buckles (Frocester) and Wortley. The archaeological section of the County Planning Department undertook fieldwork in the Cotswold Water Park, inaugurated a study of aerial photographs of the County and continued to compile the computerised sites and monuments record.

Specific topics which engaged the attention of CAG include:

Annual Symposium

The sixth annual symposium took place on Saturday 12th November in the Wheatstone Hall, Gloucester. It was jointly organised by CAG and GADARG, and proved to be the most successful symposium yet in terms of the number of people who attended. The morning session focused on archaeology in the City of Gloucester, while in the afternoon short summaries of recent work in the rest of the County were presented. A fine display of recent finds and publications was mounted. Over 100 people attended the symposium with the result that a small profit was made on ticket sales. This will be used to offset next year's expenses. Thanks are extended to all those who presented talks at the symposium, and especially GADARG for their efforts in making the day a success.

Ancient Monuments and their destruction

The Committee continues to be concerned by the alarming rate at which archaeological sites of all types are being destroyed or seriously damaged in the County. A number of specific instances have been monitored through the year. In view of the scale of the problem the Committee is looking into new ways of tackling it; in particular the possibilities of heritage conservancy campaigns, especially in rural areas.

C.B.A. Group XIII

Contact with the C.B.A.'s regional Group XIII, of which Gloucestershire is part, has continued through our designated correspondent Alison Alden. Various items were submitted for the Group XIII Newsletters. The difficulties of maintaining active involvement in the affairs of Group XIII, imposed by the sheer size of the group area, were discussed at a number of levels simply to draw attention to the problems.

Unpublished excavations

Sadly, very little feedback was received from the publication of a provisional list of unpublished pre-1960 excavations (see the Annual Report for 1982). The Committee continues to be interested in updating the material already in hand, although there are no immediate plans to expand the survey.

Handbook of Gloucestershire Archaeology

Work has continued on this project, and under the general editorship of Alison Alden (aided by Malcolm Watkins, Tim Darvill and Bernard Rawes) a revised handbook covering a variety of topics is in active preparation. The loose-leaf folders comprising material collected at the start of this project continue to be available in some museums and libraries to help answer specific enquiries.

Pipelines and bypasses

CAG has been active in promoting and co-ordinating responses to the multifarious threats posed by an almost continuous succession of major civil engineering works in the County. Watching briefs, and a limited trial excavation, took place along the line of the Northleach Bypass under the auspices of GADARG from March through to September 1983. At Birdlip, Tim Darvill undertook watching briefs on behalf of CAG during exploratory work by the County Surveyor's Department, and has subsequently supervised a field survey of the bypass corridor as part of Western Archaeological Trust's MSC scheme. A watch was maintained by Bernard and Barbara Rawes throughout work on a water pipeline scheme which cut through Salmonsbury Camp. Plans for an archaeological response to the proposed Esso oil-pipeline, which is to run roughly north to south through eastern Gloucestershire, were discussed.

Other matters

Among many other matters considered, CAG responded to the proposals made in the *Cheltenham Borough Local Plan*, and made detailed comments on the archaeological provisions in the *Cotswold Water Park Review*. The Committee has continued to make suggestions on the nature and scope of adult education courses in the County through the representatives from Bristol University Department of Extra-Mural Studies and the Gloucestershire WEA. On a less formal note, the question of a logo for CAG has been raised several times, although as yet no suitable design has been found.

T.C. DARVILL
Secretary to the Committee

Obituaries

SEIRIOL EVANS

DEAN SEIRIOL EVANS C.B.E., F.S.A. (President of the Society 1960–1) died at his home at Fulbourn, nr. Cambridge on the 29th June, 1984 at the age of 89. He was educated at King's School, Worcester, King's College, Cambridge, and Salisbury Theological College. His first appointment at Gloucester Cathedral was as Sacrist, which he left in 1923 to become Precentor of Ely. Later he was Rector of Christ Church, Upwell and became Archdeacon of Wisbech, an office he held until he returned to Gloucester as Dean in 1953. He retired in 1972. During his long and distinguished career he was Chairman of the Central Council for the Care of Churches from 1954 until 1971, a Trustee of the National Gallery and a member of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts. But he will be chiefly remembered for his great work at Gloucester Cathedral. Not only were nearly all the main roofs repaired during his tenure of office, but ever present was his love of the liturgy and of the rich heritage of Cathedral music which he did everything to foster, including a major rebuild of the 17th-century organ in 1971. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that he was the 'Captain of the Ship' yet with it all, he gave a sympathetic and understanding ear to all who came to him with their problems, great or small and, most helpful of all, he gave decisions. He was a Dean of the old school but one in the finest tradition of the Anglican Church.

B.J.A.

VIVIAN GEORGE MILDREN

VIVIAN MILDREN, Membership Secretary of the Society, died on 8 January, 1984, in his 57th year. A native of Bristol, he had had a modest but varied career as an Able Seaman in the Royal Navy (including active service at the end of the Second World War), as a newsagent on St Michael's Hill, and latterly as a V.A.T. specialist in the Customs and Excise service; but two absorbing interests dominated his life. One was his devotion to the Church of England; he became an expert in Anglican liturgies, and served until his death as Churchwarden of Christ Church, City, and Clerk to the Guild of Kalendars. The other was self-taught scholarship, with its focus mainly on history, archaeology, and archives; his principal research was in the life and buildings of the Bristol architect Henry Dare Bryan and in the history of the Bristol Merchant Taylors, and he was a loyal member of the Society, helping to plan the outdoor meetings and willingly accepting the onerous new post of Membership and Subscription Secretary. He had graduated B.A. of the Open University. His conspicuous goodness, simplicity, and courage in suffering, have inspired his many friends.

A.B.C.

DAVID CECIL WYNTER VEREY

The Society has been fortunate over the years to have had amongst its members a number of scholarly country gentlemen with the time and facilities to pursue their studies to the enrichment of us all – amateurs in the very best sense, fastidious in their scholarship and always ready to share it with others. DAVID CECIL WYNTER VEREY F.S.A., who died on 3rd May 1984, was such a person and the Society is deeply indebted for the part he took in its affairs, acting as President in 1971–72, as Chairman of the Excavation and Buildings Committee for many years, and as one of the Society's trustees. He contributed the essay on the Perpendicular style in the Cotswolds to the Society's centenary volume and other papers to the *Transactions*. Many members will recollect the memorable experience of visiting Cotswold churches with him at Field Meetings.

David Verey was born in 1913, educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge where he read architecture and then was admitted to the Royal Institute of British Architects. After war service in the Royal Fusiliers he entered the Ministry of Housing and in 1965, when senior investigator of Historic Buildings, retired to Gloucestershire having inherited Barnsley House near Cirencester.

He played his part in the public life of Gloucestershire, serving as High Sheriff and as a Deputy Lieutenant, but his major contribution to the county was in the field of architectural and antiquarian scholarship reflected in his Chairmanship of the Gloucester Diocesan Advisory Committee for the care of Churches, his work on the Severn Regional Committee of the National Trust and beyond the county on the Cathedrals Advisory Committee and on the Morris Fund of the Society of Antiquaries.

His literary work was substantial. He edited a number of Shell county guides and then the two Gloucestershire volumes in Pevsner's *Buildings of England* where his work was particularly acclaimed and set new standards for the series. This was followed by his *Cotswold Churches* (1976), the editing of *The Diary of a Cotswold Parson* (1978) and *The Diary of a Victorian Squire* (1983) – in fact his grandfather. With Canon Welander he wrote *Gloucester Cathedral* (1979) and in 1981 he prepared *Gloucestershire Churches* for the Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust.

Outside his writing he will be remembered for the highly successful museum he established in the disused Arlington Mill at Bibury, which has had a major influence on the re-assessment of the work of Ernest Gimson and other members of the Arts & Crafts movement who settled in the Cotswolds in the early years of this century. All involved in archaeological publishing will also be grateful for the support he gave to Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd. of which he was Chairman of the directors and ensured the company was firmly established as a specialist archaeological publisher providing much needed technical help and production services for learned society publications.

In 1939 he married Rosemary, the daughter of Lt. Colonel Prescott Sandilands and with her developed the gardens for which Barnsley House is famous; there he displayed his personal skill and taste as an architect.

“Slight, frail and dark, a trifle austere and touchingly diffident, David Verey had the striking countenance of some medieval monk. Although the most courteous and affable of hosts there clung to him an indefinable aura of asceticism”.

This extract from his obituary in *The Times* is a very true description and a fitting end to this contribution.

H.G.M.L.

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Compiled by Elizabeth Hall

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Authors having papers which they wish to submit for publication in the *Transactions* are asked to communicate with one or other of the Hon. Editors, Dr Steven Blake (historical articles) or Mr Alan Saville (archaeological articles) at Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum, 40 Clarence Street, Cheltenham, GL50 3NX, from whom a copy of the Society's 'Notes for the guidance of contributors' may be obtained.

Books for review should be sent to the relevant Reviews Editor, namely Dr Tim Darvill, 209 Seymour Road, Gloucester, GL1 5HR (archaeological publications) or Mrs Jill Voyce, Gloucester City Library, Brunswick Road, Gloucester (historical publications).

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Reviews

Edited by Tim Darvill and Jill Joyce

Saville, Alan. *Uley Bury and Norbury Hillforts – Rescue Excavations at two Gloucestershire Iron Age Sites*. Western Archaeological Trust Excavation Monograph No. 5. 1983. vi + 48 pp. + 26 figs + 12 plates + one microfiche. £8.95. (Distributed by Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd.)

This latest publication from Western Archaeological Trust reports on two small, but nevertheless important, rescue excavations carried out in 1976 and 1977 on two Cotswold Iron Age hillforts and continues a very creditable sequence of reports produced by the Trust.

The investigation at Uley Bury, prompted by a water pipeline scheme, is the longer of the two reports and details excavations in the eastern entrance together with sections through the upper and lower terraces on the north-eastern side. Limited as they are, these investigations do allow Alan Saville and Ann Ellison (joint excavators and authors of this first report) to observe that Uley Bury is now elevated to the position of one of the better known Cotswold hillforts. Certainly the Cotswolds have until recently been something of a backwater in terms of the number of Iron Age settlement sites investigated. This situation has now been partly remedied by research undertaken in the past decade at Crickley Hill, Claydon Pike, Guiting Power, The Ditches hillfort and further work at Bagendon.

Uley Bury is a site that has prompted discussion over the years with regard to the true nature of the structure of its defences. This discussion has been based on topographical evidence alone, as no formal excavations have taken place at the site. The excavations reported here were unable to resolve the questionmark beside the possibility of a second rampart on the lower terrace but do provide details of the structure of the terraces themselves, confirming their artificial nature.

Specialist reports run into double figures in the Uley Bury report. Of these, the Iron Age ceramic analysis by Elaine Morris is the only report included in the main text, the remainder being committed to microfiche. Morris has provided a seriation analysis by fabric type for the ceramics which accords well with the stratigraphic sequence and as the authors observe this is a technique with considerable potential for application to other Iron Age sites in the area. A feature of the ceramics is the presence of Droitwich briquetage, some 65 km from its place of manufacture, providing further testimony to the extensive distribution of salt from Droitwich in the Middle Iron Age.

The reports on microfiche are essential reading for those whose interests extend beyond the structural sequence and Iron Age ceramics. Bruce Levitan's animal bone analysis is an important addition to the rather sparse data from Cotswold hillforts, although his report is itself limited in scope by the statistical inadequacy of the finds from many contexts. Elizabeth Fowler, in a lengthy discussion of an involuted pin and penannular brooch found in the entrance passage of the hillfort, argues strongly for their insular development in Britain, whilst Bob Everton reports on a curiously mutilated skeleton, the unfortunate owner of which appears to have suffered a most revolting death.

Turning to Norbury, the excavations here took place in the interior of the univallate hillfort. Machine stripping down to the bedrock necessitated by a rescue timetable resulted in only those features that penetrated the bedrock being recorded. Two important discoveries were made.

Firstly, 12 post-pits arranged in such a fashion as to allow interpretation as "four-posters" and secondly, the alignment of these "four-posters" suggesting an orderly layout within the hillfort. With univallate Crickley Hill a few miles distant the discovery of "four-posters" at Norbury is not a complete surprise. Alan Saville has drawn on a third similarity with Crickley, namely, the absence of storage pits. On these grounds he suggests that Norbury and Crickley may be contemporary. Unfortunately the Norbury excavations were carried out within a rescue timetable so strict that testing of this hypothesis must await further excavation at the site.

The Norbury report raises a number of questions to stimulate further hillfort research. For instance, within the Gloucestershire Cotswolds, what is the chronological and cultural relationship of dip-slope to scarp-edge hillforts? Looking beyond the Cotswolds Wainwright has suggested (1967, 57) that a group of hillforts, including Norbury, may be stock enclosures. This suggestion, based on the type site of Bathampton Down, Avon has not been completely overturned by the Norbury excavations as the dating of the four-post structures *vis-à-vis* the defences is uncertain. Further explorations both at Norbury and on other sites within the group are needed to test this hypothesis properly.

Finally a word of praise for the report designer, Richard Bryant, who has produced a most attractive publication in paperback A4 format. Two very well-chosen drawings of Uley Bury and Norbury by Edward Burrow, an early twentieth-century explorer of the Cotswold Iron Age, are reproduced on the cover. The quality of the photographs is good and the line and object drawings are clear throughout.

Wainwright G.J. 1967. The Excavation of an I.A. Hillfort on Bathampton Down, Somerset, *Trans BGAS* 86, 42-59.

STEPHEN CLEWS
Corinium Museum

Linda J. Hall. *The Rural Houses of North Avon & South Gloucestershire 1400-1720*. City of Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Monograph No. 6. 1983. 336 pp, 68 plates, 148 figs. £15.

This oversize volume is the first work of its kind to be devoted to the houses of the lowland region to the north of Bristol. The first twenty pages are given over almost entirely to lists of contents, plates and subscribers. Of the remainder, one third is devoted to a description and analytic study of nearly every aspect of the houses of the area ranging from geology to house plans, and roof construction to plaster ceilings. The rest of the volume comprises a gazetteer describing 67 houses individually, replete with plans and frequent elevations and drawings of interesting details.

Initially this study set out to explore the extent, date range and characteristics of the gabled house form typical of the area. This meant looking at no fewer than 597 houses, and probably more. The Regional Style was found to extend from the Severn as far as the Cotswold escarpment, thinning around the edges where it met the sub-cultures of other regions. The style is shown to have had a date range of *c.* 1600 to 1700, and it is within this period that the author is at her best.

Unfortunately the author gives no clue as to how many houses have been examined in each parish. On this point the three most informative distribution maps (figs. 3, 11 and 31) even appear to be at variance with each other. Around forty houses in southern Gloucestershire are indicated, but it is a trifle disappointing to find only two of these described in the gazetteer. It

would also have helped to have had a large scale map with the parishes and the hamlets clearly marked – fig. 3 is totally inadequate for this purpose.

No buildings prior to 1400 appear to have survived. There were, however, several to which a medieval date could be ascribed, and several that lacked datable features but for which one might well assume a similar date. All of these were of stone with the exception of one, Wood Lane Cottage, Horton, which was timber framed and had features in common with those of central Gloucestershire. Most people regard the medieval period as having ended *c.* 1500 or 1540. It is unclear whether the author feels that the medieval tradition survived virtually unchanged till 1600 or whether there was a sub-medieval intermediate stage of which no specific characteristics have been identified.

Long houses have for many years been the *bête noire* among architectural historians. The author, however, identified 42 possible examples as well as quoting from three inventories of the second half of the 17th century in which reference is made to cattle. Much depends on interpretation. At the one extreme we have the byre specifically for cattle, all using the same front entrance to the house (I.O. Peate, *The Welsh House*), and at the other a far more liberal usage (P. Rahtz, Upton, Glos., *Trans BGAS* Vol. 88 p. 96). No one has thought to suggest that these enigmatic rooms at the lower end might sometimes have been cider cellars, a purpose for which they were eminently suited.

Roof construction is very rightly described at some length and includes details of the extended-collar truss, which is a product of the use of large multiple gable dormers. The extremely heavy doorframes with their large chamfer mouldings and ornate stops are frequently illustrated, and are an important localised feature of the Regional Style.

The book is very well produced apart from a few irritating points. In the gazetteer each house carries by its name a very boldly printed non-consecutive number. These relate only to the manuscript reference files, but can by their prominence confuse the general reader. I was not unduly upset by the variation in scale of the plans etc., but there is rather a lot of wasted blank paper – about 50 pages in all. This could have been put to good use, or omitted and the resultant saving used to improve the quality of the binding which does not do justice to the content.

There are sure to be differences of interpretation, and future research may modify some of the statements. Even so, this is an important work for experts and amateurs alike. The photographs are adequate, the drawings are crisp and the text large enough to be read in comfort. I hope it may not be presumptuous to look forward to two further monographs, one on the urban style houses of Bristol, Thornbury, Chipping Sodbury and Marshfield, and a smaller work to illustrate comparative studies of the local staircases, window catches, chamfer stops etc., that comprise the folk art of regional architecture.

LIONEL F.J. WALROND
Stroud District (Cowle) Museum

Calendar of the Correspondence of the Smyth Family of Ashton Court, 1548–1642, edited by J.H. Bettey (Bristol Record Society, vol. XXXV), pp. xxvi + 217. 1982. £3 p.a. member's subscription; £9 to non-members.

The greater part of the Smyth family archives came to Bristol Record Office shortly after World War II. It has taken until now for this remarkable collection to begin to receive the close study it deserves, and to be made more widely available through the publications of Bristol Record Society – first with Dr. J. Vanes' edition of the 1538–1550 Ledger of John Smythe, founder of

the family fortunes, in *B.R.S.* vol. XXVIII (1975), and now with Dr. Bettey's splendid calendar of the 16th–17th century family letters. The two volumes are very different. Dr. Vanes gave us a detailed study of one document. Dr. Bettey is dealing with one particular class of record: more than four hundred letters, long and short, terse and discursive, ranging over nearly a hundred years and through three generations. The majority of the letters are, as would be expected, to the Smyths; the other side of the correspondence has to be deduced, with the aid of Dr. Bettey's footnotes. Occasional endorsed notes for a reply, draft replies, and at least one splendidly angry letter written but apparently not sent (no. 265), survive and are duly included. Much of the appeal of these letters lies in their sheer variety: personal and domestic affairs, local estate business, national gossip and politics. To reduce them to the limits of a single volume has required a considerable feat of calendaring, which could all too easily have neutered the subject in the cause of brevity. Dr. Bettey has resolved this dilemma with a deft combination of calendar and quotation. The smooth flow of the resulting book to some extent masks, and is a tribute to, the close and careful work that has gone into it.

Dr. Bettey has already published a preliminary study of the rise of the Smyths of Ashton Court (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association: Local History Pamphlet no. 43, 1978) which provides an illustrated supplement to the Introduction to the volume, and covers much the same ground. Short biographies set successive members of the family in their local and national context. Dr. Bettey shows how this Somerset family lived out the sequence of obscure origins; a successful Tudor merchant making his money in Bristol and setting up his sons as the new landed gentry; and the erratic progress of these new country squires in establishing and enlarging their estates, until by the third generation they have risen to an active role in local and – with the 1640s and approaching civil war – national affairs. The shift of emphasis through the volume is clear, from the problems of acquiring estates unencumbered by old claims, 1552–3 (nos. 5–8), to London political gossip from the effusive Baynham Throckmorton, 1640 (no. 327 and others), and a wry comment from Florence Smyth on the not dissimilar problems of controlling Parliament and her 'wild rascals' of farm labourers, 1641 (no. 375). Political matters creep in incidentally at first (nos. 279, 285) and gradually become dominant (nos. 312 ff.). But this general sequence of development is brought alive by the vivid threads of incidental detail woven through all the letters: especially a constant concern with each other's health, a precarious and vital business in the 1600s. There is John Smyth, careful for every penny, making sure of the lead roofing on the various former chantry chapels he has just acquired, 1548 (no. 1). His erratic son Hugh throws his weight about as a new country gentleman, 1578–9 (nos. 23, 29). Hugh's nephew Hugh Smyth, after his early enthusiasm for fashion, hawks and horses (nos. 100, 102, 112–115) gradually gives way to irascibility, melancholia and, one suspects, mental breakdown, discerned at second-hand through the anxious letters of his wife and friends (e.g. nos. 149–154, 160–161, 169). His wife Elizabeth refers to him taking the waters, presumably of the Hotwell Spring, in 1626 (no. 160). His daughter-in-law Florence Smyth has a little trouble with witchcraft in 1631 (no. 245). His son Thomas, inheriting the estate at eighteen, brings new stability to both the family and to Ashton Court mansion, setting the foundations of a powerful 18th–19th century squirearchy and stately home that lingered on, gracious but out of step with the times, until its final extinction, 1939–1945.

Dr. Bettey's calendaring is terse but conveys the informal immediacy of letter-writing, and incorporates brief quotations without breaking the flow of the text. Longer quotations are clearly distinguished by being indented and set in smaller type. Occasionally a letter may be quoted in full. Treated in this flexible way, letters rude (no. 100), placatory (nos. 123, 127, 128), humorous (no. 246: 'My wife hath sent your Lady a cake of her own making which I am bound to commend. . . . If any person be inquisitive to aske how my old Dame gott the skill of making of

cakes, you may resolve them that one Sir Richard Baker was her Godfather') and frantic (no. 316: 'I beseech you do this as soone as you can, and lett me heare from you for untill then I shall live between hope and dispare') all come alive. Calendar and quotation are neatly interwoven so that all the material is present, clearly identified as original or abstract, yet compact. Personal letters could be dangerously prone to subjective editing; but this flexible presentation makes it possible to include every known letter for the period – although it is a pity this is not stated specifically in the Introduction – and thus would seem to ensure that we are seeing a true balance of material.

Editorial footnotes, in still smaller type, follow neatly under each letter. In this position, the notes are clear and handy without being too obtrusive. They are especially valuable for the identification of individuals mentioned in the letters. Into these mini-biographies Dr. Bettey has packed a great deal of valuable information; much of the labour of editing this volume must have lain in the assembling of these useful details. The Appendices include not only undated letters, but some most interesting documents about Thomas Smyth's household (nos. 418–420, 426). Dr. Bettey has provided one genealogical table of the Smyths *c.* 1500–1642 (p. xxiv). It does, however, seem a pity that this, or a second and wider family tree, could not have been contrived to show the extended network of cousins, in-laws and other relations – Gorges, Phelips, Popham, Poulett and many others – who make up the majority of the letter-writers. They are clearly identified in editorial notes when they first appear; but one cannot always remember the details, or re-locate the note, when they reappear some years, and several settlements, or babies, later. The original quotations have been carefully checked for accuracy, but an occasional misprint has escaped notice in the modern English: 'the winter has delivered' should surely be 'the writer has delivered' (no. 79); there is some inconsistency over whether Hugh Smyth was born in 1574 (Introduction pp. xv, xxiv) or 1575 (Index, p. 215); footnote 25 in Introduction, p. xvi has been mis-numbered 15, and a reference to soap appears on p. 199, not p. 198 as in the index; but these are minor details. The title of the volume does seem extraordinarily cumbersome; might not 'Correspondence of the Smyth Family, Ashton Court, 1548–1642: A Calendar' have served as well, and read less clumsily? The letters are well spaced on the page, so that the various typefaces in no way hinder reading. The heading of each letter, with its number, address and date, is in an inelegantly heavyweight type; but this certainly serves to divide one letter from the next very clearly.

Dr. Bettey's volume leads the reader, as all good record publications should, on to broader questions; in particular, how unusual or otherwise are these letters? For long, the 15th-century Celys, Stonors and above all the Pastons have been thought of as remarkable but isolated letter-writers. Now we have something similar, one to two centuries later, in southwest England. These letters are in a different class from those of highly literate aristocracy such as Viscount Lisle in the 16th century, or Dorothy Osborne in the 17th. Were they rare and remarkable or were there a lot of moderately literate gentry writing such letters, and we have simply lost most of the evidence? How far does the maintenance of such a complex network of correspondence depend on the chance of literate women holding the fort (sometimes literally, as Margaret Paston did) at home? This is one obvious common denominator between the two groups of letters. Jane Smyth reports on the estate to her husband Matthew in London, *c.* 1580–83, just like Margaret Paston a century before (no. 81). Attractive (to judge by her portrait) Elizabeth Smyth *née* Gorges writes bravely and cheerfully to her son at Oxford while her husband grows increasingly morose and ill (nos. 117, 160 and others). Cousin Elizabeth Phelips records the saga of her lovelife amid the wheeling-and-dealing of 17th-century marriage settlements, with some exasperation and tart comments on a potential mother-in-law and her minion (no. 248: her father, Sir Robert Phelips of Montacute, 'will not be fooled by no precice matron or bussie balde patted knave, you know I am sure that I mean Mother Caple and frier Claxton'; nos. 309, 315, 316, 320). Finally

there is the delightful Florence Smyth, whose plain but cheerful features shine through the standard stiff conventions of 17th-century portraiture just as her affection for her husband Thomas shines through her many letters: 'I need not tel thee how I long to have thy co(m)pany againe (no. 245) . . . since thou canst not kom to me I will kom to thee (no. 257) . . . My Deare Harte, I am exscding glad to heare thou art so well and that thos wishest thy selfe at home, for my part tis not day nor nitli that I wish for thee but ourli (no. 373) . . . thy loving worme, Flo Smyth' (no. 383), (1631–1641 and n.d.). Or again, how far is the survival of these letters the consequence of having a later antiquarian dilettante in the family, such as the 18th-century John Hugh Smyth? Or more prosaically, because the family never moved from Ashton Court, where the spacious garrets could always accommodate past papers? Dr. Bettey does not venture upon these questions; but his volume makes the letters themselves readily available, opening up a rich and readable source of information on many facets of Bristol and Somerset history during the 16th and 17th centuries.

This review is reprinted from the *Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society*, Volume 126 (1982), pp. 145–147, by kind permission of the Hon. Editor.

F. NEALE
Winscombe

Cyril Hart, *Coleford. The History of a West Gloucestershire Town*, Alan Sutton, Gloucester. 1983.
573pp. + 57 plates + 28 figures. £16.

Dr. Hart's comprehensive history of Coleford demonstrates both his meticulous scholarship and his affection for his home town. Although it may be true, as he asserts, that Coleford has no pretensions to be classed among the elite of the towns of Gloucestershire, the careful chronicling of the events and personalities associated with this Forest community entirely convinces the reader that it is a worthy subject for study. Dr. Hart's knowledge and use of the relevant primary and secondary source material is impressive. It would provide an admirable guide to any author contemplating a similar labour of love.

In the introductory chapters, the inter-dependence of Coleford, its neighbouring communities and the Forest of Dean is outlined and emphasised. In the rest of the book, a chronological approach is followed but this significant relationship is kept in mind. The history of Coleford from the probable Saxon settlement to the present-day is traced, in the context of the complicated Forest and parish organisation and jurisdiction as well as of the national scene.

Many varied aspects and activities of community life receive attention, those of more recent periods enhanced by photographs and personal reminiscences.

As one would expect, there are many useful full footnotes, references and specially prepared maps. The serious student can find here a wealth of information, easily accessible because of the exemplary appendices and indices – of place, subject and people.

One note of slight incongruity is the insertion at the end of some chapters of imaginative reconstructions of certain events such as 'Mayor John Wade's Journey through Coleford in 1660'. The change of style and approach is noted by a change of type-face in the text but, in marked contrast to the rest of the work, the documentary evidence is not fully convincing nor does there appear to be any explanation as to the reason for such inclusions.

This is, however, obviously a book which will find its way on to many shelves and will be regarded as an authoritative work on this fascinating and lively Forest town.

JEAN WELSFORD
Cirencester

Joseph Leech, *Rural Rides of the Bristol Churchgoer* (edited by Alan Sutton). Alan Sutton, Gloucester, 1982. 326 pp. £8.95.

First there must be a hymn of praise for Alan Sutton: everyone interested in the history of Bristol and Gloucestershire is very much in debt to him for his enterprise as a publisher. At a time when the ravages of economic depression and the advances of modern technology have made the work of a publisher exceptionally hazardous he has provided us with a remarkable stream of publications. Now he has ventured forth as an editor himself.

He has resurrected Joseph Leech, a fellow publisher, although principally of newspapers. It was for his first venture, the *Bristol Times*, which he founded in 1839 that Leech, using the pseudonym *Churchgoer*, produced the articles which make up this book. About half are devoted to the churches of Bristol and the rest to churches within a twenty mile radius of the city. They provide the reader with a lively and opinionated snapshot of congregations, incumbents, parish clerks and services as they were in the years 1843–5. Leech himself was of protestant Irish origin and not surprisingly was a low church tory who had little time for Puseyism and still less for Dissent. His comments were often pungent and at the time attracted considerable attention. For the historian their value is enhanced as far as Bristol churches are concerned because the manuscript returns of the 1851 Religious Census, which on occasion provided comments from incumbents on the state of their church in addition to the simple figures of attendance and available pews, appear not to have survived at the P.R.O. In short Alan Sutton has rendered a valuable service to the local historian.

DAVID LARGE
University of Bristol

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

This section is designed to draw attention to recent publications which make a contribution to the study of the archaeology and history of the county. It is hoped that those responsible for any such publication, whether periodical, guide, article or full-length study, will contact one or other of the Reviews Editors as soon as their work appears in print to ensure its inclusion here. The inclusion of a publication in this list does not preclude a review at a later date.

- Anderson, C. 1983. *A City and its Cinemas*, Redcliffe Press, Bristol. 103 pp. £2.95.
 Andrews, G. & Brecze, G. 1984. *Margaret Gere 1878–1965*, Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums exhibition catalogue. 32 pp. £1.50.
 Ashton, O. 1983. 'Clerical Control and Radical Responses in Cheltenham Spa 1838–48', *Midland History* 8 pp. 121–147.
 Ashwell, B.J. 1983–4. Architect's Report to the Friends, *Friends of Gloucester Cathedral Report* no. 47 (1983), pp. 11–18 and no. 48 (1984), pp. 14–18. Notes on master masons and their marks.

- Ashworth, B. 1983. *The Last Days of Steam in Gloucestershire*, Alan Sutton, Gloucester. 140 pp. £7.95. A photographic record of the county's railways between 1959 and 1965.
- Avon Past* no. 6 (Spring 1982) includes Coates (op. cit.); no. 7 (Autumn 1982) includes Malcolmson (op. cit.), Moore (op. cit.), Russell (op. cit.); no. 8 (Spring 1983) includes Ineichen (op. cit.), Spittall and Dawson (op. cit.); no. 9 (Autumn 1983) includes Brown (op. cit.), Holland (op. cit.), Lindegaard (op. cit.), Little (op. cit.), Manson (op. cit.). Available from Avon Community Council, 209 Redland Road, Bristol 6, £3 per. annum.
- Awdry, W. (ed.) 1983. *Industrial Archaeology in Gloucestershire*, 3rd. edn. G.S.I.A., Dursley. 36 pp. £1.50.
- Bardswell, A. 1983. 'Sheltered by Stone: Barns of the Cotswolds', *Country Life* 17 November, pp. 1474-5.
- Belsey, P. and Ponsford, M. 1982. 'A late Roman buckle and Medieval building at Stockwood, Bristol', *Bristol and Avon Archaeology* no. 1, pp. 2-6.
- Bild, I. (ed.) 1983. *Bristol's Other History*, Bristol Broadsides. 160 pp. £3.50. Six studies - radical childhood, trade unions, Bristol women, people's housing, socialist society and John Wall.
- Blagg, T.F.C. 1983. 'Two decorative relief carvings at Lydney Park, Gloucestershire', *Antiquaries Journal* LXIII, pp. 355-359.
- Blake, S. 1982. *George Rowe, Artist and Lithographer 1796-1864*, Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums exhibition catalogue. 72 pp. £1.50.
- Blake, S. 1983. *An Interesting Group: Portraits by Richard Dighton 1796-1880*, Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museums exhibition catalogue. 16 pp. £0.50p.
- Blake, S. 1983. 'Henry Merrett's Map of Cheltenham 1834', *Cheltenham Local History Society Journal*, no. 1, pp. 7-10.
- Boore, E.J. 1982. 'Excavations at Peter Street, Bristol 1975-7', *Bristol and Avon Archaeology* no. 1, pp. 7-11.
- Boore, E.J. 1984. *Excavations at Tower Lane, Bristol*, Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery. 32 pp. £0.70p.
- Booth, F. 1984. *St. John's Northgate, Gloucester*. 28 pp. £1.
- Bristol and Avon Archaeology* no. 1 (1982) includes Belsey and Ponsford (op. cit.), Boore (op. cit.), Bryant and Kear (op. cit.), Dawson (op. cit.), Hall (op. cit.), Williams (op. cit.); no. 2 (1983) includes Bryant and Winstone (op. cit.), Jones (op. cit.), Russell (op. cit.), Shackleton and Douglass (op. cit.), Williams (op. cit.), Published by Bristol Archaeological Research Group. £2.
- Brooks, C.M. 1983. 'Aspects of the sugar-refining industry from the 16th to the 19th centuries', *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 17, pp. 1-14. Refs. to Bristol, passim.
- Brown, H. 1983. 'Unwillingly to School: Easton Board School', *Avon Past* no. 9, pp. 22-29.
- Brown, T. 1982. 'Human impact on the former floodplain woodlands of the Severn', in Bell, M. and Limbrey, S. (eds) *Archaeological Aspects of Woodland Ecology*, B.A.R. Oxford, pp. 93-104.
- Bryant, J. and Kear, D. 1982. 'An 18th-century bakery at Christmas Steps, Bristol', *Bristol and Avon Archaeology* no. 1, pp. 45-49.
- Bryant, J. and Winstone, J. 1983. 'A 17th-century house at 10 Lower Park Row, Bristol', *Bristol and Avon Archaeology* no. 2, pp. 45-47.
- Buchanan, A. and Williams, M. 1982. *Brunel's Bristol*, Redcliffe Press, Bristol. 96 pp. £6.75.
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