

REVIEWS

Chalk Hill, Neolithic and Bronze Age discoveries at Ramsgate, Kent. By P. Clark, G. Shand and J. Weekes. 282 pp., 99 figs, 18 colour and b/w plates. Sidestone Press, 2019. Softback £33.50, hardback £101.00 and pdf format £8.40. ISBN 978-90-8890-608-4 and 978-90-8890-609-1.

This monograph presents the results of excavations carried out between 1997 and 1998 at Chalk Hill, to the west of Ramsgate on the Isle of Thanet, in advance of a new road from the A253 to Ramsgate Harbour. The focus of the excavation was the concentric arcs of multi-phase pit clusters, with rich assemblages of finds, superficially conforming to the model of a Causewayed Enclosure monument, whose short period of occupation ended around 3600 cal BC. The Causewayed Enclosure was targeted for investigation by Aerial Photographic evidence and interpretation which located the feature within the route of the new road.

The publication is structured to deal with a multi-period site, where one period element proved to be extraordinarily complex. The modular structure of the report reflects the difficulty archaeologists face in creating a single narrative from the evidence of a long spaced out occupation, compelled to try to use imperfect data to tell a story, with a beginning, middle and an end, rather than employ floating discussions of the most coherent evidence. Occasionally this problem is reflected in the discussion of minor elements of this site, which diminish in the wake of the mass of data presented for the main show, although they may have significance to a wider survey of the periods they represent. The report also contains information on significant Early Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon features, useful as comparatives for other Thanet sites. Understandably publication cost leads to the compression of text without differentiation, at the expense of whitespace, increasing the cognitive load of reading dense descriptive sequences.

An introduction to the excavation programme in section 1 discusses the decisions behind the presentation of excavation data in the report. The general differentiation of the description of the period landscapes in separate sections in the monograph is refreshing for the reader. Three following sections of the monograph are period-based discussions, followed by two interpretative essays and three well laid out appendices containing tabulated stratigraphic and ceramic sherd grouping data. A comprehensive list of references extends over 26 pages at the end. The inclusion of specific discussions in the later sections separates raw data from interpretation and in part, speculation.

An introduction to the landscape context of the excavation site is given in section 1. Elements of the reviewer's baseline survey of the landscape and the heritage of archaeological investigation in Thanet are given in this discussion, contributing to the acknowledgement of the extent of change to the landscape under investigation and to the presentation of the geological process underlying the formation of

the landscape, as well as ongoing and radical change from coastal erosion and deposition. A fully justified caution is made that understanding the site in the past requires an act of reconstruction rather than a phenomenological appreciation of the present state of the landscape.

Most importantly, in section 2 the report publishes an archaeological sequence for a 'Causewayed Enclosure' which differs considerably from the prevailing archaeological model, which the excavation tested and found to be flawed, with significant implications for the received interpretation for other such sites that have generally been identified from Aerial Photographic evidence or by excavation. The evidence presented 'contributes a more nuanced understanding of the heterogeneity of monumental architecture in the early Neolithic of the British Isles'. The comparison of the Chalk Hill results with a small site with similarly structured features and assemblages at Pegwell, on a similar chalk rise on the opposite side of a valley, suggests the form of the Chalk Hill features is more than an isolated phenomenon.

The descriptive text is dense and complex, reflecting the complexity of the features that compose the monument group. Along with the varied assemblages of finds, the stratigraphic evidence indicates the level and duration of the occupation that formed the monument, prompting a revision of the excavation evidence and questioning the interpretation of other 'typical' Causewayed Enclosure monuments.

Following a description of some minor features, the excavation of a more typical Beaker/Early Bronze Age Round barrow and four associated barrows runs on in the text from the preceding section. These could have been differentiated by a more prominent title/section break, as would the following series of thematic descriptions and discussions of the paleo-environmental evidence, carbon dating and associated finds reports.

Section 3 describes ditches and enclosure representing a later Prehistoric landscape of Mid to Late Bronze Age and Early to Late Iron Age in similar well illustrated descriptive format, followed by period specific discussions and specialist reports. Early historic landscapes, section 4, describes a single Anglo-Saxon sunken featured building, medieval field systems and associated finds and specialist reports.

Section 5 is reserved for a discussion and interpretation by Dr Jake Weekes, presenting a detailed appreciation of the features of the putative Causewayed Enclosure at Chalk Hill, its antecedents in a pre-Neolithic environment and the influences behind its final form and possible functions. This is a refreshing overview of what is a very complex, but necessary, technical presentation of the field data in the main body of section 3.

Section 6 is an essay in three parts by Peter Clark, analysing all the features in their prehistoric and historical context. The first a discussion of the Causewayed Enclosure phenomenon in archaeological and cultural terms, with an extensive comparison of the finds assemblages and depositional patterns at comparable sites. The second and third elements are less detailed summaries of the two other broad period landscapes. The first section is most significant in its examination of the concepts of the Causewayed Enclosure model in local, national and European contexts, reviewing the excavation evidence, form and possible functions of all such monuments, comparing them with the Chalk Hill excavation results. This

consideration prompts the question whether this ‘monument class is so loose ... that it is of little use’.

The essential intellectual struggle in the two reflective sections is over whether the Causewayed Enclosure at Chalk Hill is a variant of a wider cultural conception of a monumental form, which differs in its construction methods from Continental models, dividing space based on the spread of a formal design executed in a regional style. Or whether Causewayed Enclosures as we read them are unplanned phenomena of an innovative Neolithic cultural practice, which unconsciously shaped a pattern of deposition. Function following form, or form following function. Peter Clark suggests that the Chalk Hill Causewayed Enclosure and an apparently similar site sampled at Pegwell, represent a local expression of whatever cultural practice had entered from the Continent, whose form drew on existing practices that involved pit digging and deposition of a varied range of cultural material, the Thanet monuments representing a synthesis of old and new practices. Local form following traditional pit digging practices were adapted to serve an imported function which focussed that activity, creating the larger monumental structure.

In 2003, when the reviewer arrived in Thanet, little formal publication was available to provide a baseline to understand the archaeology of the area. In a general survey of the long history of archaeological investigation in Thanet published in 2007, the imminent publication of several major archaeological monographs associated with infrastructure projects on Thanet were noted. With the addition of this monograph to the list, the publication landscape of Thanet has altered beyond recognition. The acknowledgements in this monograph refer to the ‘long awaited report’, however, time has enabled the wealth of new data from large scale investigation as well as international research to be combined with the significant results of this excavation.

The Chalk Hill publication is concise and thoughtful, with a general outward looking tone to the text and discussions. The discussions place the excavations, and an important part of Thanet’s archaeology into its European context. With the academic publication apparatus of summaries presented in French and German, the publication signals the international significance of the archaeological discoveries on a publicly funded infrastructure project.

GES MOODY

Beyond the Wantsum: Archaeological investigations in South Thanet, Kent. By G. Dawkes, D. Hart, K. Grant and D. Swift. 116 pp. SpoilHeap Publications Monograph. Lavenham Press, 2019. Paperback, £20.00. ISBN 978-1-912331-12-3.

This is the twenty-second monograph in the SpoilHeap Publications series, a joint venture of Archaeology South-East and the Surrey County Archaeological Unit. It presents the results of four developer-funded excavations in the southern part of the Isle of Thanet undertaken by Archaeology South-East between 2005 and 2013.

At Broadstairs, a relatively small excavation at Bradstow School revealed a small late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age ring ditch (just under 6m in diameter) that encircled a group of three inhumation burials radiocarbon dated to 1775-1660 cal BC, along with three pits, two of which contained fragments of infant crania and

might also have been graves. To the south of this, and slightly later in date (Middle Bronze Age, c. 1500-1150 BC) was a very large ring ditch (around 32m in diameter), though no burials were associated with this feature. Also in Broadstairs, a modest excavation at Hereson School, just to the west of Bradstow School uncovered a badly disturbed Middle Bronze Age inhumation, radiocarbon dated to around 1406-1145 cal BC.

Further to the south, another minor excavation at St Lawrence College, just east of Ramsgate railway station revealed some Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age enclosure ditches and a small medieval sunken featured bakery or kitchen, possibly an outbuilding of a farmstead dating between the 12th-14th centuries AD. Lastly, a larger open-area excavation to the west at Manston Road uncovered an interesting multi-phase sequence; a small Middle Bronze Age cremation cemetery, a late Bronze Age enclosure ditch and a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age driveway and associated field system. The latter was supplanted later in the Iron Age by a new field system on a different alignment. In the Roman period (late 1st to early 2nd centuries AD) two small mortuary enclosures were established at the northern end of the site, associated with a number of cremation burials. Three Anglo-Saxon sunken featured buildings were also found, possibly outliers of the small Anglo-Saxon settlement excavated to the south-west in 1996. Two other sunken-featured buildings were found to be medieval in date (mid 11th-early 13th centuries), one with a well-preserved oven set against its southern side, reminiscent of the many examples found at the Thanet Earth excavations in 2007-2012.

Overall the report is admirably clear with a simple and spacious layout and many figures, most of which are in colour. After a brief introductory overview, each site is described in a series of four chapters each presenting a summary site description followed by short finds and environmental reports and (where appropriate) a general site discussion. A final 'Conclusions' chapter outlines the contributions of the sites to the research themes of the archaeological narrative of the Isle of Thanet.

The authors have adopted a summary approach to presenting this evidence, eschewing detailed blow-by-blow stratigraphic descriptions of every feature and every fill. Indeed, individual context numbers are rarely mentioned (although they do appear on section drawings); descriptions are often presented at the group or structure level. This approach has much to recommend it, making the report more approachable to the general, non-specialist reader. This reviewer welcomes this move to summary integrated and synthetic archaeological reports, in keeping with the recommendations of the Southport Group report,¹ which highlighted the need for the archaeological profession to engage with a wider public audience. It is encouraging to see commercial archaeological units adopting a new style of presentation of results that may result in the wider dissemination of knowledge and a more inclusive appreciation of, and engagement with, our historic heritage. However, this is a new skill, and a number of minor inconsistencies in this report suggests that perhaps archaeologists have not yet perfected this summary style of presentation.

First, there seems to be some inconsistency on the level of detail being presented. For example, descriptions of the detailed methodology of radiocarbon analysis and calibration (which is repeated almost verbatim in chapters 2 and 5) may not

be of great interest to anybody but a (small) audience of specialists. Similarly, some finds catalogues offer the provenance of an object to a specific context, but this is sometimes not cross-referenced with the site description. Thus we are told of a flint core that came from context (35) at Hereson School, but nowhere is the reader told what context (35) is. It is perhaps a missed opportunity that the detailed stratigraphic and specialist reports that no doubt underpin this published account have not been made available on-line (or if they have, no mention of them is made in this report). This would have meant that such technical information would be available to those few specialists who needed it, allowing the authors of the present volume to focus on results. Secondly, and perhaps relatedly, the brevity of the text sometimes means that discussion and interpretation are underdeveloped; for example, it is baldly stated that the Late Bronze Age enclosure ditch at Manston Road 'held some special or ritual purpose' with no explanation why this should be so.

But these are minor irritations in well-presented report that offers a modest yet important contribution to our knowledge of the archaeology of Thanet.

PETER CLARK

¹ Southport Group, 2011, *Realising the benefits of planning-led investigation in the historic environment: a framework for delivery*, London.

Living by the Creek. Excavations at Kemsley near Sittingbourne, Kent. By G. Dawkes. 76pp., 49 figs, 14 tables. SpoilHeap Occasional Paper 10, Lavenham Press, 2019. Paperback, £10.00. ISBN 978-1912331116.

This volume provides another addition to the archaeology of the Swale region, furthering our still developing understanding of the area. Funded by Kent County Council, a team from Archaeology South-East undertook three phases of work on a site that lay on London Clay formation capped by Head deposits and Alluvium. Activity demonstrating landscape use from the Neolithic to Roman periods was identified though, as has been noted across much of north Kent, there is an apparent hiatus in activity between the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age.

As indicated in the preface the most significant periods archaeologically were the middle Bronze Age and Romano-British. The former period contained a ring-ditch with central cremation, probably associated with the nearby settlement at Kemsley Down. The Roman activity included four cremation burials, with several post-holes representing potential markers. Perhaps of greater significance was a saltern which is of particular interest as it represents one of only a few examples in the Thames Estuary region that have been subject to modern excavation techniques.

Overall, the volume is nicely designed and well written, consisting of four chapters with good use of figures and plates. The results are contained in chapter 2 with finds and environmental data incorporated where relevant and providing interesting detail without overwhelming the reader. A discussion is provided at the end of the descriptive text for each period, with a more overarching synthesis presented in chapter 4.

Specialist analyses are presented in chapter 3 with interesting sections on the

pottery, human remains, plant remains and geo-archaeological aspects. As is often the case, the sections on geoarchaeology/landscape characterisation and soil micromorphology are welcome inclusions but are in places quite complicated.

The discussion chapter places the site in its local context, providing a brief overview of settlement in the lower lying areas of the Swale/Sittingbourne district. Of particular note is the section on salt-working activity and how this potentially related to nearby villas, or whether it was under imperial jurisdiction. As the author notes, at present this question cannot easily be answered, but it seems likely that the villa estates must have had some sort of role given their close proximity to the marsh.

This slimline volume is another positive contribution to local archaeology from the commercial sector. It provides user-friendly research material and it is welcome that the production of such volumes continues.

JAMES HOLMAN

Culture and Society at Lullingstone Roman Villa. By Caroline K. Mackenzie. 64 pp. Archaeopress, 2019. Paperback £14.99. ISBN 978-1-78969-290-7; ISBN 978-1-78969-291-4 (e-Pdf)

Kent has evidence for many Roman villas although, as in other areas of Britain, these are remarkably poorly understood. Some remain un- or only partially excavated while many of those that have been unearthed were found long before modern standards of excavation and recording. Moreover, the general tendency to regard Roman villas as an unproblematic class of rural elite dwelling (the foci of agricultural estates) inhibits further analysis. Modern scholarship has, in fact, started to interrogate the evidence in different ways and here Caroline Mackenzie seeks to apply some of these techniques to Kent's best-known example.

In this concise, attractive and well-illustrated volume the author uses two perspectives to explore the ways in which Lullingstone's inhabitants used their dwelling as a means of creating and asserting their cultural and socio-economic identity. The first of these is the villa's landscape setting and the second the use of domestic space, both in the layout of the rooms and in their internal decoration, particularly the mosaics. The villa's location, terraced into the hill-slope, gave it a commanding view over the river valley and lands below and asserted the owner's right to tame the landscape. The position of the master, seated in his reception hall, contrasted with that of visitors, whose access was controlled and whose experience would vary from that of the petitioner, admitted only to the threshold, to that of the honoured guest at a *convivium* who would be able fully to appreciate the floor mosaics. These spoke of the owner's education and cultural aspirations. The erection of a temple-mausoleum and monumental granary reinforced the grandeur of the villa and its owner's wealth and position.

The author uses comparison with various other sites to place Lullingstone within a group of admittedly 'exceptional' grand and affluent villas. It is perhaps telling that these comparators are almost entirely from central southern/western England. There is much that is exceptional about Lullingstone, particularly in comparison to other villas in Kent: it has, for example, the only figurative 4th-century mosaics known in the county.

A volume of this size, specific in its aims, can only begin to address the many questions that we might ask about culture and society at this, or indeed any other Roman villa, and this stimulating approach raises many more in the mind of this commentator. This accessible study complements the original site report of Col. Meates (published by the KAS) and can be recommended to the general reader who wants to understand how modern scholarship approaches such issues; being based on the author's M.A. dissertation, it is fully referenced and should be read by any scholars interested in the site and of the nature of Kent in the late Roman period.

ELIZABETH BLANNING

Twelfth-Century Sculptural Finds at Canterbury Cathedral and the Cult of Thomas Becket. By Carolyn Marino Malone. xiii + 265 pp., 304 illustrations and figures. Oxbow books, 2019. Hardback, £55.00. ISBN: 9781789252309.

This book is an important addition to the literature on the medieval history of Canterbury Cathedral, whether or not one agrees with all the author's conclusions. It is a comprehensive study of a collection of late twelfth-century limestone sculptures which were later re-used as filling stones after the demolition of the structures on which they were originally installed, and which were only rediscovered in recent times. Nearly all were found in the vaults and walls of the west walk of the Great Cloister during renovation work between about 1968 and 1973. They had been there since the cloister was rebuilt by Prior Chillenden in the 1390s, when presumably they became available as products of his masons' demolition of the previous cloister or of other buildings nearby as the huge project of constructing the new nave proceeded. The extant corpus consists of 'four intact quatrefoils, ten roundels, three segments of statues, and twenty-three architectural fragments', all related in style despite some differences, and attributed to the same date. Some, especially the relief figures in the five quatrefoils (one came to light as early as the eighteenth century from a different context) and the roundels are of the highest quality, and have been discussed as such by art historians including Jean Bony, George Zarnecki and Deborah Kahn since their rediscovery, though with no agreement on their original provenance or function. The author herself first became aware of the discoveries at an early stage of her career, in 1970, and 'returned many times' to photograph them and study them as further finds emerged to 1973, but only 'returned to the Canterbury project in earnest' in 2011. All this is lucidly set out in her Introduction and first chapter, along with a very fair account of earlier research and acknowledgements of assistance from other scholars, in Canterbury and elsewhere. Here then is an essential value of this book: its Part II (pp. 165-252) comprises for the first time a full descriptive catalogue of the objects, with photographs, and all available information about their original find spots and present locations. This is the more important because 'at least fifteen' of the itemised fragments have been lost since 1973 and the rest are currently stored at a variety of places in the Cathedral precincts or in its masons' yard, and hard to access even for research. The author's claim that her catalogue 'is essential to any future study' is therefore undeniable.

But as she also says, since the 1970s 'many interpretations have been offered'

for the original use of the sculptures but none of them ‘correspond to my own hypotheses’. Malone’s interpretation is now set out in her Part I: Screens and the Cult of St Thomas. How compelling is it? Negatively, she rejects the view of art historians up to Deborah Kahn in 1991 that the sculpture came from a choir screen (of *c.*1180?) along the eastern side of the crossing, because that screen was replaced in two operations *c.*1300 and *c.*1440, neither of which would have provided material for re-use in the 1390s. The more recent proposal of Jeffrey West (1997, 2013) and Peter Fergusson (2011) that the finds came from the earlier cloister, and specifically from the *lavatorium* attached to its north walk shown on the famous ‘waterworks plan’ of *c.*1160, is also rejected, largely because many of the sculptures are too unweathered to have been exposed in external settings, though this is not entirely conclusive. Instead she attributes them to screens constructed across the south-west transept and on the western and southern sides of the crossing in the early 1170s, the very first years of the Becket pilgrimage cult, just before or after the papal decree of canonisation in February 1173. Their role, linked to the construction of a tunnel under the crossing giving access to the crypt (precursor of the present fifteenth-century one), was to create a manageable circulation system for pilgrims between Becket’s tomb and the martyrdom, screening it off (literally) from the monks’ access to their cloister and choir. Hypothetical reconstruction of these screens also serves as the basis for discussion of the meaning and iconography of the sculptures, notably the two portrayals of kings and two of prophets among the quatrefoils, and the intriguing heads of ‘lions, demons, Jew and a pagan’ among the roundels. Theological links are made with works attributed to Odo, prior of Christ Church 1168-75, who must have played a key role as patron of the building operations if Malone’s date is accepted.

At the least this is a rich and debatable interpretation, which demands much fuller discussion than can be given here, so what follows is just a series of queries and observations. First, her theory requires an extremely precise stylistic attribution for the sculpture, later than Prior Wibert’s work of the 1160s but earlier than the rebuilding which followed the fire of September 1174 – she repeatedly uses the phrase ‘around 1173’ but in fact there is very little margin for disagreement. Second there is an inevitable circular element to her contextual analysis – the pressure of early pilgrimage means screens must have been built, the ‘fact’ that screens were built in turn throws new and ‘previously ignored’ light on early pilgrimage. The possibility that more improvised structures were used to control space in this initial period rather than carved stone ones is not really considered. Doubts might also be raised about just how feasible it was for the Christ Church community to have carried through such an elaborate campaign during the confusion and uncertainties of the early 1170s, despite claims that ‘the screens could have been finished quickly’ and ‘construction of the tunnel and crossing stairs was not a complicated process’. Finally an analysis of verb tenses in Gervase of Canterbury’s celebrated later account of the rebuilding after the 1174 fire is far from conclusive as a way of providing answers about what was there just before it. To say this is only to suggest that other interpretations remain possible, and anyone who proposes them will have learnt much from this book. But one of the author’s views that should command general acceptance is her hope that ‘an exhibition area for this exceptional sculpture’ might be created in Canterbury.

RICHARD EALES

Adventure in Iron: the blast furnace and its spread from Namur to northern France, England and North America, 1450-1650: a technological, political and genealogical investigation. By B. Awty. Edited by J. Hodgkinson and C. Whittick. xviii + 977 pp., 37 b/w figures and maps. Wealden Iron Research Group, 2019. Two vols. Hardback. Contact books@hodgers.com, or write to The Editors, Adventure in Iron, 3 Saxon Road, Worth, Crawley, UK, RH10 7SA. ISBN 978-1-9160423-0-8.

The production of these two comprehensive volumes, supported by the Allen Grove Fund, is a tour de force by the editors, reflecting their respect and admiration of the work of research done by the late Brian Awty. Most historians of Kent will have a rudimentary knowledge and understanding of the importance of the Wealden iron industry in the late middle ages and early modern period, and perhaps a smaller number will understand the specifics of the technology and economic framework within which it functioned. But this fully contextualised study is to be welcomed as an accessible resource clarifying the international nature of the capital, skills, trades, and migrations involved in the technological innovation in early modern Europe and its later transmission, via the Weald of Kent and Sussex to North America. The manuscript, in a diversity of forms, was originally completed in the early 1990s, but was not considered a commercial prospect by publishers. As a member of the Wealden Iron Research Group, Awty made his material available to researchers, including genealogists and its importance encouraged the editors, under the auspices of the Research Group and with some generous private funding, to bring all the material together and prepare it for publication.

The first volume is principally an historical study of the ironworks on the near Continent, particularly the beginnings in Namur and the Burgundian territories leading to full-scale establishment in Normandy-Beauvaisis, and the Pays de Bray, where iron had been worked since the early thirteenth century. The industry continued until its decline in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, when iron makers and workers migrated to the Kent and Sussex Weald as local wood supplies for charcoal dwindled and rents began to be raised. Awty suggests that some of the forge masters might also have lost some of the technical expertise handed down through the generations and lost to the Weald where the industry was better placed to invest in new developments. This European context to the development of the Wealden iron industry inevitably leads the reader to appreciate the importance of the relations between Normandy and England throughout the medieval period, and therefore the story of the French forges is an integral part of the expansion into Kent and Sussex.

Awty's study starts with the transition in the later middle ages from the centuries old bloomery direct process of iron smelting to the development of the water-powered (hydraulic) bellows for casting iron for the increasing demand for firearms and cannons. The development of water-powered smelting throughout parts of Europe (Italy, Sweden and Germany) and particularly in Namur was well-established by 1400 and this is where Awty's in-depth study of the industry really begins, interwoven with the complex European politics involving the newly dominant Burgundian state, in alliance with England, and the second half of the Hundred Years' War between England and France. It was in French-speaking Burgundian Namur that the expansion really took off in the fifteenth century with

the introduction of the finery hammer process. It is noted that the development of ironworks tended to be in politically unstable areas as the close links with military activity was its bedrock. But Awty tempers this by ascribing the first Walloon migration to the Weald in the 1490s to the wish to leave danger areas, in the same way as ironmaking moved further north in France and into the German Ardennes.

The core of the two volumes is, however, the genealogical study of the iron makers and their workers with a short chapter once again setting the historical context at the beginning of volume two. Awty draws together the evidence for movement from northern France to the Weald with comparison of family names, speculating for example on the possible translation of the name 'Hue', to 'Huet' to 'Huget', and thence to 'Hewgate' or 'Hugget', within a time frame and geographical context in the first half of the sixteenth century, that apparently supports his hypothesis. After a very detailed and immaculately researched, study of the families in the French ironworking industry the trend for influential families moving to the Weald was soon supported by seasonal workers looking for greater job security and a new life. This study of the Wealden migrations, settlements and families from the end of the fifteenth into the seventeenth century is probably best used as a gazetteer based on the comprehensive indexes at the end of volume two: of Places and Subjects; and of Personal Names. While the whole industry, along with many of the family names, became Anglicised, there is throughout a continuation of identifiable French names and influence. Awty's detailed research into determining the progress of family and industry wide links, paints a clear picture of the social, economic, cultural and political infrastructures within which the iron makers, foundry owners and workers lived. The final chapter deals with the migrations and transmission of ironmaking technology and skills to North America, as well as looking briefly at the evidence for the later seventeenth century and the more diverse activities of some of the migrants. In both the final chapter and the appendices, there is yet more background information to enhance the overall complex picture of those involved at all levels in the iron industry.

In the current world of publishing, there could be a good case for arguing that such a comprehensive resource should be available online and in future this could perhaps happen, but there is also a lot to be welcomed in having everything easily accessible in two well-indexed volumes, rather than a website with an almost unmanageable complexity of links.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

Tudor Sandwich: A Social History. By T.L. Richardson. 24 pp. Sandwich Local History Society, 2019. Paperback, £2.50 + £2.00 p&p, from the Society, The Chanter's House, 11 Strand Street, Sandwich CT13 9DX, email: jacuilinling@aol.com. ISBN9542424-7-5.

It is always a pleasure to receive one of T.L. Richardson's Sandwich booklets and this one does not disappoint. In just twenty-four short pages a fascinating picture of life in Tudor Sandwich is painted and carefully set within the context of the consequences of the silting up of the Stour at the end of the fifteenth century: the drop in the town's population, the transition to a more coastal and near-Continental

trade, smaller ships unloading at sea, the mid-sixteenth century arrival of the Dutch ‘strangers’ and the new cloth industry. Richardson takes as his main theme the links between the public enjoyment of visiting entertainment troupes, blood sports and a ‘propensity for lawless behaviour of all kinds’ by the townsfolk and the mayor and jurats’ response to petty theft, to murder and all shades of crime in between. This led to a very violent time on the streets of Sandwich, particularly when fairs were taking place, and resulted in punishments made to fit the crime, the worst offences resulting in many executions. For the more minor offences Richardson describes often very unpleasant retribution including seven years’ banishment for having an ‘evil disposition’ or the humiliation of walking around the town with a wooden mortar, which seems to have been a common punishment for women who disturbed the public peace. The wide range of petty and more serious crimes were added to by the crews of the ships and their propensity for ‘prostitution and fornication’ to the extent that the authorities founded a brothel in 1473 in St Clement’s parish which only partially addressed the problem.

The entertainments which the townsfolk enjoyed were no doubt contributory to the riotous behaviour, bearbaiting as an example of the viciousness of a period which Richardson sees as cruel and violent and indifferent to the suffering of man or animals. These activities were often encouraged and patronised by all strata of society from the monarchy downwards, with bearbaiting given special privileges and support by the mayor and jurats. The picture does however become a little more sedate with some of the strolling players and minstrels, as many of their entertainments fitted in with the festivals of the church year. Performers were drawn from locals and from the wider regions of east Kent and the troupes often toured beyond Kent to East Sussex and Essex. The minstrels had an additional role in the sea trade as they would walk around the town at night playing their instruments and shouting out a rudimentary weather forecast for the ships.

This concise study displays all Richardson’s usual comprehensive research and full involvement in his subject and in conclusion he argues that the vibrant small town of Sandwich was able to forestall the decline of the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with a shift in its economy and the contribution of the ‘strangers’ making the Tudor age a period of prosperity – and crime.

Minnis Memories and More. Edited by Ros Shefford. viii + 88 pp., b/w and colour photographs throughout. Canterley Publishing, 2019. Paperback £10.00 + £2.00 p&p from Stelling Minnis and Upper Hardres History Group, email: rosalindshefford@gmail.com. ISBN 978-1-9-9164981-2-9.

This second volume of memories of Stelling Minnis, Bossingham, Upper Hardres and Wheelbarrow Town, the villages of the ‘Minnis’, compiled with support from the Allen Grove Fund, is a well-produced volume with a fine mix of topics for those interested in this varied and in many respects unusual part of rural Kent, set in the North Downs. Beginning with the anachronistic Minnis Common, the most well-known feature to outsiders, David McDine perfectly sets the scene exploring its status as a private estate owned by the Trustees of the estate of the last Lord of the Manor (Lord Tomlin), and explains that ‘technically, the Tomlin Trustees continue

to be Lords of the Manor'. For those who have got lost on the Minnis, and there are many, Robert Veltman's footpath section builds on McDine's contribution as he describes his researches, both walking and documentary, to clarify the evolving history of the Minnis and its public rights of way. After a brief consideration of the lepidoptera by Jacqui Smith, a number of local residents have contributed to the core sections which deal with some of the more notable buildings, churches, farms, schools and of course the easily recognisable windmill, and their contributions to the villages' social, economic and cultural life.

The second half of this well-illustrated study, is the 'memory' part of the volume with local people providing their own impressions of their environment with an understanding only possible from those immersed within it, a mixture of personal and reported memories of people, places and events. The final few sections return to an eclectic mix of places and amenities as they have developed over the past hundred years or so, including a history of the telephone service as well as clubs and societies and contemporary businesses. Ros Shefford has succeeded in bringing all the contributions from a wide range of local people smoothly together into a comprehensive picture of a twenty-first century rural area in Kent, with the support of high-quality photographs and reproductions. For those who have managed to find their way across the Minnis and located St Mary's Church in the fields near Bossingham, this little volume will broaden their understanding of the area considerably.