

REVIEWS

Prehistoric Ebbsfleet. Excavations and Research in Advance of High Speed 1 and South Thameside Development Route 4, 1989-2003. By Francis Wenban-Smith, Elizabeth Stafford, Martin Bates and Simon Parfitt. Oxford Wessex Archaeology Monograph, 7. 480 pp. 2020, Oxford and Salisbury. Hardback, £30.00. ISBN: 9780957467200.

This is the last volume of a series of reports by Oxford Wessex Archaeology (OWA) dealing with the archaeology of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (now known as High Speed 1). This volume focuses on landscape development and human occupation from the Palaeolithic to the Early Iron Age, a period spanning some 300,000 years. It brings together the results of an immense campaign of archaeological work in the Ebbsfleet Valley (roughly centred on what is now Ebbsfleet International Railway Station) between 1989 and 2003. The data was derived from a huge number of archaeological interventions of various types: geophysics, boreholes, test pits, trial trenches and open area excavation. The scale of these operations is reflected in the size of this handsome and well-produced report, running to 451 pages, 192 figures (mostly in colour), 48 plates and 172 tables, along with an index to supplementary material on the OWA website listing twenty-three appendices, 72 additional figures and 134 further tables – a substantial body of work indeed.

The book consists of twenty-three chapters divided into four sections. The first section ‘Introduction and Background’ is self-explanatory, but it includes a fascinating and immensely useful account on antiquarian and archaeological work in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the area, mostly focussing on the internationally important Palaeolithic remains first revealed by chalk quarrying in the 1870s. The second section, ‘Landscape and Environment’ is the substantive heart of the volume. To bring some structure to the mass of interventions across the study area, it has been divided into eleven spatial zones, each with a separate chapter describing the various fieldwork operations in each zone and providing a synthesis of the results. Thus in each chapter the various interventions are discussed, first describing the stratigraphic sequence (here termed the ‘lithological succession’) and detailing, as appropriate, the micromorphology, animal bone, pollen, diatoms, molluscs, ostracods, foraminifera, waterlogged plant remains, and dating evidence, including radiocarbon dating, optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) dating and amino acid dating. The authors are to be congratulated for integrating the results of earlier nineteenth- and twentieth-century investigations with the more recent studies as best they can. The focus here is clearly the changing environmental history of the area; there is little mention of human occupation beyond the dating of some stratigraphic features presumably by artefact assemblages. The section ends with an overview pulling all the evidence together. It appears that some point early in Marine Isotope Stage 11 (MIS 11: traditionally known as the ‘Hoxnian

Stage', around 400,000 years ago), for reasons that are not yet understood, there was a massive slide of clay-rich sediments into the Ebbsfleet Valley, effectively plugging the western branch of the river. This, along with subsequent developments, created a relatively quiet backwater embayment of the Ebbsfleet which became a 'sump' in the landscape in which deposits accumulated from thereon in, which goes some way to explain why the Ebbsfleet Valley is so rich in Palaeolithic and later archaeological material. Four major post-MIS 11 Phases are then identified, describing the development of the landscape up until the relatively modern period.

The third section, 'Occupation and Activity' switches the focus to evidence for human activity in the changing landscape described in the preceding section. It begins with three chapters re-assessing the Palaeolithic artefacts recovered from early twentieth-century investigations as well as presenting the new Lower/Middle Palaeolithic material from the High Speed 1 investigations. There then follows a series of chapters on the Final Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, and finally the Middle Bronze Age to Iron Age. This evidence is relatively modest, but the close correlation of this data with the dynamic landscape model presented in section 2 has allowed the authors to produce some stimulating and important discussion of the material.

Overall, this volume is a splendid achievement. The results of an enormous and complex fieldwork project have been structured in a clear, logical way that allows the reader to follow the arguments and interpretations being made with some confidence. It is an important contribution to the archaeology of south-east England and a testament to what can be achieved by good archaeological planning in large-scale infrastructure projects. However, it is not for the faint-hearted; it is a complex, data-rich account with a bewildering number of individual interventions to keep track of. That being said, the prose style throughout is refreshingly clear and unambiguous, and relatively free of unnecessary jargon. There are a few spelling mistakes/typos (probably inevitable in a volume of the size), but overall the standard of editing is high (a welcome improvement on some other Joint Venture volumes that have appeared in recent years). The figures are superb. So well done to all concerned; let us hope there remains a budget to produce a slimmer version more digestible to the average reader!

PETER CLARK

Ceremonial Living in the Third Millennium BC: Excavations at Ringlemere Site M1, Kent, 2002-2006. By Keith Parfitt and Stuart Needham. British Museum Press, 342 pp. British Museum Research Publication 217, 128 figures, 46 plates, 73 tables. 2020 Softback, £40.00. ISBN 978-0861592173.

This substantial volume reports investigations by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust and the British Museum at Ringlemere, site of the discovery in 2001 of the famous gold cup. Intermittent excavations from 2002 to 2006 together with surveys of the surrounding area revealed a complex of nine almost completely ploughed-out circular barrows surrounded by penannular ditches. The book focuses on the excavation of M1, the central and most imposing monument of the complex – about 50m in diameter but barely visible with a rise of no more than

30cm in a 9.5ha field. Six chapters include a detailed introduction of the site's context and excavation methods, pre-barrow finds, the construction and use phases of the monument, the post-mound phases, the numerous finds, environmental and dating evidence and the site's chronological sequence. The final chapter deals with ceremonial living in the Third Millennium BC.

The lower layers of the barrow mound are well preserved and have protected the paleosol and underlying features, which predate the monument, from heavy ploughing. The interior space of the circular ditch is well preserved and comprises 250 features, including pits, post holes, stake holes, three hearths and two possible graves. Pottery and radiocarbon analysis date these to the Late Neolithic or the Chalcolithic/Early Bronze Age. Sixteen post holes in a horseshoe arrangement are interpreted as a henge-type enclosure. Grooved ware pottery was found at the centre of the enclosure, in two L-shaped slots which could form the base of a small timber structure (the cove) and in three sub-rectangular hearths located to the south and west of the enclosure. Other pits which contained Beaker-type pottery, including three complete vessels, seem to be of a later date. One of the pits in the central enclosure was the original location of the gold cup.

The authors suggest that there are several construction phases involving the mound and its penannular ditch. There is evidence that a later, larger ditch was re-dug when the internal mound was built with a narrow break (just over 2m wide) to the north-west to provide easy access to the central area. The ditch shows varying states of preservation, different sections varying from 2.5-6m deep and from 0.75-1.5m wide. The 24 cross sections and a longitudinal section attest to an earlier and probably shallower ditch still visible to the north-west and to the south of the main ditch while the fill sequence suggests an outer bank located a short distance away from the edge of the ditch. The mound itself, which could have been 3m in height, has two distinct sections – a contained inner core made from turf and an outer clay mound that could have extended to the inner edge of the ditch. The turf and clay used in the mound's construction would have been stripped from an area outside the bank creating a broad shallow quarried area which probably accentuated the height of the monument.

There are few artefacts from the ditch fill or from the base of the mound to provide reliable dating for the monument. The fill of the ditch and in particular the lower layers were sterile. Otherwise about one hundred Grooved ware pottery sherds, a Beaker-type sherd and several thousand struck and burnt flint from Early Bronze Age haphazard hard-hammer flaking provide clues.

An Anglo-Saxon cemetery of over sixty inhumations at the base of the western and southern slopes of the mound attests to the monument's visibility over two millennia. Other later features cut into the mound including a seventh-century sunken building on its north side as well as a three-sided enclosure ditch dating to the twelfth century.

Chapter 5 (over 120 pages) deals with the finds and environmental and dating evidence from the site. The finds are described by material type commencing with struck flint from both early and later mounds, worked stone artefacts, pottery and amber fragments and the Ringlemere gold cup. Illustrations of the artefacts, including drawings and photos, and tables cataloguing raw data tend to impede the narrative and could have been included at the end of the book.

The flint collection dating to the pre-mound (Mesolithic, Earlier Neolithic, Later Neolithic) and mound phases (Bronze Age) is described in detail with a particularly interesting discussion on the characteristics of each lithic industry.

The fragmented and abraded nature of the Grooved ware pottery, which comprises two thousand sherds, indicates that all the material was re-deposited. The study therefore focuses on stylistic comparisons with larger assemblages from across the Thames Estuary, notably from Lion Point, Clacton. With the exception of four partial or complete vessels found on site, the Beaker pottery, comprising only 200 sherds, is also fragmented but can be dated to after 2250 BC, corresponding to Needham's post-Fission phase.

A study of charred plant remains highlights the substantial concentrations of hazelnut fragments around the hearths, which could indicate feasting activities. Other plant remains are scarce with small amounts of emmer and barley found in Grooved ware contexts.

Radiocarbon analysis, OSL and archaeomagnetic dating of the hearths provide supplementary data for the site sequence, which is divided into nine phases from the Mesolithic and Early Neolithic to the post-medieval agricultural period. The authors suggest a primary monument phase dating to the Late Neolithic with the horseshoe arrangement enclosing an area of hearths, post holes and pits before being replaced by a ditch enclosing a much larger area with a succession of different features including the cove timber structure. During the early Bronze Age, the ditch was re-cut, an outer bank added and a turf and clay mound constructed to completely cover the enclosed area.

In the final chapter, Needham considers the structural and material evidence from the site which might point to a Late Neolithic ceremonial function. The evidence for and against this interpretation is meticulously analysed over thirty pages, using for comparison data from other Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age sites in the British Isles with similar features and artefacts. He emphasises that Ringlemere is a site designed for the living and not for the dead but resists the temptation to define the monument as having a uniquely ceremonial as opposed to domestic function. He prefers a more comprehensive approach favouring interaction between both ritual and daily activities 'in intimate association and in varied combinations' as implied by the book's title: *Ceremonial Living*.

REBECCA PEAKE

Medieval New Romney a Town Shaped by Water: The archaeology of the First Time Sewer Scheme. By James Holman, and Enid Allison, Luke Barber, Sharon Clough, Adrian Gollop, Lisa Lay, Alison Locker, Louise Loe, Susan Jones and Sheila Sweetinburgh. xiv + 156 pp. Canterbury Archaeological Trust, Occas. Paper No 12, 2020. Paperback, £25.00. ISBN 978-1-870545-35-8.

This well-produced short book extends a succession of studies of Romney Marsh, its settlement and the surrounding towns, which began with four wide-ranging volumes of papers sponsored by the Romney Marsh Research Trust (1988-2002) and also includes important books on New Winchelsea (2004), the Lydd area (2008) and Rye (2009). All contain varying combinations of historical and archaeological

research, and all benefit from inter-disciplinary approaches. Taken together with several more general surveys, and a growing article literature, this constitutes one of one of the most notable additions to our knowledge of medieval south-east England in the last thirty years.

But the specific comparison here is with the earlier study of New Romney itself: *The Sea and the Marsh: The Medieval Cinque Port of New Romney* by Gillian Draper and Frank Meddens (2009). The two books have much in common. Both resulted from excavations paid for by developers: Sainsbury's for *The Sea and the Marsh*, Southern Water for *Medieval New Romney*, though it should be noted the publication itself was funded by Kent County Council. Both use the archaeological opportunities provided, albeit necessarily constrained by development schemes, to produce wider studies of the medieval town, incorporating earlier topographical work and a great deal of documentary research. There are though significant differences in the excavation data available to each project. *The Sea and the Marsh* utilised a reasonably large coherent site for investigation in 2001 and report (the Southlands School site in the east of the town) though only about six per cent of it was available for open area excavation; conclusions otherwise were drawn from foundation and drainage pits and a few exploratory trenches. *Medieval New Romney* by contrast drew on a mains drainage scheme which involved work in almost every part of the town. The figures are impressive; first boreholes, then thirteen evaluation trenches in 2004, followed by an extended watching brief 2005-2007 in which about 7.3km of trenching was monitored and 8,000 contexts recorded, some 1,500 of archaeological interest. While rightly emphasizing the scale of the information obtained, and its unusually wide distribution, Holman is also clear about the limitations of the process: most examination was cursory, dating evidence was rarely present, and only thirty-three sites were 'subject to more detailed stratigraphic analysis' and two to full stripped excavation (one south-west of the urban core and the other on St Martin's Field, site of the now vanished St Martin's church and its graveyard). The wider contextual analysis which accompanies the archaeological findings makes frequent reference to Draper and Meddens and their fuller documentary reconstruction, and in general does not dispute their conclusions, such as the key argument that the developed plan of New Romney was not that of an unusually early ('before 960') planted new town as argued by Beresford in 1967, and repeated by others, but rather the product of later organic growth from the twelfth century onwards.

It might then be asked in what ways Holman and his co-authors have added to what is known about medieval New Romney? The question could be fairly answered by referring to a lot of specific new points, not all of which can be discussed here, but one broader theme might be picked out. The sheer scale and range of their evidence, however limited most of the individual observations, makes it possible to confirm theories or conclusions with greater confidence. Thus the 'almost complete absence of Anglo-Saxon or early medieval pottery' across the town, in contrast to Lydd and other sites, makes it hard now to argue that there was much activity there before the twelfth century. The 'beach track' proposed by Draper and Meddens as the origin of the plan of New Romney (the line of the Old High Street) is identified on the ground with an early hollow way, which 'does indeed appear to form the earliest identifiable route in the town' and is called 'undoubtedly the most

important discovery made during the project'. It leads to more scepticism than was shown by Draper and Meddens about early borough settlement within New Romney, specifically the location of the mint from c.997 or the 156 burgesses at *Romenel* recorded in Domesday Book. But even if New Romney at these dates is seen as a (seasonal?) fishing settlement on a shingle bank, Holman *et al.* recognise that there are equally problems in locating all the early documented activity around St Clement's Church in present Old Romney instead, and so fall back on the idea of 'a third as yet unidentified location' or a *Romenel* of more scattered foci before the emergence of New Romney as the dominant urban centre by c.1150, not unlike the provisional conclusion of the earlier study. Similarly, the growth of New Romney in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is described here along the lines of earlier reconstructions, but with much new evidence and detail. Excavation on St Martin's Field especially (the most extensive of the 2004 campaign) produced a wealth of information about the economy and living conditions of the town: forty graves were excavated and almost 6,400 individual fish bones recovered, a huge increase in the data base for studying this crucial industry. Much the same might be said of the setback which followed storm damage in the late thirteenth century and subsequent late medieval decline. The Southlands School excavation was particularly well placed to preserve and exploit vivid evidence of damage attributed to the great storm of 1287 along the vulnerable southern foreshore, but the 2004-2007 observations demonstrate equally vividly exactly how far the tidal surge penetrated the town, with widespread silt deposits up to 4m OD, 2m above the general high tide level.

Overall, the book is clearly written and well edited, with high-quality illustration, except for some of the maps: small reference plans of the town being well-designed but hard to read because of low-resolution printing, while conversely regional maps do not attempt much precision. It is not made clear why Old Romney is placed on the northern shore of the Rother outflow in the map on page 16, rather than to the south as in other recent reconstructions. Page 19 states that there were twenty-five burgesses of the archbishop in *Romenel* according to Domesday Book when it should be eighty-five (*Domesday Monachorum* has twenty-five), before giving population estimates which are clearly based on the higher figure. But such slips are few. Holman's introduction fairly states the strengths as well as the limitations of the research programme, and the same can be said of his constructive suggestions for future work in the conclusion. Taking this study alongside previous ones, he is quite justified in the claim that now 'New Romney is one of the most thoroughly investigated small towns in the south-east of England'.

RICHARD EALES

The Great Tower of Dover Castle – History, Architecture and Context. Edited by Paul Pattison, Stephen Brindle and David M. Robinson. 328pp. Liverpool University Press, 2020. Hardback, £35.00 ISBN 978-1-78962-243-0 cased.

Dover Castle is a remarkable monument, a fortress that has dominated the port of Dover from the eastern cliff above the Dour valley and guarded the shortest crossing point to the continent for centuries. At its heart stands one of the last of the great

tower keeps to be constructed, built at enormous expense for Henry II during the 1180s. There have been many attempts to explain and interpret the castle and its origins, some more and some less successful than others. The decision by English Heritage to concentrate their resources on the keep and on the work of Henry II was, at least to the reviewer, a surprise – but a very welcome one. As one of those fortunate people who attended the conference discussing the proposal to display the Great Tower as an Angevin stronghold and your reviewer has been waiting for this volume with anticipation ever since. It does not disappoint – indeed it is perhaps better for the interval. Some of the more controversial ideas have been modified in the execution of the project, and in the writing of the various chapters for this volume, and what we are left with is a model of how things ought to be: brave interpretation based on solid and sustained research. But it is important when reading this work that the purpose of the research, and the goal are kept in mind. That said, it goes well beyond the original brief and looks at the building across the whole of its history, setting it in the context of its time and place.

What impresses most is the range of specialists that has been brought together to turn their minds to the question of Henry II's Great Tower, its origins, purpose, the context in which it was constructed and its later history and use. It is therefore very difficult to pick out the star chapters here; they all shine, and they all provoke thought.

The first chapter, written by Paul Pattison, Steven Brindle and David Robinson, introduces the subject and takes the reader through the published sources setting out what is already known, or rather what we believe we already know, setting up the complex discussions that follow.

The core of the volume is the forensic analysis of the fabric by Kevin Booth and the excellent illustrations that accompany it. Using this work the authors have been able to associate much of the documentary evidence that has been amassed with specific building campaigns. However, this isn't his only contribution. Further work is published here about the design of the inner bailey, the two barbicans that relate to it and the beginnings of a discussion about the outer curtain to the east of the castle. This begins to shed light upon what preceded the work of Henry II. The inner bailey study is reinforced by the work of Tom Cromwell with a chapter on the archaeology that brings new information about the topography and building methods, and with a fine chapter by Allan Brodie on Arthur's Hall and the domestic buildings which brings forward previously unpublished and fascinating research.

The chapters by John Gillingham, Nicholas Vincent and Lindy Grant are of particular interest. John Gillingham looks in detail at why Henry II spent such a large sum on Dover Castle when in strategic terms Dover was of less consequence than other ports in the king's itinerary. His conclusion that the driver was the surprise state visit of King Louis VII of France and the pilgrimage route to Canterbury is as convincing as it is interesting, and it reminds us that the reasons for building castles are far more complex than simply defence, something of an enduring theme in this volume. This is amplified by Nicholas Vincent with his analysis of the various strands that interweave the medieval history of the castle with that of the town and its inhabitants, a great chapter that warrants a review of its own. Lindy Grant then looks at Henry II as a patron of architecture on both sides of the Channel. She reminds us that the Angevin empire that he ruled was

vast and that when considering the history of Dover we should always carefully consider the influence of our near neighbours just across the Channel.

Richard Eales's thoughtful chapter on the politics of Kent and its castles provided profound insights that had not struck this reviewer before, and quite rightly reminds us that regional studies are required to fully understand the reasons behind castle building. [See also *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXI (2020), 245-59.]

The chapter by the late Christopher Phillpotts supports the work of many of the other writers with an outline of the documentary evidence for the medieval construction work. But he takes us further by looking at how the building was used and breathing life into the documents through his analysis.

Steven Brindle and Philip Dixon look at the architecture of the Great Tower assessing its place in the family of such buildings across Britain and France. They investigate the intention of the design and how it might have been used to serve multiple functions, not least that of display and ceremony.

The more recent history of the tower is well served. Firstly, by Gordon Higgott, who examines in detail the alterations made from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, and then by Paul Pattison who looks at the history of the tower after it ceased to be a royal residence and became a prison, barrack and ordnance store and was turned into an artillery fortification at the heart of a remodelled castle. These too have much new information and challenge some of our existing views and authorities.

Jonathan Coad brings us back to topic with his comprehensive and thoughtful review of earlier interpretive and display approaches. He makes the very valid point that concentrating on just one period or event simply doesn't work for Dover Castle – its history is so complex and varied but, in this reviewer's opinion at least, these displays, and in particular this volume that supports and expands upon them, set the standard for those that will follow.

These displays, and the work that went into creating them, are dealt with in the final chapter, which could have been the subject of a volume itself. It reminds us again of the purpose of the research and makes a sound case for the decisions and compromises that had to be made to bring the Great Tower alive with colour and activity.

This is an extremely valuable addition to our understanding of Dover Castle. It is a book that will be turned to again and again, and it is to be hoped that other volumes might follow that answer at least some of the questions that remain.

JON IVESON

Great Cloister: A Lost Canterbury Tale. A History of the Canterbury Cloister, Constructed 1408-14, with Some Account of the Donors and their Coats of Arms. By Paul A. Fox. iv + 694 pp. (Archaeopress, 2020). Paperback £65, ePDF £16. ISBN 978-1-78969-331-7; ePDF 978-1-78969-332-4.

In the 1930s Messenger undertook the herculean task of discovering the original colours of the coats of arms in Canterbury Cathedral cloister which had become obscured by erosion, whitewashing and deliberate repainting (Commander A.W.B. Messenger, *The Heraldry of Canterbury Cathedral*, Vol. I. The Great

Cloister Vault, 1947). After fifteen years of analysis, this latest study has resulted in the first comprehensive and complete review of this monument ever undertaken, providing a detailed chronology as well as many new insights into the donor families. As Paul Fox remarks, the monument is revealed to have been the personal project of Archbishop Thomas Arundel (d.1414) who was closely connected with the overthrow of Richard II. The work as a whole provides considerable insights into the revolution of 1399 and the troubled reign of Henry IV as seen through the lens of individual families. After a chapter on the construction of the cloister and its date, it was intriguing to find that the cloister and the chapter house were severely damaged in an earthquake on 21 May 1382 and hence the need for a rebuild; the cathedral nave had been demolished prior to the earthquake in 1377. The cloister, as originally conceived, contained 856 heraldic shields, badges and devices of which 576 were unique. Some 365 families, principalities, religious foundations and other individuals, both real and imagined, were represented, some with more than one shield or device. More precisely, there were 252 families, 51 peerage families, 3 English royal families (Lancaster, York and Beaufort), 20 principalities, 12 religious foundations, 9 bishops, 7 saints, 3 heroes, 4 cities or towns, 2 priests, 1 monk and 1 for God himself (in the form of the Holy Trinity). The origins and evolution of each shield represented are considered in detail.

In chapter 2, Fox delves into a study of Thomas Arundel as Archbishop of Canterbury. He brings together much material on his life and times as the first archbishop of York to be translated to Canterbury. And it was Arundel who was the driving force behind Henry of Lancaster being placed on the throne in 1399. When Henry IV executed Arundel's friend and protégé Archbishop Richard Scrope of York for rebellion with the Percys it was fortunate for Henry that the Roman pope failed to punish this gross violation of ecclesiastical rights for fear that Henry would desert to the obedience of the rival pope at Avignon. Archbishop Arundel's arms, supported by three angels, is to be found in bay 9.

The next chapter concerns the cloister as a roll of arms. The bays commence with Bay 1 outside the door of the Martyrdom, to Bay 10 outside the Archbishop's Palace and run sequentially to Bay 36. This is depicted by an annotated plan of the bays and their dates. The curious changes of direction in the building works are revealed by this study and it is to be regretted that no manuscript material of Arundel's directions to the masons has survived.

The fourth chapter deals with the immense problems of the historical sources. Fox comments that, 'There are many examples of concordance between the sources, but there are also rather too many instances where the colours recorded are either manifestly wrong in terms of what the original colours must have been or are mutually contradictory'. He gives a few pages to illustrate the problem (the case studies are contained in eight pages). In the end many of these attributions are the result of new research, and are different from those previously published; not a few shields have been lost since 1500, while others have been incorrectly painted. There is an alphabetical list of shields and one arranged by bay and number.

Page 74 onwards, in alphabetical order, to the end of the volume, concerns the families and their coats of arms. These are very detailed accounts of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century activities of the family alliances. The first Kent family we meet is that of Aldon (12/31 and 28/35 – bay number and then position in bay as

given by Messenger). Sir Thomas d'Aldon held Hadlow Place in Crundale in the fourteenth century and it appears that Maud and Mary Aldon, who were still living in 1405 made a Canterbury benefaction on behalf of their father. The accounts of Cresell of Kent are followed by those of Crevequer and Crioll or Keriell of Kent. The volume provides three coloured coats of arms and a splendid pedigree for Keriell of Sarre and Westenhanger. Fox says that Sir John Keriell died in 1376 and his wife Lettice outlived him until 1408 and their son Sir Nicholas died in 1379. It would seem from a petition at the National Archives (SC 8/55/2713) Sir John Cornwaile robbed and brought misery to Lettice whilst she was resident in the Castle from time to time from 1378 to 1381. On this last occasion, 28 October 1381, he came to the castle to reduce it with armed men and scaling ladders and pursued Lettice into the castle moat where she remained in fear for four hours until she was as good as dead. And then believing that she was dead he took her horses and other goods and chattels worth £1,000. A little further in the volume is an account of Crouch of Kent. Fox records that Nicholas Crouch was a very prominent Canterbury citizen and the cloister version of the Crouch arms probably originated with him. There is an interesting, and well-illustrated, account of the Culpepper family from Kent which includes a detailed pedigree. Space is given to other Kent families such as Digge, Fremingham, Hardres, Hart, Isaac, Lese, Lucy, Manston, Mereworth, Oldcastle, Potyn, Ruxley, Sandwich, Savage, Shelving, Squire, Saint Nicholas, Twitham, Wangford and the Priors of Dover, Leeds and Abbey of Lesnes.

This is really a splendid volume for anyone interested in the fifteenth century and their family alliances. There are wonderful coloured coats of arms to bring the whole subject of heraldry to life. Definitely a book to have on the shelves for anyone interested either in the period, Kent or Canterbury Cathedral.

DUNCAN HARRINGTON

Kentish Book Culture: Writers, Archives, Libraries and Sociability 1400-1660. Edited by Claire Bartram. xiii + 296 pp. 12 b/w figures. Peter Lang, 2020. Hardback, £55. ISBN 78-1-78707-466-8; ePub 78-1-78707-468-2; ePDF 78-1-78707-467-5.

A much-anticipated volume of essays which does not disappoint. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, Claire Bartram has collected an expert group of the late medievalists and early modernists currently working in Kentish archives and libraries. Following current theories, the volume highlights the varied strands bringing together the written and printed word into the complex world of creating, publishing and maintaining religious and secular archives and libraries, civic records and personal accounts. Individual studies focus on different aspects of the culture of the county's literate society, but also offer the reader a nuanced understanding of the socio-economic and politico-religious cultures of the period. The volume is divided into two sections: 'Technical, Production, Archives and Libraries' and 'Literate Identities, Networks and Sociability' although there is an almost seamless transition between the two.

Meriel Connor introduces the reader to the somewhat rarified environment of the literate monks of late medieval Christ Church Priory Canterbury setting the

scene clearly and coherently for those unfamiliar with the Benedictine Rule and monastic life by demonstrating the importance of reading, thinking and writing for a variety of functions. Connor paints the picture of an almost idyllic ivory tower within which elite monks such as Prior Selling could study in relative privacy within a supportive structure and with strong links to Canterbury College, Oxford, and wider European study, bringing the ‘new learning’ and early Greek texts into their library and thought.

Sheila Sweetinburgh turns to the secular in a study of the mid fifteenth-century role and writings of John Serle, clerk to the civic administration of Sandwich. This analysis of a very different environment benefits from detailed researches into a range of texts recording the administration of the town which, as a member of the Cinque Ports, had a role outside the norm for a small town. As Sweetinburgh says, ‘the clerk’s role was pivotal and it was important that he had the requisite legal and administrative expertise’ as well as an understanding of the community as his records became part of the town’s social and historical record and memory. The creation of an archive, literate and accessible, with some interesting personal touches, was as important to the immediate successors of the writer/clerk as it still is to the researchers of today.

Claire Bartram explores a different kind of civic record through two books, ‘discourses’, on the political and civic process leading to the seventeenth-century renovation of Dover Harbour, written in various styles and forms. She examines the potential of ‘traditional socio-economic’ sources for the light they shed on the use of language revealing the personal focus of the writer, but also their sources, contexts and interests within the wider cultural experiences. Reginald Scot’s appointment by the gentry commissioners to oversee and report on the renovations, together with the complexity of communication in early modern society, demanded a commensurate standard of literate culture, while as a representative of the town the one-time mariner, John Tooke, served the civic authority as an ‘expert witness’ and needed similar skills, contacts and knowledge to chronicle the history of the harbour developments.

Lorraine Flisher provides the only brief insight into the Kentish culture beyond east Kent and the Cinque Ports with a fascinating account of the rise and fall of one William Rogers and his collection of medical books seen through the publication of a sermon preached at his funeral by the minister of Cranbrook, Robert Abbot. The events took place in the 1630s, a time of religious uncertainties, with a strong puritan presence in the Cranbrook area. Fisher evokes the social background of a privileged, educated, child of a Wealden clothier, who was not able or willing to conform to the strict morality expected of him. The power of Abbot to use all the available means of communication and publication to further the puritan cause is set within a wider discussion of literacy and book ownership in Cranbrook.

Back in east Kent Sheila Hingley considers the collection and loans from the library of Henry Oxinden of Barham (now held in Canterbury Cathedral Library) between 1648 and 1657. The two well annotated appendices listing the books and their borrowers are a treasure trove for bibliophiles. This chapter forms the bridge between the first section of the volume with its emphasis on the creation, publication, collection and use of written works, and the second half with its study of cultural networks.

The second section starts with a study of John Mychell's printing press in Canterbury in the early sixteenth century, one of the very few operating outside London. Stuart Palmer challenges the traditional views of the significance of the printing press during the religious tensions in the city between 1532 and 1556. Through an examination of the output of the printing press (with the full list in an appendix) and building on current theories, he argues that both Catholics and Protestants used the printed word to disseminate their ideas. After working originally under the patronage of St Augustine's Abbey, by 1536 Mychell was publishing Lutheran literature and continued to be a leading member of the cultural and political elite of Canterbury, serving as sheriff, alderman and mayor, but able, with impunity, to shift the balance of his output to avoid offending the Marian regime after 1554.

Both Gillian Draper on New Romney and Lydd and Jane Andrewes on Sandwich use the evidence of wills and those who were paid for their services in witnessing and drafting to illustrate the nature of a literate culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Considering dramatic and commemorative evidence in the early sixteenth century, Draper draws on the particular nature of the Cinque Ports to challenge some of the more commonplace assumptions about signing or marking as indicators of literacy, using the example of the bond committing actors 'to participate, learn and rehearse their parts' for the New Romney passion play in 1555, before looking also at testamentary and other indicators. Andrewes provides an in-depth study of the cultural and administrative literacy of the 'Dutch' immigrants in Sandwich (1561-1650) and their relations with the native population, operating in a parallel culture but gradually, of necessity, becoming more interactive. Careful case studies of individual probate scribes and translators show they also acted as appraisers and witnesses, having roles such as teachers within the immigrant community which laid great emphasis on education, demonstrated by high levels of literacy and book ownership.

In the final chapter we come full circle to another, mainly secular, literate cultural elite centred on Canterbury Cathedral library. Sarah Griffin and David Shaw consider the work of the Canterbury antiquary, William Somner and the contributions made by an impressive group of Kentish writers, thinkers and antiquarians (listed in the appendix) to his *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. The presence in this group of Dugdale and Twysden among others, gives a hint that this could be a starting point for expanding the study of literate society to the parts of Kent barely touched in this volume, as well as interaction with other cultural centres. It is satisfying to see how the cultural experience of engaging with archives and libraries has changed so little in over five hundred years. In addition to the useful appendices to several of the chapters, a full bibliography would have been very helpful.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

'Just a Bit Barmy'. The Princess Christian Farm Colony and Hospital 1895-1995. Chris Rowley. Leigh, 2018. xiv +202 pp. Illustrated. Paperback (£20.00 + £5.00 p+p from Mr Book, 142 High Street, Tonbridge, or Sevenoaks Bookshop). ISBN 978 0 9539340 4 1.

A good deal of recent historical research has been undertaken on official and private provision for the care and treatment of the mentally disabled. The focus has been mainly on the second half of the nineteenth century, the age when the great asylums were built, and the medical profession began to take a greater interest in mental illness. Chris Rowley's splendidly produced book looks in detail at a twentieth-century visionary 'farm colony' for what were termed the 'feeble-minded', founded on what became a 4,000 acre site at Hildenborough, near Tonbridge. Major figures in the early work of the 'colony' were Dr Reginald and Jane Langdon-Down, whose father, John, gave his name to 'Downs syndrome'.

This is an important study of a minor institution that extended its work to accommodate young women in 1916-17. Rowley was faced with daunting problems in writing the study. Take-over by the NHS in 1948, resulted in the loss of institutional records, and this history of the founding of the 'colony' and hospital, its buildings (early ones by Clough Williams-Ellis) and their maintenance, the staff, inmates, duties, achievements, and failures, is due to the author's curiosity, tenacity, and intellectual skill in using marginal sources, gathering oral evidence, and analysing them. The many photographs, maps and plans complement this study. Inevitably much of what is contained in this often intimate account will be of interest to those who worked at Princess Christian or lived in the village of Hildenborough. However, the book deserves a wider readership, as a valuable and sensitive contribution to the study of institutional care for the mentally disabled in the twentieth century.

DAVID KILLINGRAY

Burnham Norton Friary. Perspectives on the Carmelites in Norfolk, ed. Brendan Chester-Kadwell (Norwich: Oldakre Press, 2019); pp. 234; 101 figures, including colour and b/w photographs, 1 table. Index. Paperback (£12 + £2.40 p+p). ISBN: 978-1-9162869-0-0.

Initiated by Norfolk Archaeological Trust and aided by the Norfolk Archaeological and Historical Research Group with others, this essay collection comprises nine chapters. The first section examines the medieval Carmelite friary of Burnham Norton in its landscape, before exploring these north Norfolk Carmelites in their cultural context in the second section. Section three provides a chronology of this friary. Thus, most of the essays focus on the friary, including the recent archaeological work and findings, as well as the neighbouring settlement and landscape. The book is well produced and offers a valuable template regarding how such projects can bring their findings to a local and regional audience, which may be applicable, for example, to Kent-based projects.

For the place of this friary in the context beyond Norfolk, Helen Clarke's chapter on the earliest Carmelite houses in England will be of interest to those in Kent, because two of these four communities were at Aylesford and Lossenham. Clarke

offers a concise summary of the Carmelites' beginnings in the Holy Land in a hermitage on Mount Carmel, before discussing how and why some of the friars left and came to England. Initially the friars sought to maintain their hermetical lifestyle, settling away from towns, but as she discusses this changed after 1247 and the revision of the Rule under which they lived.

Having provided this background information, Clarke provides a brief history of each pre-1247 house in turn, including information concerning the layout of the friary, its size, and its position viz-a-viz road and river transport networks. In her concluding section, she explores several common features among these friaries including their accessibility to travellers, and the form of the church.

Consequently, this is a useful addition to the history of this far less well-known order of friars, as well as demonstrating the benefits of funded projects that bring together professional archaeologists and historians, and local communities to discover the history of their area in its wider context.

SHEILA SWEETINBURGH

Susan Pittman, *The Miller Family, Farmers at Wested Farm* (2020, 60 pp., £8.00 + £2.00 p+p); *The Lee Family, Farmers at Crockenhill* (2020, 132 pp., £12.00 + £3.50 p+p); and *John Wood and Family, Farmers of The Mount, Crockenhill* (2020, 248 pp., £15.00 +4.00 p+p). From Crockenhill Parish Council Office, Stones Cross Road, Crockenhill BR8 8LT (01322 614674) or Susan Pittman (01322 669923).

These three thoroughly researched volumes form the middle three of a planned series of five about 'four enterprising farming families from Crockenhill, Kent' with an introductory volume on the history of the village from c.mid-nineteenth century and a study of the Clements family of Gosenhill to follow. Accessible, fully referenced, illustrated and well-produced, they exemplify the successful development of detailed family histories within the broader socio-economic context and benefit from the author's proven skills as a researcher and local historian. The three volumes provide a fascinating picture of the changes in farm tenancies and land ownership as well as new developments in farming and housing over a century and a half in west Kent and under the influence of the Lullingstone estate. The remarkable stories of the three farms which stayed in the same families for over a hundred years, all starting from different degrees of 'humble' origins demonstrate the potential the mid-nineteenth agricultural environment offered to the entrepreneurial farmworker. Starting on a very small scale, all three developed their own speciality gradually acquiring land and property: peppermint growing and distilling (the Millers); cold storage of fruit (the Lees); and fruit growing and village building development (the Woods). However, by the mid-twentieth century changes in agriculture and the general economy and infrastructure, together with more local and family circumstances led to decline, sale and loss to the local community. Pittman's sensitive detailed exploration of the family histories set within her more forensic examination of the changing economic circumstances provide studies which are a fascinating read at all levels. The publication of the final two volumes will be very welcome.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS