

REVIEWS

Robert Griffiths, *The history of the Royal and Ancient Park of Toxteth, Liverpool*, Liverpool: Liverpool Libraries and Information Services, 2001 [xxxviii], 180 pp. £13.50 hbk. ISBN 0902990 17 9.

This publication is a reprint, with some additional photographs, of the 1923 reprint (itself described as 'corrected and amended') of Griffiths' *Toxteth Park*. The book was first published in 1907, and was based on a series of articles the author had written for the *Liverpool Echo*. It begins with a brief history of the area from prehistoric times up to the nineteenth century, which it follows with a set of detailed descriptions of local buildings and personalities of note, such as the great astronomer Jeremiah Horrox, together with important events like the notorious 1804 duel between Grayson, the shipbuilder, and his adversary, Sparling, in the 'romantic glen' of the Dingle.

Such productions, aimed at the intelligent readership of a local newspaper, were common in the nineteenth century and, indeed, Griffiths' book breathes the air of the 1850s and 1860s. Was it worth reprinting? The answer is a definite 'yes'. Its most useful parts are the detailed, illustrated descriptions of Toxteth, Aigburth and district from the mid- to the later-nineteenth century—'as our grandfathers knew it', to use Griffiths' own phrase. In many instances, though, he is using his own eyes and ears. For example, on pp. 50–54, he gives a valuable description of the remains of the once important Mersey Forge in Sefton Street, which closed in 1898, together with a line drawing dated 1907 and a detailed account of the building's dimensions. Or again, see the tantalisingly brief account he gives of 'Willaloo' cottages, situated in the tan yards in South Street, again with illustration, which had two beer-houses in which ships' carpenters used to congregate in the 1850s, and resultant brawls had to be dealt with by the two constables responsible for the whole of Toxteth.

Should the book have been republished in the form that it has been? The answer to this question has to be a regretful 'no'. The additional photographs, not very well reproduced, should have been omitted, and an introduction commissioned to put Griffiths' work into context. A modern historian could have told us of the decline of the early industries of Liverpool, such as the Mersey Forge and the Herculaneum Pottery, washed away upon the tide of all-engulfing commerce. In addition, the many mistakes that Griffiths inevitably made about the medieval and early-

modern history of the township could have been pointed out, and saved them from being perpetuated in the insidious manner that is all too familiar to students of local history. On the whole, though, the City of Liverpool is to be congratulated in this venture, and it is to be hoped that others will be considered for the future.

P. H. W. Booth, University of Liverpool.

Michael Nevell & John Walker, *Portland Basin and the archaeology of the canal warehouse* (The Archaeology of Tameside Series, vol. 1). Tameside: Tameside MBC, 2001. viii, 86 pp. £7.50 (+ p&p) pbk. ISBN 1 871324 25 4.

This first volume in a series on the archaeology of Tameside draws on fieldwork by archaeologists from the University of Manchester and on the archival resources of the Tameside Local Studies Library. It follows a series by these authors, and others, using similar sources for the history of Tameside to 1930. The focus of this volume is the warehouse site in Ashton-under-Lyne, which is now a museum of Tameside social and industrial history.

The book aims throughout to place the Portland Basin in broader context. The first chapter is a survey of the origins and development of industrial warehousing. Conjecturing about Iron Age granaries leads to a more certain review of Roman warehouses. Multi-purpose medieval tithe barns gave way to separation of warehouse functions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Thence quayside warehouses of eighteenth-century ports are posited as direct ancestors of canal warehouses. Innovation in design was spurred by new power systems and building materials. Ultimately the twentieth-century requirement for mere transhipment centres is shown to take the wheel full circle to simple structures which the Romans might recognise.

Chapter 2 describes the Portland Basin Warehouse and its archaeological context within North West England. The region is said to contain one of the most important surviving groups of industrial canal warehouses in Europe. The Portland Basin Warehouse, built at the zenith of the canal age in 1830, is cited as one of few where the public can still see 'all the features that created the classic canal warehouse design'. All aspects of this warehouse and significant others are described in detail with the aid of photographs and excellent line drawings.

The third chapter locates the Portland Basin in its immediate network of canals, the Ashton, the Huddersfield Narrow and the Peak Forest. The *raison d'être* and history of canal developments are traced, with a focus on the North West and particularly Tameside. The three local canals are

followed from proposal and construction through decline and loss to a measure of repair and recovery.

Restoration and development, especially of the Portland Basin Warehouse from a disastrous fire in 1972 until the opening of the Museum in 1999, are the subjects of chapter 4. After the cessation of commercial canal carrying and resulting dereliction, the Ashton canal saw the most celebrated clearance in the 'Big Dig' of 1968, when 600 volunteers removed 2,000 tonnes of rubbish from a 700 yard length. Continued campaigning and co-ordinated action has culminated in the re-opening of all Tameside canals.

Finally there is an illustrated gazetteer of surviving canal warehouses in the north west of England, in which some photographs do little justice to their subjects. There is also a brief glossary, list of waterways museums, and an interesting guide to further reading.

Unfortunately Harvard references and unwieldy sentences cause difficulty; mistakes of grammar and syntax cause irritation; and there is much restatement of information. There are also factual errors. Some figures bear little relation to the text—a map of the canal network in North West England is not instantly helpful in identifying the 'three narrow-boat canals . . . constructed across Tameside', but unnamed in the adjacent text. Also Fig. 1.1 is not as indicated! Notwithstanding deplorable deficiencies in copy-editing and proof-reading, this volume does succeed in providing an overview of the Portland Basin and assesses its regional significance. It will provide a useful point of reference.

D. E. Ascott, University of Liverpool.

David Shotter, *Roman coins from North-West England: Second supplement*, Lancaster: Centre for North-West Regional Studies, 2000. iv, 254 pp. £15.95. pbk. ISBN 1 86220 100 5.

Somewhat surprisingly this second supplementary volume is exactly as long as the original work. However, the considerable size of the new book is not entirely due to new discoveries which have been made since the first supplement appeared in 1995. Here Dr Shotter has taken the opportunity to extend his definition of North-West England to include the county of Cheshire, although, as he himself admits, the boundaries of Cheshire have been given a certain elasticity to include important finds just beyond its borders.

The new book is very attractively presented with a colourfully-designed cover and pages that are nicer to handle and easier to read than the first two volumes, thanks to better quality paper and a cleaner and larger type-face. It is a shame, therefore, to see that the rather sketchy style of the maps has

been carried over from the earlier books. As a consequence of expanding its geographical borders the book has a dual personality. The additional material from Lancashire and Cumbria which the reader will find here is truly supplementary to the first two volumes and really has to be studied in context with them, whereas the Chester/Cheshire material introduces a brand new subject, and comes very close to taking up half of the book (pp. 43–110, 157–91, and 222–45).

Those unduly prone to conspiracy theories will find that adding Cheshire to the area of the overall study allows it to mesh rather fortuitously with the boundaries of current political agendas for the regionalisation of England, but of course there are powerful archaeological reasons for the inclusion—it is impossible to understand fully what was going on in the Roman North-West without reference to the great legionary fortress at Chester. Indeed Peter Gaunt, when he was reviewing the original volume and its first supplement in this journal (vol. 147 (1998), pp. 155–56), pointed out the dearth of published Roman coin lists for most parts of the country. By pushing the boundaries of his survey just one county further south Dr Shotter has at a stroke filled one of these blanks on the coin map of Britain, and a very important one at that.

Until this book appeared anyone who was interested in studying Roman Chester would look in vain for a modern record of the coins found in and around the fortress. Sadly there is nothing later than the Rev. J. T. Davies' catalogue of 1922, and that slim volume is strictly speaking a list of coins kept in the Grosvenor Museum at the time, which is not at all the same thing as a list of coins found in Chester. As every year goes by it has become more imperative that a full coin list be published; old certainties about the major events in the fortress' history are now seeming less sure, particularly the date and purpose of its foundation. All of us who spend our leisure hours trying to solve these conundrums need to have *all* of the evidence at our fingertips. Dr Shotter has done a great service to all students of Roman Britain by making the coins from the Chester fortress and its environs available to them through this book.

With so much new information to impart it is a pity that the comprehensive list of illustrations is not matched by a fuller and more helpful contents list. For example there is no reference to the important discussion on 'The Roman North-West: Conquest and occupation' (pp. 111–28) which will be of interest to a far wider audience than those who might otherwise study this book; other useful discussions, e.g. the thorny question of the chronologies of Chester (77–80) and Holt (91–94), are buried in the body of the book and could have been flagged up more clearly for those who do not have the time to browse. This is unfortunate because the study of numismatics, although it can rightly claim to be one of the founding subjects which shaped the development of archaeology, has

over the years acquired its own specialised methodology and jargon (dates for Period XV, anyone?) The result is that it has become a foreign language to many modern archaeologists. Whereas specialists will follow Dr Shotter's lists and histograms from their own numismatic perspective, many more will be interested in the conclusions which he is able to draw from the data; it would have been nice if these were easier to find.

For those who have already acquired the first two volumes this book will be an obvious addition to their shelves. The publication of the coin lists for the Chester legionary fortress, not forgetting those for other important sites in the area such as Holt and Middlewich, should attract a new and wider audience who will find much food for thought here in our quest to understand the functioning of the Roman army in the North-West.

Dan Robinson, Chester

Sharon Lambert, *Irish women in Lancashire, 1922–1960: Their story*, Lancaster: Centre for North West Regional Studies, 2001. xv, 127 pp. £9.95 pbk. ISBN 1 86220110 12.

In recent years there has been an upsurge of interest amongst historians in the experiences and achievements of the Irish abroad. To date however existing studies have tended to focus on the lives of Irish men adapting to the world of work and public life in their adopted homes. The experiences of female emigrants, who unlike the trend in any other European country, outnumbered Irish male emigrants throughout the years 1871 to 1971, have often been marginalised or overlooked altogether. This oversight is finally beginning to be addressed.

In this context Sharon Lambert's book proves to be a very important and timely addition to the field of Irish and British social history. The book presents a vivid insight into the lives of Irish women living in Lancashire throughout the period 1922 to 1960. Using oral history 'life-stories' as her main source, Lambert skilfully pieces together the lives of forty women who emigrated to England and eventually made their home in Lancashire. The introduction clearly explains the methodology employed, in particular the use of oral history, and informs the reader of the selection and interview process for informants, thereby ensuring that the reader is fully aware of how representative the sample chosen is of Irish women living in Lancashire. In addition full biographical details of the forty respondents are attached as an appendix, providing a useful reference point for readers.

Lambert explains why hundreds of thousands of Irish citizens emigrated from the newly established twenty-six county Irish Free State (renamed the

Republic of Ireland in 1949) during the years 1922 to 1960. Geographical origins of emigrants, gender and age distribution, as well as the motives for leaving are considered here, with a particular emphasis on the reasons why women felt compelled to emigrate and why they chose Lancashire for their new home. Lambert suggests that the women interviewed had a number of reasons for wishing to emigrate. These included the most obvious, a desire to secure well-paid employment to support themselves as well as their families back in Ireland. There were however also more personal reasons, for example to hide an unwanted pregnancy, to escape an unsuitable relationship and, more surprisingly, the desire to conform to the wishes of their parents and family. Perhaps not so surprising is the fact that the overriding reason for the women moving to Lancashire was the fact that they already had family living in the county who could provide accommodation and support.

The next four chapters focus on particular themes that dominated the lives of the women featured in the study. Chapter three examines the extent to which the women kept in touch with their families in Ireland. Writing letters, sending parcels and holidays in Ireland were the principal ways in which the women kept in touch with home. It is clear from the oral history accounts that the majority of respondents kept close contact with their families in Ireland indicating that they had no desire to 'turn their backs on Ireland'. Lambert argues that the women did not regard emigration as a means of escape from their families and did all that they could to keep in touch. Along with family ties, religion played a major part in the lives of the women interviewed. The next chapter explores the extent to which the women upheld their religious beliefs and practices after emigration. This chapter demonstrates that the majority of the women continued to attend church services and practice their religion after emigration, indicating that in common with family ties, emigration did not represent an escape from religious observance.

The influence of religious teaching and Roman Catholic social teaching in particular (only one respondent was non-Catholic) is very evident in a chapter which explores personal relationships. This chapter is the most moving of the book with its frank accounts of sexual ignorance, heart-breaking insights into the impact of single motherhood and the reluctance of the women to use contraception to limit the size of their families. Once again it is clear that despite their departure from Ireland these women were still very much influenced by the strict social and religious codes which dominated Irish society during this period. Chapter six demonstrates the desire of the women to maintain their Irish national identity whilst living in Britain, something that contributed to their close contact with home and, for thirty-nine of the women, identification with the Catholic Church. Irish national identity, it is argued, was particularly important for this generation

of women living in Britain in the decades following Irish independence from Britain. It is also argued, however, that despite their best efforts all the women voiced concerns about feeling neither Irish nor English but assuming a 'new' separate emigrant identity. These points are reiterated in the overall conclusion, highlighting in particular the influence of family and religion on the lives of Irish female emigrants to Britain. This text, which is accompanied by an extensive bibliography, photographs and tables, will appeal to a wide range of readers interested in Irish and British social history, women's history and local history, and is a major contribution to a new and exciting field of historical research.

Caitriona Beaumont, South Bank University, London

Andrew White, *The buildings of Georgian Lancaster*, 2nd edn, Lancaster: Centre for North-West Studies, 2000. iv, 76 pp. £6.95 pbk. ISBN 1 86220 084 X.

Andrew White & Michael Winstanley, *Victorian terraced houses in Lancaster*, Lancaster: Centre for North West Studies, 1996. iv, 76 pp. £6.95 pbk. ISBN 0 901800 96 1.

Lancaster, with a small number of distinguished Victorian and Edwardian public buildings and suburbs but diminished by its modern commercial developments and attempted solutions to its traffic problems, failed to take advantage of the arrival of a new university to undertake sensitive projects of urban renewal. However, still centred around its 'castle' (the prison) and its 'priory' (the parish church) it retains many buildings erected by its civilised merchants in the late eighteenth century. By the end of the Georgian period the centre of commercial activity, no longer centred on the slave trade, moved south from the ancient county town to that brash upstart Liverpool, but leaving a rich heritage of bridges, quays, etc., behind.

The buildings of Georgian Lancaster (first published in 1992) is in two sections. The first ('Introduction') covers the economic, architectural, planning and social background. Importantly, it considers not only the grandest houses but the smaller properties, gardens, summer houses and what the table of contents describes as 'services' (that is, water supply and sewage). The illustrations include maps, plans, sketches for developments, prints and photographs (recent and historic). Its 'Notes' include sources both printed and manuscript. It concludes with an 'Index'.

This excellent study is a follow-up to the 1996 *Victorian terraced houses in Lancaster*, which should also be commended here. The Englishman is extremely snobbish about his castle and until recent years the idea of living in a terraced house conjured up visions of those dreary streets on the

outskirts of Leeds or the rows of tunnel-back houses found in Handsworth in Birmingham, where not only had architectural imagination died but even the capacity to find names for these streets had been exhausted. The final quarter of the past century, perhaps delayed by the 1939–45 war, saw a revival of interest in truly urban design and the birth of the so-called ‘Georgian town house’. The splendours of the terraces of provincial cities such as Bath or Clifton were forgotten.

Attitudes have changed. The centuries-long outflow of populations from city centres has gone into reverse. Lancaster’s expansion in the nineteenth century was not on the dramatic scale of many other commercial or industrial towns, so its housing developments were small in scale even, in some cases, reflecting the mediaeval patterns of land ownership. Although properties did decline into slums or were demolished for commercial improvements, Lancaster is fortunate in the quality of its building materials (usually stone for external walls) and the local building bye-laws. In addition to houses this study includes churches, pubs and off-licences, shops, schools and lodgings. The study is concluded by a gazetteer and presents a model for the study of other town’s houses of the nineteenth century.

J. E. Vaughan, Liverpool

Edward Morris, *Public art collections in North West England*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001. 191 pp. £19.95 pbk. ISBN 0 85323 527 9

This pithy book, written to act as a guide to the public art collections in the North-West and to provide a history of the formation of those collections, is entertaining and highly informative—a must for anyone interested in the visual arts in the region. All but the most seasoned and determined gallery visitor will be amazed by the scale and quality of the holdings that Edward Morris describes, and by the insights into the cultural ambitions of the North-West at the peak of its economic prosperity that the early histories of these institutions reveal.

In his succinct introduction Edward Morris vividly sketches out the formidable challenges that faced the founders and supporters of art galleries in the North-West in the nineteenth century, not least the legal difficulties that had to be overcome and the hostility and indifference of central government—then as now—to local government and local initiatives. He also rightly stresses the absence of any benefits from nationalised aristocratic and ecclesiastical collections such as form the nucleus of so many of the regional galleries of Europe. That so much was achieved is a tribute to the determination and grit of a handful of collectors and public-spirited

individuals who fought to establish galleries in their towns and whose characters are sympathetically outlined in this book.

The introduction is fuller and stronger on the earlier institutional history than on the recent past, when changes in local government have had such a fundamental impact on the galleries of the North-West. The radical reorganisation of local government in the 1970s which led to the combination of many small institutions and the creation of metropolitan county councils (so soon to be abolished by Margaret Thatcher) is touched on but not discussed in depth. Ironically, her action necessitated the creation of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, funded by government.

This reviewer believes that the present promises to be a new golden age, full of opportunities to build on past achievements. Cultural institutions have now been given an influential role in urban regeneration, not dissimilar from the nineteenth-century belief that the arts can change society. Through substantial grants the Heritage Lottery Fund has not only facilitated the long planned extension to Manchester City Art Gallery, to name but one of the schemes it has backed in the region, but also purchases such as *Nearing Camp: Evening on the Upper Colorado River* by Bolton-born Thomas Moran for that town's gallery. For these positive reasons more comment on current developments in the region would have been welcome.

Following the introduction is an excellent concise account of the histories and holdings of thirty-nine collections together with extended descriptions of some individual works. Rightly, more space is given to the lesser known, smaller collections about which information is hard to find. The net is cast wide and includes Norton Priory with its spectacular and very rare sandstone medieval figure of St Christopher striding through the water with the Christ child. Some might quibble about the exclusion of Lyme Park near Stockport and Astley Hall at Chorley with their interesting collections of family portraits and might argue that houses such as Heaton Hall, now used to show collections from the main museum, should be included. Indeed, the use of substantial country houses engulfed by urban development as museums and galleries by local authorities is an important strand in museum development in the North-West.

One or two illustrations—in a few cases more—are allocated to nearly all galleries but not, unfortunately, to some of the smallest and least known. For instance there is no work illustrated from West Park, Macclesfield, Stockport War Memorial and Art Gallery or from Rossendale Museum, Rawtenstall. This economy is a pity as it means—such is the power of an image—that a chance is missed to raise the profile of the smallest institutions, which are likely to remain undervalued and sought out by only the most determined tourist.

Morris has a knack for devising a well turned sentence to sum up a collector or benefactor. The contrast between the quality and range of the art collection formed by George Holt (1825–1896), the Liverpool ship owner and merchant, and the simplicity of his home is, for instance, nicely caught: ‘Ostentation was not a fault of his and the visitor will be amazed to find in his relatively small dining room, drawing room, morning room and library—rooms of little decorative importance and originally containing only utilitarian furniture—some of the greatest British paintings of any period. Four or five of them must have together cost him more than the entire house’. Edward Hart, who bequeathed his outstanding collection of manuscripts and early printed books and much else to Blackburn, is described as leading ‘a quiet and modest bachelor life in Blackburn living with his mother and sister in West Park Road’. The interlinking of political opinions, religious beliefs and support for the arts is similarly deftly dealt with. Robert Taylor Heape, a benefactor of Rochdale Art Gallery, ‘was of course Liberal in politics and Unitarian in religion’.

Because of the relatively modest space allowed to each institution, only a handful of works are discussed in any detail. The author has no inhibitions about choosing unfamiliar paintings that he personally admires such as Albert Moore’s *The Loves of the Winds and the Seasons* at Blackburn, William Stott’s *Venus born of the Sea Foam* at Oldham and George Clausen’s *Bird Scaring, March* at Preston. He has an eye which gives his selection freshness, particularly in his choice of works from the smaller institutions. Visitors using the guide will find themselves directed to pictures which, although by artists who are hardly household names, and perhaps not even on display, will always be worth seeking out.

For local historians this is an important book and the best general survey yet of the public art collections of the region, representing one of the great legacies from the Victorian age. It also usefully brings together information about most of the major collectors in the region. What must strike the reader though is that the political and religious radicalism of most of the promoters of art galleries in the North-West was not on the whole mirrored in their tastes in the visual arts. At best the preferences of those involved was for progressive conservative artists rather than artists at the cutting edge. The few involved in art galleries who were deeply committed to the new, such as P. H. Rathbone (1825–95) in Liverpool, found the going extremely hard when it came to the acquisition of the unfamiliar. This aversion to innovation and innate terror of the challenging has somewhat restricted the impact of galleries on their communities, as the broad appeal of their collections is limited.

Given the long tradition of interest in local history in Lancashire and Cheshire it is not surprising that some galleries have focused on collecting the work of artists with local connections, even if rather tenuous. An

outstanding example of this approach is the rich group of Stubbs at Liverpool, started not because his paintings were particularly highly regarded but because he was born in Liverpool (their first Stubbs, the classic *Horse Frightened by a Lion*, was bought for £22 10s in 1910). This book rightly highlights these collections: Preston's paintings by the Devis family; Salford's Lowrys (bought long before he became so fashionable); Warrington's group of paintings by Luke Fildes, Henry Woods and the much underrated James Charles; the Wilson Steers at Birkenhead and Stott's work at Oldham. Collections that celebrate serious local talent always have a distinctive flavour which makes a visit rewarding. Shrewdly, Abbot Hall, one of the newest public collections in the North-West, has concentrated to great effect on artists with local connections, such as George Romney, and on work inspired by the scenery of the Lake District.

While Galleries have been willing to take an interest in natives who went on to play a role on the national stage, there has been much less concern for documenting the local art scene, for securing examples of local portraiture and paintings of local events and views. That it is only within the last fifteen years that the first portrait by Joseph Wright of Derby—the most talented portraitist to work in Lancashire in the eighteenth century—has been bought is a measure of this indifference but, predictably, the acquisition was by the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, the only institution which has systematically sought to document the art and patronage of its locality.

The production and design of the book is of a good standard. It is difficult though to understand why no work illustrated is in colour (except on the cover) and why there is no index or even the briefest of bibliographies; the absence of both of these is much to be regretted. Liverpool University Press are to be congratulated for their laudable involvement in local history and should be encouraged to commission a more ambitious history of the visual arts in the North-West from Edward Morris whose knowledge about, and sympathy for, the art galleries in the North-West and their histories is so evident from this book.

Timothy Stevens OBE, Melton Constable

John J. Parkinson-Bailey, *Manchester: An architectural history*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000. xviii + 386 pp. £20.00 hbk. ISBN 0 7190 5606 3.

Clare Hartwell, *The buildings of England: Manchester* (Pevsner Architectural Guides). London: Penguin Books, 2001. 320 pp. £9.99 pbk. ISBN 0 1407 1131 7.

Parkinson-Bailey's book is, in the author's words, 'an attempt to provide a history of Manchester, through its buildings, and of the buildings themselves through the cultural, social and political events of the periods in which they were built'. His approach is chronological. He concentrates on the city centre, an area roughly within a half-mile radius of St Anne's Church. He goes beyond this when he feels events and buildings outside this area have had an influence on it or when changes at the centre have had consequences beyond it. For these reasons he considers, for example, the Ship Canal and the development of Hulme based on community involvement. His criterion for including a building is that it is representative of its period. He says selecting buildings representative of the nineteenth century was easiest; the difficulty came with making selections for the 1960s and after. The author, who is a senior lecturer in the Department of History and Art at the Manchester Metropolitan University, aims his book at both the general reader and the student of architectural history of urban design.

His aims are laudable, but I fear his book will not grip the general reader. To have fired his/her interest he would have to produce a book like Quentin Hughes' *Seaport: Architecture and townscape in Liverpool* (1964, reprinted with a postscript 1993), or Gomme & Walker's *Architecture of Glasgow* (2nd edition, 1987), both of which have stunning photographs and offer first-class analysis in the light of architectural history and the *genus loci*. He might have done it with this book if he had given much more space and more thorough analysis to the period of Manchester's greatest architectural achievement, the years from 1840 to 1940. Instead, too much space is devoted to the aesthetically abysmal and depressing 1960s, 70s and 80s.

The story of Manchester's architecture became exciting again with the 1990s. The IRA bomb of 1996, the bid for the Commonwealth Games, and the building of new museums have put Manchester on the architectural map for the first time since the Second World War. Parkinson-Bailey gives this decade the attention to which it is due. The author is to be praised for elucidating and stressing the non-aesthetic influence on Manchester's development. He must be strongly criticised for the weakness of his aesthetic analyses and for his failure to convey fully the qualities in buildings which are the product of their architects' manner and strengths.

This is the book's second major fault. The only maps are those on the end-paper; there are no plans of buildings (e.g. there should have been a plan of the Town Hall so that Waterhouse's genius in organising space could be appreciated). There should be a bibliographical essay, instead of the select bibliography provided. More useful is a glossary and gazetteer; the numerous black and white illustrations are integrated with the text, while the sixty colour plates are grouped in three sections.

Clare Hartwell's guide should be regarded as the next logical step in the story of the Pevsner guides. That story began when the first three volumes of Nikolaus Pevsner's *Buildings of England* series were published in 1951. The appearance of the forty-sixth volume in 1974 marked the completion of this unrivalled series. From the start of this mighty endeavour Pevsner asked users to comment on errors and omissions because he saw the necessity for revised editions. His awareness of new scholarship and changes of taste, especially where Victorian architecture was concerned, made him conscious of the incompleteness of his work. Since his death in 1983, the revising process has led to a new departure: the publication of paperback guides covering key subjects and areas, the latest of which is Clare Hartwell's *Manchester*. Hartwell's guide is exemplary and can be recommended without reservation. Those who do not know Manchester will find it easy to use and highly stimulating. Those who feel they know the city will have their knowledge greatly heightened. Mancunians will find it an eye-opener and a boost to their sense of civic pride. All will return again and again with it in hand.

The author is an architectural historian based in Manchester and her text stands on a solid foundation of scholarship and familiarity. Pevsner's account as a starting point has been expanded by thorough and up-to-date research encompassing the many changes of the last thirty years. Although Ms Hartwell has wisely called upon others to contribute directly, including the distinguished Manchester architectural historian, John Archer, who writes on the Town Hall, the Free Trade Hall and the John Rylands Library and three others, all the other entries are by her. She writes clearly and exercises sound judgement and criticism; places buildings in context by showing their place in the architect's *oeuvre*, and their significance in national and international architectural history.

The structure and layout of the book are admirable. They make for ease of use and of assimilation. Each section starts with a map which shows, where relevant, the route of a walk. Street names are highlighted in red type, bold is used for the names of buildings, and the names of architects and artists are italicised. There are numerous good photographs, nearly all of them in colour. There is a guide to further reading, a glossary of architectural terms and indexes of artists, architects, patrons and others, localities, streets and buildings.

Architectural historians and general readers should *buy* Hartwell's guide. They may choose to *consult* Parkinson-Bailey's.

John Dewsnap, Liverpool

Ian D. Farley, *J C Ryle, first Bishop of Liverpool: A study of mission amongst the masses*, Carlisle: Paternoster Publishing, 2000. xiv + 258 pp. £19.99 pbk. ISBN 1 84227 017 6.

Eric Russell, *That man of granite with the heart of a child: A biography of J C Ryle*, Fearn, Ross-shire: Christian Focus Publications, 2001. 247 pp. £9.99 hbk. ISBN 1 85792 631 5.

It was a pity that, even in the city and diocese where he spent the last twenty years of his life, the centenary of the death, on 20 June 1900, of John Charles Ryle, the first Anglican Bishop of Liverpool (or as he almost undoubtedly would have preferred it, the first Protestant Lord Bishop of Liverpool) should have passed so relatively un-noticed. It seems an even greater shame that these two new studies of his life and achievements (the first of any substance, this reviewer thinks, since 1985) were apparently not published until after the anniversary was past.

Before we can consider whether either of them have any value to historians, it is important to remember the objectives of the two authors. Issued by publishers such as Paternoster and Christian Focus, we would be wrong to expect unbiased and objective assessments of Ryle's life and work, and in Russell's case, he unashamedly follows in the footsteps of earlier biographers like Toon & Smout (1976), Loane (1983) and Smout (1985) in providing, if not a hagiographic account, at least a very sympathetic one. Farley's approach is somewhat different and, largely limiting himself to the period of Ryle's episcopate (1880–1900), he provides a 'thematic study' of the Bishop's preaching and work. Both, however, see Ryle as 'an example . . . of how to combine leadership, a firm faith and compassion' (Russell) and highlighting 'important parallels with the modern era and offer[ing] challenging insights to the church today' (Farley). With such overt objectives, an example for Christians to follow and a challenge for the church to meet, the content and conclusions of both must therefore be treated with caution by those desiring an unbiased historical account.

Taking for his title a description of Ryle given to him by his successor as bishop, Francis Chavasse, Russell seems (there is, regrettably, no separate bibliography) to have examined most of the usual sources for facts about Ryle and his family and he devotes a little over a third of his space to his episcopate. While some (Christians rather than historians, probably) might judge that it is for his writings that Ryle should be remembered, this small

compass deals just about adequately with the major aspects of those final twenty years (1880–1900). It is marred, however, by a number of minor errors which, although insignificant and unimportant in themselves, if detected may cause the reader to question the accuracy of other given facts. To cite but two examples: Douglas Horsfall, the High Church benefactor of St Agnes', Ullet Rd, Liverpool is referred to on p. 169 and in the Index as 'Horsfield', and Hengler's Circus, where Ryle supported the meetings of the American evangelist D. L. Moody in 1883 is referred to as 'Henglis' (p. 189). He also gives no reason, when stating the length of Bell Cox's imprisonment in 1887, why he differs by two days, fifteen instead of the more usual seventeen given by others.

He does, on the other hand, avoid, on p. 190, Loane's mistake of saying that Ryle had not gone to the Lambeth Conference in 1888 (M. Loane, *John Charles Ryle, 1816–1900*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1983, p. 105), but does not reference the source of his information—presumably the Conference Minute Book in Lambeth Palace Library.

Evangelical Christians of the old school who are Ryle enthusiasts (and the almost non-observance of the centenary of his death suggests that they are relatively few in number) will find Russell an enjoyable retelling of the facts of the bishop's life, and confirm to them that he was indeed worthy of emulation, but for historians there seems to be nothing new.

Farley approaches his task from a very different and refreshing direction. While he starts by providing a brief 40-line sketch of Ryle's life, he cannot however avoid further details of it obtruding into the succeeding six sections of his work which deal with specific aspects of his episcopate. The first two of these consider Ryle's distinctive theology as evinced by his writing and preaching, but make no reference to Newby's unpublished doctoral thesis 'The theology of John Charles Ryle' (University of Potchefstroom, South Africa, 1991). The third and fourth consider the working out of that theology in mission and social issues in Liverpool, and the final two study the hindrances, diversions and obstructions to that mission.

Even if Ryle's theology might seem at first sight to be irrelevant to a historian's considerations, it was its practical application that ordered his attitudes and resultant actions, and it was perhaps a failure to follow his practical advice that exacerbated some of the problems of his day.

The next two sections provide in a form convenient to a generalist, and culled from a variety of secondary sources much useful information on the 'darker' side of late 19th century Liverpool. Farley looks at unemployment, including the use of emigration as a partial answer to the problem, women, education, drink, Sunday observance and war. Anent emigration, he mentions how Ryle 'continued [in] his great faith in emigration and wish[ed] it were more loudly proclaimed' (p. 130), but surprisingly fails to mention his speech or his inclusion in the 'working-party' on the subject

at the 1886 Lambeth Conference. He claims that Ryle's views on women 'broadened during his episcopate, breaking away from the narrowness of early Victorian evangelical attitudes' (p. 131), and although they would be regarded as conservative or even reactionary when compared with today's (lack of) standards, their examination here usefully demonstrates the thinking of many in his day. Similarly, the other sub-sections serve as helpful resumes of how Ryle and others with a similar patrician and Tory outlook saw and dealt with education and other social issues.

The final pair of sections examines some of the hindrances that the church itself provided to the achievement of his and its true purpose. Farley deals with fairness and at some length with the canards that Ryle did not want a Cathedral (he would have welcomed one if Liverpool's 'merchant princes' had found the money, but meanwhile he had far more pressing concerns), and that he was the bishop who had persecuted 'poor Mr Bell Cox' for wearing vestments.

Ryle is sometimes charged with caring little for the poor, a charge that, considering his systematic begging both on behalf of the poor, and for internal church purposes, Farley firmly refutes. Explaining some of the difficulties (especially that of the image of the Church of England itself and the obdurate hard-heartedness of some of the younger generation of hitherto benevolent families) that Ryle often faced, Farley readily admits to his subject's lack of a proper understanding of the problems of the poor and lower middle classes.

A very significant part of the church's image problem was ritualism and the conduct of public worship. Although the Bell Cox affair was one major element in the Liverpool aspect of this, there were many others, the activities of Douglas Horsfall, mentioned above, not excluded. In the thirty pages allocated to the subject, Farley dispassionately examines both the Bell Cox and Horsfall side of the long drawn out dispute and that led by Dr James Hakes and the Church Association, and does not try to hide the results of Ryle's sometimes inappropriate handling of it.

Superior in every other respect to Russell's, perhaps the biggest fault with Farley's book is its lack of any form of index. Russell helpfully provides three—people, places and subjects, but Farley, although having the detailed bibliography missing from Russell, has none at all. If a second edition is ever contemplated, this lacuna must be filled.

Michael E. Brian, Formby

Steven King, *A Fylde country practice: Medicine and society in Lancashire, c.1760–1840*. Lancaster: Centre for North West Regional Studies, 2001. xiv + 110 pp. pbk. £10.95. ISBN 1 86220 117 X.

This book is largely an expansion of the paper 'Lives in many hands: The medical landscape in Lancashire 1700–1820', by Steven King and Alan Weaver, which was published in *Medical History*, 45 (2000), pp. 173–200.

King's introduction to his book lists four generalisations which he regards as important. First is the development of a 'Medical Marketplace' which he says arose because 'Medicine and medical care became commodities to be consumed by middling and even many labouring people, stimulating increasing demand'. Second, doctors tried to increase their professional authority, and 'treatment came to be framed in terms *not in the lifestyle of the patient* (my emphasis) but in terms of medical remedies'. Third, established remedies remained commonly used, including 'bleeding, leeches, *modification to diet and lifestyle, taking the waters* (my emphasis) and a few basic herbs' although doctors were more willing to adopt invasive procedures. Finally, 'the filtering of medicine down the social scale, increasing numbers of doctors and other practitioners, the founding of a medical marketplace and slow improvements in medical and surgical practices, yielded positive benefits to contemporaries.'

These general principles are not clear-cut. The first and last seem very similar and the emphasised passages in the second and third are clearly contradictory. I personally derive little, if any, extra understanding from the concept of the medical marketplace, to which the author refers repeatedly throughout the book. I also doubt if there was any great increase in intrusive surgery done by surgeon-apothecaries in the period before 1820. Dr Loxham's account book (of which more later), Fig 3.15, makes no mention of any surgical procedure of any sort between 1 March and 18 July 1760.

The author then poses some pertinent questions. Are medical historians right to place the notion of 'progress' at the heart of their theoretical perspectives on medicine? Are they right to adopt market economics as the dominant paradigm in medical history? How did long established institutional, religious and cultural structures in the English regions influence the supply of and demand for medicine? These and the rest are rightly suggested as topics for further research. The last question is raised because the author's research shows that the more Catholic South West of Lancashire was not so well provided with medical care as the North East of the County where Anglicanism predominated, without clear evidence to show why it should be so.

The narrative continues with an account of national mortality rates and the way in which life in Lancashire was hampered by an increase in both

sickness and death rates. King points out that 'outbreaks of influenza, typhus, typhoid, putrid fever and whooping cough occurred over 150 times in Lancashire communities in the last three decades of the eighteenth century alone', quoting C. Creighton as his source. This authority must have been mistaken since the term 'typhoid' was not coined by the French physician Pierre Louis until 1829 and typhoid and typhus were not properly distinguished from one another until the middle 1840s.

The core of the book relates to the account book, stretching from the 1750s to the 1780s, of a surgeon-apothecary called Loxham who conducted a rural practice in Poulton in the Fylde district of Lancashire. The practice was clearly not a busy one for Loxham appears to have seen between 740 and 780 patients over a period of 30 years, with each patient being seen on average just under once every three years or so. A map shows Dr Loxham's circuit of visits. This indicates more than 41 visits to Eccleston, near St. Helens, presumably to the family of Richard Lackenby of Eccleston, recorded in Fig 3.15. Dr Jean Hugh-Jones, of Eccleston, an authority on medical history in the St. Helens district, pointed out to me that there was no-one of that name in local records, especially of the rank of esquire, that is to say a landowner, living in Eccleston. However, in a history of the Fylde, she found reference to Richard Leckonby of Leckonby House in Great Eccleston, which is 5 miles from Poulton where Loxham lived and a much more likely place for him to visit on successive days, rather than a place about 45 miles away. It is also intriguing to see that Loxham visited a patient in Liverpool. One wonders why he went all that way.

The book ends with an account of the difficulties of making a medical living. Loxham's problems appear to be much the same as those of his peers, so well described by Digby, Loudon and others—mainly bad debts, delayed payment and competition. Loxham too did some farming, some moneylending and a fair amount of barter.

Most of the illustrations are reproductions of manuscript letters. Several are difficult to read and a few are wrongly captioned. I am sorry that the author did not pick up the fact that the doctor complained of in Fig 4.5 was not some obscure country practitioner, but the great Sir Benjamin Brodie, Bart., Surgeon to St. Georges Hospital, President of the Royal College of Surgeons, President of the Royal Society, first President of the General Medical Council and regarded as the best surgical diagnostician in the country. How fragile a thing is a doctor's reputation!

Does the book succeed in its aims? I would have to say, fairly well, although in spite of the large amount of archive combing that has gone into it, there is little that struck me as truly original other than the disparity between East and West Lancashire.

I would be failing in my task if I did not point out the rather large number of errors that slipped through the editorial net. Apart from one or

two typos, there are several solecisms. Finally, although the author might feel it was his own style and I could take it or leave it, I found that in places the flow was interrupted by the large number of instances in which a new sentence was started with 'and'. In none of these instances was the sense altered if either the full stop or the conjunction was omitted.

J. J. Rivlin MB ChB MSc, Liverpool

Ray Costello, *Black Liverpool: The early history of Britain's oldest black community, 1730–1918*. Liverpool: Picton Press, 2001. 108 pp. pbk. £9.00. ISBN 1 873245 07 6.

This is a very well researched volume packed with familiar and new information written in such a way that it has a target audience across a variety of age groups. The material can be adapted for children at primary level; the text as it stands is ideal for secondary education and should be used as a supportive text to fill in the gaps and omissions often attributed to 'mainstream' texts at FE and HE levels. Those who are not in education can also benefit from reading *Black Liverpool* as each page contains many gems of knowledge.

This volume makes a valuable contribution to material currently available about black settlement in Britain, and in Liverpool in particular. Ray Costello brings to life black British contributions to institutions like the founding of the Labour Party, or the roles played by black servicemen during the two world wars, which are often absent from historical writings. The book plugs the gaps in historical knowledge; it also has a familiarity about it where one feels that one knows the protagonists within the text, as many of the families who are described still have descendants in twenty-first century Liverpool. Local people can read this text with pride, whilst many honoured and buried histories are rekindled. There are many interesting factors about this book: it is not just about black Liverpool, but also illustrates the lives of members of the poor working class where their stories impinge on other communities 'who shared experiences of hard times'. Costello continually reminds us about common empathy, but always brings the reader back to the nature of race and skin colour where blacks whatever their status or social class are seen as a lumpen group: 'denial of . . . facility to poor blacks and, indeed, blacks of higher station as all blacks came to be seen in the same light'.

Much of the text, although full of facts, has an emotional side to it, where 'British blacks have been forced to recognise their own worth, even if others do not'. *Black Liverpool* draws together almost two hundred years of history, with many highlighted moments which all members of the black

community with an African heritage should be proud of, as it demonstrates how our ancestors have made countless contributions to British society.

Paulette Clunie, Manchester

Alasdair Munro & Duncan Sim, *The Merseyside Scots: A study of an expatriate community*. Birkenhead: Liver Press, 2001. x + 213pp. pbk. £9.75. ISBN 1 71201 10 1.

Liverpool is an immigrant city, its politics and culture largely created by many Celtic newcomers. There is no doubt that the mix of immigrant languages, religions and cultures made an unusual city. The most numerous in-migrants were the Irish and the Welsh, and significant work, inspired by historical geographers and continued more recently by social historians, has been published on both groups. Numerically smaller immigrant groups, Jewish, African and Chinese have also been studied in recent years. Scottish in-migrants are the only group not included, despite supplying iconic figures like Dr Duncan, John Gladstone, William Laird, John MacIver, Alexander Elder and John Dempster to mention only a few. Munro and Sims, revealed in the foreword as Liverpool Scots themselves, have remedied an important gap in historical knowledge.

In chapters on demography, the Kirk, medicine, the port and commerce, the military, social life and charity, and politics, they set out to survey the Scots on Merseyside and to assess their character and contribution to the city. Some of the themes are already well known. The contribution of Scots to medicine, in Liverpool as elsewhere, has long been recognised. The nineteenth-century universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh produced doctors in numbers much greater than the English universities, and alongside Currie and Duncan, the authors argue for the importance of Bostock, Dobson, Carson, McCulloch, Traill, Waldie and Semple. Scottish doctors alone make a case for the importance of the group to the city. In shipping and commerce, the role of the Laird and Gladstone families is well known. The contribution of the MacIvers to the shipping line of Cunard, of Macleod and Reid to tobacco manufacture, Buchanan in flour milling, the Fairries in sugar refining, Aikin in insurance, and Perry in marine engineering might be less well known, and benefactors like Samuel Smith, the cotton king, who gave money to the YMCA, Louisa Birt's Sheltering Homes charity, Father Nugent's catholic charity, and the Gordon Smith Institute for Seamen.

In other chapters much will be new. Most are aware of St Andrew's church, now forlornly decaying in Rodney Street. How many realise that there were a dozen other Scottish Presbyterian churches in late-nineteenth-

century Liverpool, the result of the Scottish penchant for religious division? How many, outside the army or the Scottish community, will be aware of the Scottish regimental tradition in the city? Though many are aware of Burns Nights how many will know of the variety of associations and events which flourished from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries in and around the city: St Andrew's societies, Burns clubs, a Wallace club, an Edinburgh University club, Highland games, Highland balls and pipe bands.

The danger of such a pioneering survey is that it becomes a list of names of great men and women, a useful preliminary exercise in itself of course but lacking analysis or explanation. Though the book does not entirely avoid this the authors strive for a wider context. They are well aware of the literature on migrant groups which explores their numbers, economic background, tendency to cluster and foster an expatriate identity through language, religion, associational culture and philanthropy. They make frequent comparisons with other migrant groups in Liverpool (Irish and Welsh in particular), and address issues of migrant success and assimilation. The book is much more than a litany of Scottish success, and it begins to address the advantages of education and attitude which commonly attend studies of Scottish emigrants, most vividly in the semi-autobiographical *Non-potable Scotch* by the famous Ontario economist, J. K. Galbraith. This book makes some comparisons with the more intensively studied Scottish Diaspora to Canada.

Occasionally the approach of Munro and Sims has obvious limitations. The chapter on demography, for example, uses published Census Reports to establish Scottish migration to Merseyside and other towns and counties in England but does not use census enumerators' books to ascertain the precise Scottish origin of the migrants or their place of settlement in the town. This prevents the authors from elaborating on one of their early contentions, that Scottish emigration is peculiar because it was from an industrialising and advancing country rather than an agricultural and backward one. They also claim, with Devine, that much Scottish migration was from the Highlands, the remote rural and economically backward region of Scotland where famine, transition to sheep rearing and wholesale eviction were driving people away, rather than from the industrialising central belt. Even cursory examination of the Liverpool census enumerators' books shows, however, that most Scottish migrants to Liverpool came from Glasgow and Edinburgh rather than the Highlands. Scottish migration to Liverpool was largely the movement of people from one developed area to another, rather than betterment migration from a collapsing rural society. This characteristic reinforces the authors' perception of Scottish migration as different from Irish migration, for example, and goes some way to explaining the success of the migrants in Liverpool.

This book is to be welcomed. It provides a readable introduction to a subject of great importance which has been ignored for too long. It will provide a context for more detailed research in the future. One of the pleasures of the book is the many illustrations. The formatting of the text is occasionally unhelpful. Why are chapter headings separated from the chapter text? Why are there unexplained half-page gaps in the text? Why do running heads not pick up chapter heading? Why are tables awkwardly spaced and headings not always clear? Why are book titles underlined rather than italicised? These are pedantic grouses, perhaps, but could be easily improved. The Liver Press is to be congratulated on making a useful study available at a modest price.

M. J. Power, University of Liverpool

Frank Bamford, *Back to the sea: The true story of Southport*, [Altrincham: the Author], 2001. 110 pp. £8.95 pbk. ISBN 0 95517225 4 9.

Eric Glasgow, *Victorian Southport*, Settle: Hudson History, 2000. 36pp. £2.90 pbk. ISBN 0 9533643 9 9.

As an historian of Southport it was a pleasure to find two books dealing with the area recently pop through my letterbox. I was even more gratified to discover that each of them provides a distinctive contribution to the already extensive historiography of the town.

In and around the 1960s, Dr Glasgow regularly wrote scholarly newspaper articles on many facets of the history of Southport. They appeared in a period that pre-dated the explosion in the publication of local history books, and I am sure that I was not alone in admiring and collecting these pieces. It is therefore pleasing to welcome a more substantial publication from him. His chosen format is that of 'a brief essay', a vehicle admirably suited to his literary style, and his 'many years of patient research' guarantee that the book contains a wealth of fascinating detail. His review of the learned societies active in Victorian Southport provides an example. The detail illuminates but never submerges Glasgow's consistently maintained central thesis that Southport's enduring 'extraordinary identity and civic spaciousness' is a product of its formative Victorian years.

Much attention is understandably devoted to Charles Hesketh, one of the lords of the manor and rector of North Meols, which contained Southport. It is doubtful that anyone would challenge Glasgow's claim that Hesketh, one of the original Improvement Commissioners, was an influential religious and secular leader. More questionable is his promotion of Hesketh as an innovative landowner. His holdings in Southport were largely limited to the Hesketh Park and High Park areas and their

development followed the successful pattern earlier established by the other two local landowners.

Glasgow culls his material from a variety of sources, including several that have not been widely used by other local scholars. Unfortunately, although he lists a number of books and articles as references for further reading, his essay format precludes the systematic identification of the primary sources. The thirty-six page book contains a four-page block of photographs, and Glasgow appears to have been poorly served by his art editor. The photographs are not linked to the text; moreover one, captioned 'Band Stand, Lord Street in 1890', is of a structure that was not built until many years later and shows a performer playing an electric organ in the 1950s. The strength of this book comes from Glasgow's unfailing sensitivity to the nature of the society in Victorian Southport and his appreciation of the complex balance that existed between the town's role as a residential town and as a resort. It is a modestly priced, elegantly written and readable book that has already found its way onto many local bookshelves, and should continue to do so.

Unlike Glasgow, who has lived in Southport for some seven decades, Frank Bamford first came to the town as a visitor four or five years ago. This detachment should perhaps give his work an objectivity sometimes denied to long-term residents. Indeed, he claims to have identified a theme neglected by other local historians, namely, the impact of the changing coastline and the retreat of the sea from Southport. This has enabled him to provide us with what he titles 'The true story of Southport'. He has based his book on what he describes as 'the only reliable source', the run of one of the local newspapers. Such a limited approach perhaps explains the failure to adequately address what must be one of the most fundamental issues of foreshore reclamation—who holds the rights and who will own the reclaimed land? Bamford has given us a detailed, sequential account of Southport as a seaside resort, and true, no one has previously provided such a chronicle. For him history is still being made and many will welcome the fact that he brings his story up to the new millennium.

The author claims that his is a 'much more complex and intriguing story than the hitherto accepted version'. One might wonder about the emphasis on Southport as a resort and the balance with the town's role as a place of residence and indeed of industry. Surprisingly, manufacturing industries, which receive scant attention, have been Southport's major employers of labour during the twentieth century. Bamford notes that the 1881 census enumerators' returns show two small boarding schools in Albert Road. Further analysis would have revealed that there were just under a thousand boarders in the town and that it was the principal centre for private school education in the north of England. Also ignored is the extraordinary number of local championship golf courses. Many were originally built

to fertilise the landowners' schemes for high-class residential development, and the land of some, including Royal Birkdale, was later bought by the corporation, which was quick to recognize the value of these assets to a resort. The significance of more recent dramatic demographic changes also receives little attention. This book is, therefore, hardly a balanced history of Southport, but it is well illustrated with appropriate photographs and maps, accompanied by informative captions.

Harry Foster, Southport

Jill Cronin & Frank Rhodes, *Ardwick* (Images of England), Stroud: Tempus, 2002. 128pp. £10.99 pbk. ISBN 0 7524 2473 4.

Chris Driver, *Bolton and district* (Britain in Old Photographs), Stroud: Tempus, 1999. 128 pp. £9.99 pbk. ISBN 0 7509 0974 9.

Michael & Peter Cox, *Saddleworth* (Images of England), Stroud: Tempus, 2002. 128 pp. £10.99 pbk. ISBN 0 7524 2275 8.

Jack Smith, *Chorley then and now* (Images of England), Stroud: Tempus, 2001. 96pp. £10.99 pbk. ISBN 0 7524 2278 2.

There cannot be many places in Britain that have not had some form of photographic record as portrayed in these four examples of the art from the North West. Indeed there seems to be an inexhaustible supply and demand for old photographs 'then and now'. But what are these books for? Who are they aimed at?

The author of the Bolton volume is quite explicit in his introduction as to what his book of photographs is *not*. It is 'not a history of the Bolton area . . . more a collection of snapshots over the last hundred years'. Likewise, Jack Smith in the Chorley volume hopes that the book will 'evoke a few memories and stimulate some conversations.' The co-authors of the Saddleworth collection are somewhat more constructive in stating that they hope 'this publication will encourage photographers of the present day to record Saddleworth as it is now' and they see the photographic image as 'the most powerful' in portraying the area. Cronin and Rhodes see their book on Ardwick as a record of the area's history. It shows 'how important and bustling a township Ardwick was.' The books are well produced and the reproductions are of very high quality. Indeed some of them are really stunning. The modest aims of the books are belied by their archive contents revealing prints that must be unique, which would otherwise have remained in private hands and possibly have never seen the light of day. They are far more than coffee table books, though one wonders if this is what they are for?

The Bolton book covers not only the centre of the town, but also its suburbs of Horwich, Deane and Farnworth; with sections at the end on coal mining, transport, human interest and fashion. I asked myself if I could take away some idea of what Bolton was like from this book. Is it meant purely for old Boltonians or could outsiders get a grip on the town? How far should maps be included, to locate buildings which no longer exist? Two maps are included, but both are disappointing in being too small in scale. Both conveniently or inadvertently exclude Manchester to the southeast. Why? The Ardwick volume does have some well-produced maps on pp. 6, 9 and 60, but again it would have been helpful to put this area in context with its big neighbour. We are only told that Ardwick is to the east of Manchester.

The Bolton book, like its companions, does include some superb 'snapshots' which must be real rarities, like those on p. 10 of the west doorway of St Peter's Church under demolition in 1866, or the grim ones of two courts on pp. 52-53 (taken just before demolition or not?) I felt real frustration, however, with a lot of this book. I wanted some logical sequence and order. Instead the reader jumps about chronologically, for example in chapter five, from 1896 to 1936, back to 1907, to an undated print, then to 1924. In the chapter on Deane it would appear that the only significance the suburb had was its church and that it was bombed during both world wars. I could applaud the snapshots taken, but it was too much like looking at a fragmented kaleidoscope and left me feeling desperate for the further reading at the end to find out more. Yet this book must be complimented in that, unlike the others, it does have a bibliography.

The Saddleworth volume does give some 'most powerful' images, particularly the aerial views of the terrain as, for example, of Dobcross, c.1870 or Uppermill in 1905. The Ardwick volume contains a useful history of the area from 1283 but this book, in particular, shows how frustrating the lack of an index is. If these volumes are to have real archive use the photographs would benefit from some kind of indexing. For instance the tram/bus depot in Hyde Road was/is obviously a key feature of the area, but it is shown on pp. 25, 35, 55, 78 and 97. Does one have to finger through the whole volume to find it every time? Likewise the famous (or infamous) Fenian ambush of 1867 (vague memories of 'O' level history trigger in my brain) is included. Where would one try to find it from the contents list?

As mentioned previously the Chorley volume tries a different approach, comparing the old with the new. It shows how the dread decade of the 1960s destroyed a lot of the old and replaced it mainly with the banal and indifferent (for example the row of cottages on p. 67 now occupied by a Comet store, or the M61 motorway on p. 77 or Lyons Lane on p. 54). In many ways this book set me thinking more than the others, as it brought up notions of conservation, heritage and the influence of the retail and

transport revolutions (i.e. supermarkets and cars) on the environment. Through no fault of its own this proved to be a depressing book for a historian but still a provocative one.

One cannot quibble over the technical production of these books, as they are certainly stimulating volumes by authors with an obvious pride in their localities, as is shown in the well-researched captions. They could be even more useful with good indexes, bibliographies and maps to show the locality and relationship of these places with their neighbouring towns in the North West. This would show that these volumes are not just for local interest, but are a significant contribution to a region that was the powerhouse of the country as a whole during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Roger Hull, Liverpool

R. Gardiner, *The history of the White Star Line*, Hershham: Ian Allan, 2001. 224pp. £16.99 hbk. ISBN 0 7110 2809 5.

This is a book which most readers will either love or loathe, and for a wide variety of reasons. Let us begin with the question of basic attitude to the subject. To the old-fashioned 'ship-lover antiquarians' the name of White Star stood very high indeed, and this is a position with which the author obviously has a strong residual sympathy. But his book builds on the catalogue of disasters to be found in Eaton & Haas' *Falling Star: Misadventures of White Star Line Ships* (Patrick Stephens, 1989) to establish that White Star liners should have carried a prominent government health warning: their safety record was consistently bad over a long period of time. *Titanic* was only worse than the others because she was bigger. The author would be less than human if he could totally resist the temptation to black humour (which he does not) but he sometimes fails to put incompetence in its proper historical context.

To the non-specialist reader, *Olympic's* running-down and sinking of the Nantucket Lightship—a vessel designed, constructed, painted and illuminated to be conspicuous—might seem the mark of ultimate navigational incompetence, but the context is that all around the world lightships were run down: at the time, in this journal's home port of Liverpool they went down at an average rate of very nearly one per year, with many more suffering minor collision damage. Bob MacAlindin's *No Port in a Storm* (1998) shows that such accidents occurred anywhere there were lightships and vessels to collide with them.

The author's writing style will cause offence to some. It does not show a proper reverence for its topic or even for the discipline of researching it.

To me this is no great objection: I think reverence, as distinct from respect for something of proven worth, is something we can do well enough without.

Oh no, not the *Titanic* again? Happily, the author recognises that the displacement tonnage of recent literature on the *Titanic* exceeds that of the average iceberg and does not wallow through it all again at inordinate length, providing instead only a (blessedly) brief summary of the key points of the disaster. But that tonnage of literature is one to which he has made two controversial contributions in which he suggested that the vessel that sank was not, in fact, *Titanic* but her sister *Olympic*. Yet in the present work, no doubt is cast as to which ship it was that sank: we get the accepted (and to me still correct) story that the *Titanic* was indeed the one which went down. Knowing the background, I found this confusing.

But this is not just a book for 'shipping enthusiasts'. It has a good deal of biographical information on the key characters of the White Star Line and an outline of the operation of the firm itself from its antecedents in sailing ship days, trading mainly to Australia, through to its purported historical murder by Cunard after the 'merger': in reality no merger at all, but a take-over required by Government. It is a long and fascinating story, touching on an enormous variety of trades, activities and people, and in this I thought the book generally successful, though I was a little unhappy at the rather gleeful excoriation of the architectural style of Thomas Ismay's 'stately home' at Dawpool—I shouldn't have minded living in it in the days when one could still get the servants. More seriously, it was a fine example of its type, deserving of some grudging respect even from those who hate its type. Nouveau riche + prestige architect = crass pile, but the said crass pile is still historical evidence we should be using and interpreting rather than mocking. We are not even shown a photograph of it (and it featured large in *Country Life* when it was built) to judge for ourselves.

What did upset me about this book is its relationship with its sources. It is quite clear that the author has done a great deal of research using fragmented and unwieldy sources to track the service records of ships and men. This is a considerable and praiseworthy achievement, but then a couple of problems arise. The first is that almost no clue is given as to where information has been found. This becomes important when he moves to the use of secondary sources, because the difference between producing a useful and worthy synthesis based on many and varied secondary sources and being unfairly derivative is a simple matter of providing references or at least acknowledgements. This book provides none, and I noticed information from, among others, Stammers' *The Passage Makers* which really should have been acknowledged. This cannot, as in some cases, be blamed on 'publisher's policy' because I

have written for Ian Allan and had no trouble persuading them to include suitable acknowledgement for any significant paraphrasing.

But that would not have suited the author's agenda. I know from 'personal information' (perhaps more accurately described as insider gossip) that his accusation that Cunard purposely, perhaps purposefully, destroyed considerable amounts of White Star archive material is almost certainly true. But his introduction also includes allegations that the 'Liverpool Museum Service' was implicated in the destruction, or at least disappearance, of large amounts of White Star archive material. A wider conspiracy is suggested.

I worked for the City of Liverpool Museums at the time in question, and from early 1969 we enjoyed a luxury rare in the museum world: we had a warehouse in St Anne Street which was actually bigger than we immediately needed. This allowed us to collect many tons of paper from, among others, the Mersey Railway, Cheshire Lines Railway, Cunard and the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board. Between 1970 and 1980 we collected literally several hundred tons of archive material. If the author is seriously suggesting that in this orgy of collection we shunned, lost or deliberately consigned to the pulp mills large amounts of White Star papers then he should show some evidence. As it happens, we did collect a small amount of White Star material from the basement of the Cunard Building in 1972, which is now available to the public in the Merseyside Maritime Museum's Maritime Archives & Library. We also purchased a large private collection of archives which included some White Star material. There is also a limited amount of evidence in the huge Mersey Docks & Harbour Board collection. At a different level, we paid a huge sum of money to purchase the 'Ismay Testimonial' as a public recognition, available to the public, of Thomas Ismay's contribution to the local economy.

There is much here which many readers will find useful and informative, and, the adverse criticisms above notwithstanding, I enjoyed reading it. It is, for its price, well produced too, with two good sections of illustrations which really do tell us something about the subject rather than just being inserted to 'pretty up' the text. They have not, as is common practice in books on maritime history, been over-cropped and while there is the odd bit of 'bleed-out' which is not quite precise, this is a lot of book for your money, especially to sentimental old fools like me who like to see a publisher still running an in-house printing division located in this sceptred isle. The binding is not traditionally stitched, but seems strong. Furthermore, while the book does not have any pretence to scholarly references or conventions it does have a very thorough (and, at a few spot-checks, accurate) index.

This brings me back to where I started: you will love it or loathe it: it all depends on what you are looking for. For what it sets out to be, I found it

very largely successful. If my reservations expressed above do not worry you, then buy it and I am sure you will enjoy it.

Adrian Jarvis, Merseyside Maritime Museum

David J. P. Mason, *Roman Chester: City of the eagles*, Stroud: Tempus, 2001. 224 pp. £17.99 pbk. ISBN 0 7524 1922 6.

This book is a very welcome and worthy addition to the growing Tempus series of studies of Roman-British history that are site-specific. Mason's achievement here is to set the development of Roman Chester into a growing body of knowledge, spanning many disciplines, regarding the Roman North-West.

That this is the first volume for more than a quarter of a century devoted exclusively to the Roman history of Chester will give some indication of the amount of new material that has been waiting to be drawn into a revised synthesis of the site. Mason's own 'credentials' for this undertaking are, in view of his long and varied association with Chester's archaeology, impeccable; if the reader is led to high expectations he/she will not be disappointed.

The book explores and analyses on many levels. The long task of discovery is graphically illustrated by some fine photographs of the mid-nineteenth century; poignantly too, when we realise how much of Roman Chester has been torn down in the last one hundred and fifty years. As Mason notes, the damage done by trying in the 1960s to accommodate the motor car in the city centre is the more frustrating to contemplate when we appreciate that current policy on this matter has gone completely into reverse—too late, of course, to save such treasures as the legionary baths.

Then there is the interpretation of the fortress site itself, particularly in the early years: here the author's long association with the enigmatic 'Elliptical Building' comes into its own. Mention is made of the still-alive possibility of pre-fortress military activity (pp. 31–33), but that there was something special about the inception of *this* fortress, with its extra space and monumental building plans, can hardly be denied. Mason conveys a sense of the excitement and expectation that must have been felt with the coming in AD 69 of a new emperor (Vespasian) and, a year later, the emperor's somewhat impetuous son-in-law, Quintus Petillius Cerialis—though some may feel that Cerialis' not undistinguished predecessor, Marcus Vetus Bolanus, has been a little 'undersold' here (pp. 29–30). That special buildings suggest special status is reasonable; that Vespasian intended major (and thorough) conquest in northern Britain and, perhaps, Ireland is equally so. Indeed Tacitus, in his description of Agricola gazing

across the sea to Ireland, perhaps betrays more than a hint of wistfulness on his part and that of his father-in-law over a policy which, by AD 81, had been consigned to the history books. The nature and scope of the special buildings are given a great boost by Mason's use of remarkable computer-generated graphics. Another major insight into the enormity of the task of constructing a fortress for 5,500 men is provided by the statistical material contained particularly in chapters 4, 5 and 11. In such a way, the author puts across a vivid idea of the huge and continuing logistical impact of the fortress on the local environment.

This environmental impact as important too, in a wider sense: not only had the fortress to be built and maintained, but also the legionaries and their dependants will have constituted a substantial market for both durables and perishables. The hinterland thus saw development in the causes of supply and manufacturing, as well as for social, cultural and religious enhancement. Not only this, but Mason rightly draws attention too to the fortress's wider, *military*, hinterland: during the second century, in particular, its soldiers were involved in the fluid and hazardous business of frontier security, involving such major 'projects' as the construction and upkeep at different times of three different frontier-lines.

It was perhaps only in the third century that the fortress found itself in a more settled scenario, perhaps realising then some of the potential which had been the principal objective a century and more earlier. In this context, Mason discusses in some detail the evidence provided for the individual building, both within and without the fortress. One wonders how far, as time went on, the character of the place and its people changed, and what was the nature then of Chester's local and regional role. Much of this, as Mason observes, remains a mystery, as it does elsewhere also.

A final, and exciting, area of the exploration lies in the subject of communicating through presentation, of which this book is itself a good example: Mason has been involved with others (as he indicates in his preface) in developing computer-generated representations of many parts of the fortress. As is shown this is simply not a matter of good display technique, but much can be learnt from it about the fluctuating fortunes of the physical fortress—not least, the environmental 'impact-figures' alluded to earlier.

The book is generously and helpfully illustrated with computer graphics, photographs, maps and plans; there is much to be learned from the history which these document. It is, however, a history that throughout stimulates the interest and remains eminently readable. The publisher's 'blurb' on the back cover claims this as the 'first ever authoritative book on Roman Chester that is accessible to a wide popular readership'. It may seem to be a big claim, but it is David Mason's achievement here that his book is both broad in its scope and carries authority; nor will his readers, whatever the

level of their own knowledge, be tempted to put it down until the final page. David Mason has succeeded in doing both Roman Chester and the Roman historian of north-west England a considerable service.

David Shotter, Morecambe

Liverpool Record Office, *Project POOL: Photos of Old Liverpool*, CD-ROM. Liverpool: Liverpool Libraries and Information Services, 2002. £15.00 (+£1.00 postage). ISBN 0 902990 25 X.

Regular users of the Liverpool Record Office will be aware of the fine collections of local photographic illustrations preserved there, from the pioneering efforts of Charles Inston and Thomas Burke at the beginning of the twentieth century (some of which are reproduced in Brian Walker & Ann Hinchliffe, *In our Liverpool home*, Blackstaff Press, 1978), to the similarly engaging photographs taken in the 1960s and 70s by Harry Ainscough (see *Ainscough's Liverpool*, Bluecoat Press, 1999). These photographers recorded life as it was, with Edwardian and, later new Elizabethan, people (mainly children) in the foreground of streets and buildings which have now largely been demolished.

From 1896 to 1995 the City Council Engineer's Department strove to record the urban landscape in photographic form, producing nearly 100,000 images depicting areas that were to be improved; those that had been improved; the clearance of slums and their replacement by new social housing; the building of tramways; the emergence of buses and many other aspects of the expansion of a confident city. Unlike the Inston, Burke and Ainscough photographs the engineers' efforts were intended to show the bare necessities of life: the streets, the street furniture, the bricks and mortar, without the romantic images of urchin children. For many years the Record Office has held a collection of prints purchased from the City Engineer, and now the entire collection, consisting of glass negatives and contact prints, totalling 158,383 photographs, has been deposited in the Central Library. With the aid of lottery funding Project POOL was established, the first 20,000 photographs from 1897 to 1962 were catalogued and 2,000 images were digitised. This CD-ROM contains a selection of about 650 images, showing samples from the range of the collection. These are categorised by subject (i.e. transport, events, health, housing and landmarks), which are then subdivided to aid closer identification. There is, however, no index of streets or buildings.

There is a useful editorial section which describes the history of the collection and contains biographies of some key figures, for example, John Alexander Brodie, City Engineer for most of the first quarter of the

twentieth century and Sir Lancelot Keay, City Architect from 1938 to 1948—both national and international figures in the field of municipal technical services. There are glaring examples of poor editorial control or proof reading here (in his biographical sketch James Newlands (1811–71), for example, is correctly described as Borough Engineer, but the caption to his portrait states ‘City Engineer’).

The photographs are found by clicking on the subject and the reader is then presented with pages of thumbnail views, enabling one to click again and obtain an enlargement of a specific picture. Many of the pages of thumbnail photos contain empty spaces (as in a photograph album where pictures have been removed and not replaced), so the unfortunate impression is given that the collection is incomplete or deficient in some way. The images when enlarged are mainly very clear and are suitable for printing. Careless editorial control leading to misleading, or in some cases incorrect, information crops up again, in the captions to some of the thumbnail photographs (e.g. a photograph of St Nicholas’ Church is captioned ‘1880’, sixteen years before the City Engineer’s policy of recording street improvements started, and a view described as the ‘Palais de Lux’ [sic] cinema, Lime Street, actually (and very clearly) shows the Forum cinema (the Palais is in the photograph but can hardly be identified, even with the aid of a magnifying glass); a picture of the Philharmonic Hall is captioned ‘Phillamonic Hall’ (there are other examples of un-checked spelling errors throughout), and, most seriously, a building described as ‘Playhouse Theatre 1954’, is actually the old Theatre Royal, by then a cold storage warehouse). In many cases the information given is too little for easy identification (e.g. the caption to a photograph of the Atlas Cinema gives no clue as to its location; a picture of ‘Hoardings, Church Road’ does not specify which Church Road—out of a possible seven in Liverpool—is depicted).

The treasure on this CD-ROM is, for this reviewer, *Homes for Workers*, a short film made by the Liverpool Gas Company in the mid-1930s. Produced in the Pathe Pictorial style prevalent at the time, complete with rousing opening music and a fruity commentary by Lancelot Keay, the City Architect, delivered in the heavily enunciated tones currently beloved of satirists and impressionists, the film demonstrates the enthusiastic determination of the City Council to demolish slum properties and to replace them with public housing of a high standard. Scenes of buildings being demolished are contrasted with views of new city centre flats and housing estates rising rapidly on the city’s outskirts. A resident is shown talking to camera about the improvements made to her family’s life by the council’s slum clearance policy and her delight with their new and well-appointed council flat (powered mainly by gas, of course). This sequence provides the bonus of an example of a Liverpool working class accent in the 1930s.

This collection provides an interesting cross-section of views of Liverpool from the beginning to about two-thirds of the way through the twentieth century. It scores most strongly when relating to social conditions (i.e. housing and public health) and to transport. Despite the disappointingly careless editorial work and the fact that the disc is not easy to navigate, for sheer content it is well worth its modest price to the historian, and should also prove to be a valuable teaching tool.

John Tiernan, Liverpool

