Mr Rollinson’s first book, though modest both in size and professed aim, offers an admirable and scientifically compiled picture of one of the most beautiful parts of Britain, including in its scope much of Cumberland and Westmorland and parts of Lancashire north of the Sands. Despite his disclaimer—'it is not a work of detailed scholarship'—made in the Introduction, the informed reader will soon discover that it is a work of scholarship, distilled to a fine essence from scores of books and papers with praiseworthy economy and selectivity.

Historically comprehensive, it necessarily follows to some extent the broad outlines of W. G. Collingwood’s Lake District History written in 1925, beginning with prehistoric Man and going skilfully through the Roman, Anglo-Saxon, and medieval periods to the changing economic landscape of later times. It is, however, by no means repetitive of the elder Collingwood’s earlier work, for Mr Rollinson brings to his story not only the outlook of the historical geographer, but the freshness of the fell walker endowed with a remarkably observant pair of eyes and with a nice judgment. One of the great advantages of the book is that it brings Lake District history up to date and does it authoritatively, while a further merit is that it presents for the first time under a single cover the full range of landscape development in the area topped with a balanced discussion of present and future problems which the planners would do well to note.

The landscape itself is treated in the first chapter, but the picture that is drawn is primarily from the geological standpoint, and one could have wished for a more descriptive account of the mountains, valleys, and lakes of this region of outstanding beauty. The rest of the book is concerned with Man and his works, and both for its own scenic interest and as a magnificent but often pitiless setting the landscape deserved a few more pages.

From the first appearance of Man to the end of Scots raiding, the next four chapters follow the dramatic history of the Lake District and make absorbing reading. The economy of words is so cunning that one is almost unaware of it until, at the end of each chapter, the amount of detailed reading and, in many cases, of original research is revealed. In the chapters on early Man and on the Roman period, maps, text, and photographs vividly depict the succession of occupied sites from flint chipping points to the more sophisticated Roman camps at Hardknott, Watercrook, and Ravenglass, to their coastal stations and their roads. The theme of Celtic foundations from the Early Iron Age, through the Roman occupation, and up to the late coming of the Angles is never lost sight of. Maps and plans illustrate the prehistoric and Roman phases, and place-names from the Celtic and the later Anglo-Saxon and Norse-Irish periods plotted on a single distribution map give a balanced view of the extent and types of country that each group of people settled. Thus the Anglian colonization is seen to be primarily of a fringe of coastal lowland, river lowland, and a thin penetration of the more open and hospitable dales.

In contrast to the small, but nucleated villages of the English, the Celtic and later the Norse-Irish had a predilection for the high dales and the mountain slopes, and it is to the latter invaders that the inner Lake District today owes the great majority of its place-names and many of the names of natural features. Mr Rollinson traces the pen and blaen elements back to the Celts, the -ingham, -ham, and -ton suffices to the Angles, and the tarns, dales, fells, becks, the thwaites, scales, and saeters to the Norse with ample and illuminating local colour. To the scholar or to the informed tourist, the map becomes correspondingly more alive.
The historical treatment as such is taken up to the end of the Middle Ages, and here Mr Rollinson is on even more familiar territory for his own research has, in particular, been concentrated on this period and he distils from many original documents the fascinating story of the Norman abbeys and their lands—Furness, St Bees, Cartmel. The pele towers, the castles, and the fortified church towers reflect the menace of Scottish raids in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Yet the first market charters were granted in this period: to Kendal in 1189, to Ravenglass in 1208, to Penrith in 1221, and to Cockermouth and Keswick before the end of the century. Despite the troubled political background, economic progress got under way, and the early woollen industry was rooted in difficult but real agricultural progress, and linked with the growth of population.

From this point in the book the theme is economic development geared primarily to the task of tracing the antecedents of the present economy. The geographical background is admirably used, and the historical perspective is never lost as the author traces the rise of the statesmen, the continuing woollen industry, the enclosure of the high tells, and the consequent growth in prosperity and the improvement in domestic architecture. The exploitation of mineral resources on a commercial scale from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is traced, especially in relation to the growth of Keswick which was the centre for the major mining ventures. He turns then to the vital role of communications, so late to develop and offering difficulties unique in England.

The eventual coming of the tourists along these same roads, from Thomas Gray onwards ('the first genuine tourist'), introduces the theme of Chapter Six, and brings the reader to the principal source of income of many present-day Lakelanders. The transition to the final subject—planning—is smoothly accomplished. This last chapter represents a suitable climax to the pattern which has been woven throughout the book, and Mr Rollinson here sets forth with clarity and conviction the probems and dangers implicit in the recent invasion by the outside world into a countryside of outstanding beauty and unique historical interest. Cars, caravans, reservoirs, new building and other modern introductions all threaten a landscape which 'when once destroyed . . . can never be re-created'.

One could not offer any but the most minor criticisms of this book, but it is a pity that the excellent lists of sources omit page references, and that figure 20 (p. 105) does not distinguish the types of ore mined. But these are negligible weighed against the merits of this highly readable and attractively produced book. Original maps, photographs, occasional lively drawings such as those of Gosforth Cross and Townend, add to the reader's pleasure, and its appeal both to the scholar and the tourist is indubitable.

DOROTHY SYLVESTER.

Liverpool Registry of Merchant Ships
by Robert Craig and Rupert C. Jarvis

Considering the importance of Liverpool as a port in the eighteenth century, it is surprising that so little has been published on two basic problems of its trade—the vessels belonging to the port, and the owners investing in them. In 1932 R. Stewart-Brown published Liverpool Ships in the 18th Century, including the King's Ships built there, with notes on the Principal Shipwrights, a survey of some 150 pages only, chiefly concerned with shipbuilding. 'The Liverpool Registers under the Act of 1786 are, it is believed, all extant from 1786 to date', he wrote, implying that he had not even seen them. Anyone who has seen the formidable rows of large volumes in the Custom House would forgive Mr Stewart-Brown for not having tackled them for his book; we must be all the more grateful to Mr Jarvis and Mr Craig, who have both contributed to our Transactions in the past, for having given us a taste of the richness of the material contained in them.

The Liverpool Registry of Merchant Ships has three valuable sections. The first
is a learned introduction by Mr Jarvis, late Librarian to H.M. Commissioners of Customs and Excise, on the origins and development of the British system of registration of merchant vessels, and on the Liverpool registers in particular. He points out the special importance of the registry act of 1786, that for the first time all British sea-going vessels (being decked, or of 15 tons and upwards) were required to be registered, with full details of the vessel and the names of the master and owners, the latter with occupation and place of residence. Thus the registrations for the first years, for any port where the records survive, give us a complete cross-section of the shipping of the time: its ownership, the place of build of the vessels, whether local, British, colonial, foreign or prize, the pattern of investment in shipping, and many other details.

The second part of the book, prepared by Mr Craig, is a transcript of the Liverpool entries for 1786 (201 entries), 1787 (262) and 1788 (98). For these there are comprehensive indexes, of vessels, of owners of vessels (conveniently including occupation and places of residence), and of place-names. For lack of space, masters of vessels are not indexed; but since these names are placed always at the right hand side of each printed entry they are easily differentiated from lists of owners, and thus easily checked by a student wanting a particular name.

In addition to the printed entries, Mr Craig has copies of all entries from 1789 to 1805, and in collaboration with Mr Jarvis, has worked out, in a third section of the book, a series of analytical tables to summarise the most important information arising. For instance, there are tables to show how the Liverpool merchant fleet was recruited and how vessels left it. A valuable table contains a yearly summary of the regions in the British Isles and the colonies which supplied vessels to Liverpool, so that the relative importance of Liverpool's own shipbuilding can be compared with that of other places. Other tables deal with prizes captured in war, some to show how many came on the Liverpool registry, and from what countries, and one to show how many Liverpool vessels were lost by capture. Another table summarises other ways in which vessels left the register, by loss at sea, condemnation as unfit, or broken up. A lengthy table gives the ports at which vessels were registered before being entered at Liverpool, and ports to which Liverpool vessels were sold, both covering the years 1786 to 1805: this demonstrates the importance of the Liverpool market for sales of vessels of every kind.

Other analyses of the information in the registers are those concerning owners of vessels. There are a series of comparisons between the first 200 registrations of 1786, and a similar number in 1804-5, which show the geographical spread of places of residence of part-owners of Liverpool vessels, with details of how many vessels they invested in and of their occupations. Unfortunately the information required by the register did not include any statement of the monetary value of any part-owner's share of a vessel, or even the size of a share (which was later required by a new registry act of 1823); there are however some entries printed for 1786–1788 (which happen to record the transfer of shares) references to the fraction of the vessel involved, but not for every transfer. Thus there are limits to the conclusions to be drawn from these lists, but the names and places of residence of part-owners make interesting reading for students of Liverpool and its trading hinterland.

There is obviously a mass of material of concern to local historians in Lancashire and Cheshire. With the table and the indexes, they can look for information about individuals or about particular places and regions, whether their primary interest is maritime or not. Were some part-owners of vessels resident outside Liverpool because they had retired from Liverpool trade but were still sleeping partners? Or were they concerned in Liverpool shipping because of its use in distributing a local product? Were they from the monied classes in search of an investment which the prosperity of Liverpool trade provided? Or were they drawn into investment by family connexions? Mr Craig and Mr Jarvis make no pretence at being experts in this local field: the onus is on local historians to interpret the information now provided, and the mass of detail here printed, not to speak of that which still remains to be printed from the registers, leaves work for successive teams of local historians to tackle. For instance a simple index of owners of Liverpool vessels for 1789–1815, similar to that printed for 1787–1788,
would be invaluable to students of Liverpool business fortunes as they rose and fell during the French Wars. It is to be hoped that Mr Craig and Mr Jarvis will continue such work, or find others to emulate them, and that the Chetham Society will be encouraged to print further material of the same type.

Ideally such work would be best done by a group of scholars, some familiar with the national archives and some with local records. Local knowledge could help to avoid some of the minor errors which appear in this book, due to the bad handwriting and spelling of eighteenth century clerks and their obviously bad guesses at some place names. There is no 'Haverstidge' in Derbyshire, or 'Hakwick' in Cheshire, or 'Flockborough' or 'Datton' in Lancashire; local scholars would recognise these as Hathersage, Keckwick, Flookborough and Dutton, and read Upholland for 'Alpholland' and Northenden for 'Northen'. Similar mistakes appear in the index of personal names: 'Dattera' for Daltera and 'Tuill' for Zuill of Liverpool, and 'Lorry' for Lowry of Ulverston. In a work of reference such as this book will become, the student turning first to the indexes should be able to find names correctly spelt, whatever the spelling in the original record. But this is a limited criticism of an important piece of work, all the more important when we realise that there is no parallel publication of register material except for the minor port of Chepstow, and a limited selection from registers of a later date for the port of Bristol.

M. M. SCHOFIELD.