

BOOK REVIEWS

The Cartulary and Charters of the Priory of Saints Peter and Paul, Ipswich. Part 1: The Cartulary (Suffolk Charters XX). Edited by David Allen. xix + 292 pp., b&w pls, bibliography, maps. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78327 354 6. Price £30 hb,

Here is a long-awaited volume; the only known cartulary from an Ipswich priory, and the first volume in the Suffolk Records Society charters series since 2012. The SRS has been publishing documents of fundamental importance for the history of our county since 1958, and the present volume continues this fine tradition. The editor worked for a long period in the Suffolk Record Office, and with his wide knowledge of the history of Ipswich and its town muniments, as well as his profound experience as an archivist, he is the ideal editor for this cartulary. Each deed is presented with an introductory summary and dating information, followed by a complete transcription of the Latin text. In some cases, the editor has identified the original document of which the cartulary contains a copy, and presented an edited version of this original. When the date of a deed is uncertain, which is often the case, a final note presents the editor's justification for the proposed date.

The cartulary has a curious history; it was deposited in a library in Lexington in Kentucky, via an uncertain route, and was bought by the Suffolk Record Office in 1970. David Allen unravels some of this mystery in his superb introductory chapter, which as well gives us a detailed history of the priory, its landholdings, and of the gentry families who were amongst its benefactors. No other religious house in Ipswich has preserved as much documentation. The other large priory, Holy Trinity, has left us two detailed rentals of the thirteenth century, but with this publication we now have for the first time much additional data relevant to the history of Ipswich.

Superficially, a cartulary such as the present one merely contains copies of deeds recording grants of lands to the priory. But for the modern scholar it is much more than this; it is indirectly a history of the priory (if only a partial and secular history), and of its place in the social structure and economy of Ipswich. It is also a record of some of the family history of the upper levels of Ipswich society. And since many of the priory's estates were in villages surrounding Ipswich, it is a historical geography of these places, with much information about agricultural practices. For onomasticians, those interested in the linguistic history of the names of people and places, it is a basic source of data. For place-name scholars, there is valuable new information, such as the identification of another farming settlement called *Carlton* (in Newbourne); the element *Carl-* here being evidence of Viking settlement.

Much of the effort in editing medieval documents is in determining the correct reading in cases of ambiguity between, for example, the scribal forms of *c* and *t*, *u* and *n*, *e* and *o*, and *C* and *T*. In the Latin text, the context will nearly always fix the correct reading. But in names, both place-names and personal names, difficulties are frequent, and here an appeal to a basic principle of onomastics can help considerably. This principle states that names are most often compounded of known elements, and so are interpretable. This is especially true of the numerous field and tenement names in the present cartulary, and the principle allows to disambiguate many cases of doubt. Thus, for example, in deed 31, *Goldhaveth* is nonsensical, and should be read *Goldhavech* to agree with *Goldhavek* in 43. It is the personal name meaning 'Goldhawk'. Similarly in 31, *Gedescalec* should read *Godes-*; it is the surname of the Ipswich *Godescalk* family. The same applies to place-names; for example the unintelligible *Comeres* in 122 should read *Tomeres* to agree with 99. The name means 'two meres', and was

a place in Hintlesham. It is perhaps a matter of editorial policy whether an apparent *Comeres* should be rendered otherwise in print, but I suggest that at least a comment is needed to avoid misleading the naive reader. Sometimes a misreading can have consequences for interpretation; in 151, I suspect *Willelmi de Bodelle* should be *Willelmi de Bodesle*, where *Bodesle* is a known place in Foxhall, and thus this William does not belong to the *de Badley* family. When we read *Helioch* in 44, we lose the interesting fact that there was a ‘holy oak’ (i.e. *Holioch*) in Brooks to the north of Ipswich. I counted about thirty such cases of mistranscriptions of just a single letter in names, many of which render an intelligible name unintelligible. The following clarifications to place-names can also be made: *Childemelne* in 20 cannot be Chelmondiston, but must an unidentified mill. In 24, *Aldulleston* is not Alston in Trimley, but the place in Grundisburgh or Culpho called *Edulwestuna* in Domesday Book (DB), and further recorded in the Leiston and Blythburgh cartularies published by the SRS. *Fachendune* in 27 and elsewhere is the place in Bramford recorded as *Fachedun* in DB. On page 280, *Theford* is not Thetford (in Norfolk), but the ford on the Belstead Brook to the south of Ipswich, which is recorded in the descriptions of the bounds of the liberty of Ipswich.

Despite these quibbles, this volume will be an essential source for everyone interested in the history of Ipswich, and the concluding second volume, containing further documents and the indices, is keenly awaited.

KEITH BRIGGS

Household Inventories of Helmingham Hall: 1597–1741. (Suffolk Records Society vol. 61). Edited by Moira Coleman. xxxvii + 342 pp., plates, appendices, glossary, bibliography, index. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78327 274. Price £35 hb.

Helmingham Hall has been the home of the Tollemache family for the last five hundred years. It was built as a Tudor moated house in 1510 to replace the former Creke Hall which was demolished after John Tollemache married Elizabeth Joyce in 1487. Originally from Avranches in Normandy, the Tollemaches arrived in Suffolk not long after the Norman Conquest and have resided in Suffolk ever since, firstly near Ipswich and subsequently at Helmingham. John Tollemache’s descendants were upwardly mobile and rose from gentry to a baronetcy and finally to the earldom of Dysart. They also had large numbers of children, so the genealogical table provided at the beginning of the book is very necessary, especially as all the baronets were called Lionel!

The present volume is based upon four household inventories for the years 1597, 1626, 1708 and 1741. Having spent many years transcribing and analysing probate inventories, it is a quite different experience to examine household inventories. Valuations are key to probate inventories whereas household inventories have no valuations but set out household furnishings and goods room by room. Compiling an inventory of such a large house is an enormous task, more than 4500 items are recorded in the volume and over 1500 for the 1626 inventory. Many goods are described in considerable detail. Probate inventories are frustrating in this respect, for example, they will list just ‘a clock’, but these household inventories include not only the type of clock but even the maker so that we discover that Helmingham Hall had a pendulum clock made by Benjamin Gray, Watchmaker in Ordinary to George II. Paintings in the Great Hall are described in detail; a picture of four young ladies hand in hand in the 1708 inventory is easily identified, for it still hangs in the Hall over the fireplace. The volume helpfully produces a colour plate of this painting and another recorded picture also still in the

Great Hall, a full-length portrait of Sir Lionel Tollemache, the second baronet.

A benefit of having inventories covering a century and a half for the same property and for the same family is that changes over time can be analysed and this applies both to the rooms and to the goods. By 1708, the 'hall' has become the 'Great Hall'. There is also 'the room where Mr Bockenham lay', a reference to the Revd Anthony Bockenham, rector of Helmingham, whose refusal to take the oaths to King William and Queen Mary led to his resignation and subsequent employment at Helmingham Hall. He died in 1704 shortly before the 1708 inventory was taken. The contents of this room reveal that it was a bedroom. The 1741 inventory lists goods associated with the new caffeine drinks, tea and coffee. It records cups and saucers, kettles, a sugar dish and a 'teaboard'. It is no surprise to find these goods at Helmingham Hall, indeed they might have been expected in 1708. The gentry led the way in owning such goods but within a few years of the 1741 inventory, ownership had spread to most social groups amongst the 'middling sort'.

Two very extensive appendices in the volume cover the development of the Hall over the period of the inventories, and material relating to a second Tollemache property known as 'Lugdons', at Fakenham Magna. The volume also includes a very extensive glossary comprising more than a hundred pages which not only explains lesser-known terms, but also lists references to the goods which considerably aids analysis. For example, the entry for maps lists all maps recorded in the inventories by subject so that we note that the family owned maps of the world, Europe, Italy, England, Scotland and Suffolk. This facility is a boon for the researcher.

Moirá Coleman has done a wonderful job in assembling the material together. The book will be essential reading for anyone who is interested in Helmingham Hall, the Tollemache family or in household inventories. It will also be of relevance to specialist researchers in furnishings, textiles and art. The book may also inspire a visit; the award-winning gardens of the Hall are open to the public and are spectacular. Whilst the Hall itself is not open, a visit to the gardens can be followed by a delicious lunch or cream tea in the Coach House.

KEN SNEATH

The Medieval Clothier. By John S. Lee. xix + 365pp., figures, maps, plates, bibliography, index. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018. ISBN 978 1 78327 317 1. Price £20 hb.

In his new book John Lee makes a valuable contribution to the ever-growing library of work on England's medieval woollen cloth industry. Eight chapters, including an introduction and conclusion, paint the economic background; explore the processes of making cloth and its subsequent marketing and sale; identify clothiers and where they lived; examine their role in government and in wider society; and explore the lives of the most famous among them. An additional seven appendices tabulate data from the alnage accounts (the records of cloth approved for sale by the Crown); list cloth types as defined by statute in 1552; and transcribe the wills of Thomas Paycocke, Thomas Spryng III and William Stumpe. A gazetteer describes surviving buildings with links to clothiers: note the references to Bildeston, Glemsford, Ipswich, Lavenham, Little Waldingfield, Nayland and Stratford St Mary. A glossary defines the less common words used in the text. It is a feast of learning and exposition.

Like me, the author sees the clothier as a figure who first emerged in the fifteenth century. He does, however, search for progenitors in the period before 1400. In an interesting twist to the old tale of Flemish weavers, he argues persuasively that the wealthier among them already operated 'a more sophisticated organization [and] a domestic or putting-out system of

production' that would later be adopted so profitably by English clothiers. By extending his study late into the sixteenth century, Lee can introduce men such as Thomas Kitson who invested the profits of his London trade in building Hengrave Hall.

The volume benefits from the author's encyclopedic knowledge of printed material, but he also uses primary manuscript sources, particularly Chancery proceedings, that have hitherto been largely untapped by textile historians. These are employed most effectively in explaining the extensive use of credit that was essential to the smooth running of any clothmaking business. The will of the Lavenham clothier John Hunte refers to debts owing 'as well beyond the sea as on this side' and illustrates that credit networks stretched beyond our own shores.

There is much of interest to the Suffolk reader. Lavenham and its rich architectural heritage receive ample attention, and the Spryngs merit their place among history's famous clothiers with a well-researched family biography. The success of Hadleigh and the county's other textile centres gets less acknowledgement but, while regrettable, in a nationwide survey this is perhaps unsurprising. Lee touches on Professor Oldland's absurd notion that Suffolk's output was no greater than that of Gloucestershire, Somerset or Wiltshire, but happily concludes that by the late fifteenth century 'it was the leading county for cloth production'. Clear evidence from the plea rolls of the Court of Common Pleas makes this incontrovertible. A sample of these rolls between 1480 and 1500 discloses 136 Suffolk clothiers, as against 45, 75 and 34 for those other counties. Lee's contention that, before the Reformation, Suffolk's 'coloured cloth [as distinct from undyed fabric] seems to have been most successful' is debatable. The evidence of the plea rolls and the military survey of Babergh in 1522 suggests otherwise – where are the dyers? He is, however, almost certainly correct in saying that 'After the Reformation, Suffolk repositioned itself to make blue cloths for northern European markets'. He stumbles in his analysis of cloth exports by Hanseatic merchants from the ports of Colchester and Ipswich. This trade did not collapse in the 1450s but rather at the end of the 1460s. Between the years 1452/53 and 1459/60 it was never less than 1000 cloths a year, so helping to sustain the cloth industry of south Suffolk and north Essex during the difficult period of the Great Slump.

Despite these niggles, Lee's volume is thoroughly researched, well illustrated, carefully structured and written in a clear and engaging style. It deserves its place on the bookshelf of anyone interested in the history of medieval/early modern Suffolk and its textile industry.

NICHOLAS R. AMOR

A Very Dangerous Locality. The Landscape of the Suffolk Sandlings in the Second World War. By Robert Liddiard and David Sims. xii + 363pp., maps, plates, bibliography, index. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2018. ISBN 978 1 912260 08 9. Price £16 pb.

The coastal area of Suffolk is a peaceful place to which people go for recreation, for nature reserves like Minsmere and for the Aldeburgh Festival. Yet local folklore tells of a devil dog who ran down the aisle of a parish church and struck worshippers dead as they knelt at prayer, and of an attempted German landing at Shingle Street during the Second World War that was thwarted by setting the sea on fire. So much for folklore; what really happened in the Sandlings during the Second World War has been uncovered by researchers at the University of East Anglia and is recorded by two of them in this fascinating book. To some of us this is somewhat recent history, but it is no less engrossing for having occurred 'only the day before yesterday'.

The title of the book, which is written by Robert Liddiard, who took the lead in two major research projects at the UEA, and researcher David Sims, reflects the assessment of the coastal area of Suffolk at the time when Britain was faced with invasion in 1940–41. The origin and development of the anti-invasion defences between Lowestoft and Felixstowe are examined in considerable detail, aided by numerous specially drawn maps and diagrams which help to show the close relationship between the layout of the defences and the topography of the area. The building of the coastal defences was a complex matter and the surviving remains are not always easily explained.

The first phase of defences were necessarily put in place with the greatest haste and there was much criticism of their planning and implementation, such as that by General Majendie, who expressed a concern ‘that we are going pill-box mad’. The appointment of a new commander resulted in a change of policy with greater emphasis being put on mobility and less on static defence. The anti-invasion measures are, however, far from being the only subject of this book. A very significant part of the story is about the training that was carried out in the coastal area of Suffolk, much of it in stretches of territory from which the civilian population was evacuated. On Boyton Marshes was a tank artillery range, of which some of the buildings still survive.

An extremely important contribution was made to the preparations for the invasion of Occupied Europe, Operation Overlord, with the training of the 79th Armoured Division in the development and use of ‘Hobart’s Funnies’, the adapted armoured vehicles so named after Major-General Percy Hobart, the commander of the division. These performed vital duties such as sweeping mines and bridging anti-tank ditches in the storming of Hitler’s Atlantic Wall. Replicas of the German defences, including a length of anti-tank ditch, were built on Westleton Walks to facilitate the training of the division and are illustrated in this book.

The conservation and preservation of such relics of wartime activity are discussed in a chapter entitled ‘From eyesore to archaeology’. The admission of Second World War archaeology to academic respectability is quite recent and was both the cause and an effect of the Defence of Britain Project of 1995 to 2002, which aimed to establish the extent and nature of twentieth-century military remains throughout the country.

This publication serves to demonstrate the importance to local studies of the effect of wartime operations on specific areas of countryside. It is a pity that it is somewhat marred by such errors as the reference to the V1 flying bomb as a ‘rocket’ (that was the V2), to a place on the Essex side of the Stour as Parkstone Quay, and to the versatile 40mm anti-aircraft gun as a Bofor; it was a Bofors, named after the Swedish company that designed and first produced it.

ROBERT MALTSTER

Kingdom, Civitas, and County. The Evolution of Territorial Identity in the English Landscape. By Stephen Rippon. xxi + 438pp., figures, maps, plates, appendices, index. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN 978 0 19 875937 9. Price £90 hb.

Stephen Rippon is Professor of Landscape Archaeology at Exeter University, but his original home territory was Essex and it is to this region that he returns in this, his latest book. For, although the book’s title does not make this explicit, this is a detailed study of territorial evolution in eastern England; a region embracing the historic counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Middlesex. This he sees as dividing, in terms of geology, topography, drainage and soils, into three sub-regions: the Northern Thames Basin, East Anglia, and the South East Midlands.

The Northern Thames Basin is defined as an area stretching from the Thames northwards to the line of the Gipping and Lark rivers and therefore including south Suffolk; his 'East Anglia' then only covers north and east Suffolk and Norfolk; the South East Midlands stretches from the Chilterns northwards to the Lincolnshire fens. The validity of these regions as human territories is then analysed through the mapping of 'selected key character-defining features' in three successive periods, the Iron Age, the Roman period and the 'Early Medieval' (Early, Middle and Late Saxon) period. Inevitably, coinage and pottery figure strongly, but, as Rippon points out, unlike many published maps that are based on out-of-date or recycled data, his maps are new and incorporate fresh information from such key sources as recent excavations, Historic Environment Records and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Interestingly, he has also sought to include negativity on his maps, for an absence can be as meaningful as a presence. The result is a wealth of new data to inform or challenge previous assumptions and contentions concerning ancient territories.

The historical evidence for the Iron Age points to tribes called the Catuvellauni, the Trinovantes, the Icenii and the Corieltaui in the study area, and Rippon uses the artefact mapping to suggest some correlation with the natural sub-regions. The Catuvellauni and the Trinovantes are both seen as occupants of the Northern Thames Basin, but occupying, respectively, the west and east halves of it, with perhaps a divide along the watershed between the rivers Lea and Roding. The Icenii were clearly in his 'East Anglia', overlapping with the Trinovantes in the Lark and Gipping valleys. Data for the South East Midlands is, however, curiously lacking, with apparently only some Catuvellauni in the south and some Corieltaui in the north. Cultural differences between the tribes are indicated by the concentration of the large settlements termed *oppida*, cremation burials and imported wine *amphorae* in the Northern Thames Basin, in contrast to the concentrations of horse-harness fittings and torcs in East Anglia. A newly revealed distribution oddity is that of triangular clay loom weights. Previously thought to be fairly ubiquitous in southern Britain, the new mapping shows that they are strongly concentrated in the North-Eastern Thames Basin area and are probably indicative of a particular method of weaving.

Rippon buffers his suggested territories with sometimes quite wide 'boundary zones' that help to hide some of the inconvenient data. One that this reviewer cannot help noticing (as he excavated there) is the defended site at Burgh in south-east Suffolk. In terms of the suggested 'natural' territories, this should fall into the orbit of the Icenii, but it has all the trappings associated with the Trinovantes – 'Belgic' style pottery, imported continental pottery including *amphorae*, triangular loom weights, and the distinct possibility that it should be classed as an *oppidum*. A wide boundary zone has been suggested to accommodate it without too much comment. Similarly awkward is the only known production site for Icenian horse-harness fittings, which happens to be at Waldringfield on the Deben estuary, well to the south of Burgh. Both suggest that we still have more to learn about tribal identities and boundaries.

In the Roman period there has been an assumption that the area was divided into territories known as *civitates* that equated to the earlier tribal units, but Rippon draws attention to the weak historical evidence for this, though there are substantial settlements that may have functioned as *civitates* capitals: Verulamium (St Albans) for the Catuvellauni, Camulodunum (Colchester) or possibly Caesaromagus (Chelmsford) for the Trinovantes and Venta Icenorum (Caister St Edmund) for the Icenii. The last, Venta, is dwarfed by the others and this reflects a general weakness of urban development in Roman East Anglia. East Anglia also lags behind the others in the number of villas, and most certainly with regard to those with mosaics. His maps of the distributions of different types of pottery do, however, suggest that there were different economic areas that might equate with *civitates*; Rettendon, Hadham and London-Essex stamped wares largely circulated in the North Thames Basin, Wattisfield, Brampton and

Pakenham wares circulated in East Anglia, and pink grogged and Horningsea wares did the same in different parts of the South East Midlands.

In the early medieval period the assumption has been that there were two major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms – those of the East Saxons and the East Angles – plus a less precise region sometimes referred to as Middle Anglia; there has also been an assumption that the direct successors of those kingdoms are the counties of Essex (East Saxons) and Norfolk and Suffolk (the north and south folk of the East Angles). If true, this would suggest a dislocation of the earlier territorial boundaries that ignored the current Norfolk-Suffolk, Suffolk-Essex and Essex-Hertfordshire borders. Once again, the distribution maps offer some challenges. The Northern Thames Basin stands out as somewhere different. Unlike its neighbours, it has very few of the Anglo-Saxon sunken featured buildings that are also known as *Grubenhäuser*, it has very few Anglo-Saxon burials, very few wrist clasps (here called sleeve clasps), very little of the Middle Saxon pottery known as Ipswich ware, and it has divergent distributions of many of the types of the early coins known *sceattas*. Rippon posits that this could be one of the areas where a substantial Romano-British population remained in place, a suggestion that has been made by several writers as far back as Mortimer Wheeler in 1935. Palaeoenvironmental evidence indicates that this was not an abandoned landscape, so someone must have been managing it, yet leaving a different cultural footprint to their neighbours. Tantalisingly, the Northern Thames Basin does have more Old English place-names that seem to refer to British communities (e.g. Walden and Walsworth). What is less clear is how such an enclave could have morphed into the East Saxon kingdom.

The mapping does, however, make it clear that south Suffolk exhibits the essential characteristics of the Northern Thames Basin, suggesting that it should more rightly be considered a part of the East Saxon kingdom, not the East Anglian one. This raises the subject of the ‘Gipping Divide’, a long-term boundary that I first identified back in 2004, which equates to the northern boundary of Rippon’s Northern Thames Basin. Rippon does however add a *caveat* by wondering whether the boundary zone might actually be the High Boulder Clay Plateau between the Gipping/Lark and Stour valleys, which he describes as having very poor soils and therefore sparsely populated (though, in truth, the dissected claylands to the south of the Gipping do have substantial amounts of soil with a good agricultural potential, unlike those in the flat, poorly drained claylands to the north of the Gipping, which may well have been sparsely populated).

However, what is clear is that there are strangely stable boundaries in the landscape that require explanation. Some, like Professor Tom Williamson, have recently argued that they are ‘largely the consequence of environmental factors’, i.e. determined by a combination of physical geography, geology, hydrology, soils and climate. Rippon takes the view that this is unlikely in the ‘extremely muted relief’ of eastern England and suggests that they are the result of ‘long-standing spheres of socio-economic interaction’. He disavows a simplistic sequence in which Iron Age kingdoms became Roman *civitates* and then, in turn, Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, but suggests that there were long-standing regional identities, rooted in their landscapes, which originated in the Iron Age, survived the homogenizing effects of Romanization and then became stronger again in the early medieval period.

The amount of well-researched new data that Rippon has assembled for this study is impressive (with additional material available as free online appendices). One might wish for some of the maps to be larger, but it undoubtedly provides a very rich store of information to fuel an overhaul of previous assumptions about territorial units and identities. It can be strongly recommended to all who have an interest in the early history of this region, though it is a pity about the high price.

EDWARD MARTIN

Woodbridge: A Personal History. By Robert Simper. viii + 168pp., map, plates, index. Woodbridge: Three Crowns, 2018. ISBN 978 1 91647 050 7. Price £12.99 pb.

Suffolk historian Robert Simper is a prolific author, having published some forty books on local history over a span of many years. His particular interest is the maritime culture of East Anglia. His most recent offering, *Woodbridge: A Personal History*, is, in his own words, a rewrite of an earlier volume and is the first complete history of Woodbridge to be published since the 1970s. The author intends, by his own personal reflection, to suggest how events and people in the area have created the character of the town. Much of the content is anecdotal, particularly in the section ‘Men of the country’, in which the author has drawn extensively from oral histories.

Following his brief introduction, the author’s opening chapter devotes itself to the origin of the town’s name. People often ask, ‘where is the wooden bridge?’. Inevitably, many suggestions have been put forward but uncertainty remains. The Deben valley has been settled for a very long time; the Romans were preceded by the Trinovantes. Anglo-Saxon settlement led to the establishment of the royal burial field of Sutton Hoo and subsequently Woodbridge grew as a market town from the 1100s whilst the port operated further down the estuary at Gosford. Several prominent residents feature including Thomas Seckford, a solicitor to Queen Elizabeth I, who became a notable benefactor to the church and the town (p. 11). At this time, Woodbridge also developed a shipbuilding industry which was to continue through to the nineteenth century. The *litterati* made its mark on the culture of the town. Bernard Barton (1784–1849), the Quaker poet, lived quietly in Woodbridge and achieved national fame with his poetry. His best known work was *The Convict’s Appeal*, written as a protest against the death penalty. Barton had many literary friends including Byron, Lamb and, in particular, Edward Fitzgerald, another Woodbridge resident, who translated *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* into English (p. 17).

The chapter entitled ‘The grand old days’ looks back over ‘the first golden era of farming’ (p. 24) with productive land and high employment, through to the agricultural depression of the late nineteenth century. Drawing on the diaries of Farmer Leggett, stories abound of daily life in Suffolk encompassing churchgoing, shooting and harvesting. The Quilter family and their grandiose home of Bawdsey Manor are covered in some detail. Although an autocrat, Sir Cuthbert Quilter, first baronet, MP, concerned himself with the welfare of local people ensuring they had decent housing and employment. He is particularly remembered for establishing the Bawdsey to Felixstowe steam ferry, a photograph of which c.1900 is shown (p. 36).

One cannot fail to be impressed by Simper’s ‘attempt’ to define a countryman (p. 41). He maintains that ‘a countryman is part of the country’, at one with nature and resolutely battling the adversaries of seasons, weather, disease and vermin. The simple pleasures these people enjoyed are well illustrated using oral history to describe the local fairs, ploughing competitions and the showing of cattle and horses which led to the development of the annual Suffolk Show. A sobering example of mid nineteenth-century life is depicted by what is described as a typical prize given at the Suffolk Show awarded to ‘the labourer who, without receiving parish relief, had brought up the most children whom had lived more than a year’ (p. 52). Hard times indeed.

The mining of coprolite, used in the production of fertilizer, began in the Deben valley in the Victorian period and brought much prosperity. The author considers other ‘Forgotten industries’ such as malting and milling and gives detailed accounts of the mills along with the characters who operated them. This section is enhanced with a number of photographs. Shellfishing is a more recent industry and the book traces its development from early oyster

beds to a thriving Simper family business growing oysters and, particularly, mussels in the clean Deben water.

The author's main focus of interest is maritime and the remaining third of the book concentrates on ships and shipping. It is a section full of old and modern photographs of craft along with some fine line drawings. A beautifully drawn map provides an excellent point of reference. As the fleets of the river Deben slowly silted up and the port of Gosford declined, the trade moved to Woodbridge and so it became a shipbuilding centre. The sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were the golden years of shipbuilding for Woodbridge and the industry supplied both London merchants and the Navy. The town became a 'sailing ship town' (p. 102) with all levels of society influenced by the trade. The newly discovered notebooks of Dr Groom, written in 1936, provide fascinating stories from the old Woodbridge bargemen.

In this book, Simper's extensive use of anecdotes and lavish illustrations demonstrates how history and people have developed the character of Woodbridge and the book would suit the general reader. There are eight chapters without footnotes or references and there are instances where a reference would be desirable, for example, it would enhance the reader's experience to know that Isaac Johnson's map of 1827 is held at the Suffolk Record Office (p. 78). The book's attractive and eye-catching cover will, without doubt, stand out on the bookseller's shelf and prove popular with Woodbridge's residents and its many visitors.

ROSEMARY MEES