

With almost 100 illustrations, the volume is enlivened by a superb array of (mainly bespoke) line drawings, crisp photographs and other attractive visuals. Overall, O'Keeffe presents a compelling case that castle-builders in Ireland were not only buying into a Western European culture of nobility, but actively contributing to and shaping as players in a much wider game of power-projection; he is to be congratulated on an inspired and thought-provoking volume.

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Medieval Dublin XVIII. Edited by Seán Duffy. 16 x 24 cm. 389 pp, 101 b&w pls and figs, 4 tables. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2020. ISBN 978-1-84682-816-4. Price: £29.95 pb.

Assembled in COVID conditions, this collection of essays was brought together in lieu of the annual conference of the Friends of Medieval Dublin but also in memory of one of the champions of Dublin's heritage, Cllr John Gallagher, a man at the forefront of the defence of Wood Quay in the 1970s – although this formed only a part of his social and political commitment to the district of the inner city that he came to represent.

Several papers deal with the outputs from archaeological excavations in Dublin. A fairly small intervention on the site of St Sepulchre's Palace offers Hayden the opportunity to review the development of the palace from the twelfth century; the investigation also tentatively identified an earlier burial ground. A fairly extensive review of excavated ecclesiastical enclosures in Ireland by Harney, though interesting, has more tenuous links to the city. The late-medieval and early modern leather-working industry is particularly well served in this volume. First, in an update on work at St Thomas's Abbey, Duffy presents a series of results relating to different phases of the site: here, part of a cemetery pre-dating the abbey was explored as well as the north wall of the abbey precinct; while an extensive complex of pits distributed within and between tenement plots just north of the abbey seems mostly related to tanning in the aftermath of the Dissolution. A revised timeline for the use of the abbey site is also provided. Giacometti reviews the excavation of a large medieval and post-medieval tanning complex at Blackpitts; over 100 pits were distributed within burgage boundaries, offering strong evidence for a tanning quarter spanning several generations and multiple workshops. Different stages of the tanning process could be clearly identified from the character of the pits and their fills, including their distinctive odours. The penultimate paper is a well-illustrated study of a leather assemblage from Chancery Lane, where the distinctive styles of brogues and shoes are reviewed.

There is plenty of interest in the volume's more historically focussed papers, which include a group of papers by Bhreathnach, Smith and Sullivan debating the singularity or otherwise of Dublin's ecclesiastical arrangements. Casey explores the relationship between coin minting in Dublin and the rise in the value of cattle in the twelfth century; Whelan discusses the ways in

which the popular legend of Tristan and Isolde offers insights into how Dublin and the Irish were viewed from a European perspective; Coleman explores the records of late-medieval parliamentary subsidies in Co. Dublin, highlighting their strong link with defence, especially the building of tower houses; and Jones offers a study of one of Dublin's later medieval elite families, the Marewards.

The publication series is clear testimony to the continuing dynamism of multidisciplinary debates about the development of Dublin, embracing internal tensions as well as connections with hinterlands and the wider networks that connected it to other places far and near. In line with the challenges of the time, it is good to see some of the new COVID-generated resources made accessible to a wider audience on the Friends of Medieval Dublin website; this includes a playlist of virtual walks of the city and other resources and links: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzbBWN0Ddk1ly631QjYF2KQ>

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Fen and Sea. The Landscapes of South-East Lincolnshire AD 500–1700. By I. G. Simmons. 19 x 25 cm. xxxv + 202 pp, 27 colour and b&w pls and figs, 8 tables. Oxford & Philadelphia: Windgather Press/Oxbow Books, 2022. ISBN 978-1-91118-896-4; epub: 978-1-91118-897-1. Price: £34.99 pb.

Reclaimed coastal wetlands are one of the most distinctive *pays* in the British landscape, and this fascinating book describes the development of a previously neglected marshland landscape in south-east Lincolnshire, from the early medieval period through to c. 1700. The study area lies on the northern side of the Wash, between the modern towns of Boston and Skegness.

The wide range of source material used in this study is very helpfully summarised at the start of the book, followed by an introduction to the 'scope and direction' of the study. Chapter 1 explores the relatively limited evidence for the landscape before Domesday that comprised a complex mosaic of wetland environments that human communities exploited for their rich natural resources while also starting to improve its agricultural potential through construction of fen banks. As Simmons notes, it is interesting how English Fenland settlements at this time were not raised up on mounds, in contrast to the *terpen* seen on the coastal wetlands of mainland North-West Europe. Chapter 2 covers 'The Manor and the Land: High Medieval Times and their Foundations, 1050–1300' – a period that saw a town established at Wainfleet and an increased intensity of landscape exploitation, including a burgeoning salt and fishing industry. We hear most about the heavy involvement of monasteries in both the reclaimed wetlands and the intertidal marshes, although some areas were in lay hands.

'The Later Medieval Era 1300–1500', explored in Chapter 3, was when environmental conditions were relatively favourable to living in coastal wetlands, but this changed in the fourteenth century when there were