

though it formed a pre-Conquest *burh* founded in 913 by Æthelflæd Lady of the Mercians, it was never a county town. Its large medieval church, dedicated to St Edith, lay (just) in the Staffordshire half and its castle with its liberty lay (just) in the Warwickshire half. Its citizens enjoyed burgage tenure in the later Middle Ages. Many of the surrounding townships in its large parish were named as ‘cotes’, thereby perhaps exhibiting a relationship and pattern of support to the town that fits a late pre-Conquest model which Chris Dyer has helpfully explored. Yet there is no Domesday Book entry for Tamworth – either as a single place or in two parts – to give an indication of whether it was truly urban by the 1080s. Its single church might suggest not, since the tenurial heterogeneity characteristic of mature urban development normally produced multiple ecclesiastical provision. Its castle was presumably the Conqueror’s; but, since it lacks any plausible bailey of a conventional sort, we might ask whether its bailey was initially the whole defended enclosure of the *burh*, as at Lincoln. We have very useful, well-informed accounts of both those buildings here; but such questions can tend to fall between the volume’s different sections as they concentrate on their own agenda.

The big question, moving backwards in time, must be ‘Why was Æthelflæd’s *burh* sited here?’ That might be formulated as ‘Did the burghal defences, as they have been encountered in excavation, follow and refurbish a distinctively earlier enclosure?’ or ‘Can we presume that the well-documented Mercian pre-Viking royal residence of ‘*Tomtun*’ was the direct predecessor of Æthelflæd’s *burh*?’ The weight of previous opinion (i.e. Gould, Rahtz, Haslam, Bassett, Meeson) has answered both in the affirmative. This VCH account essentially confines itself to reporting views on this difficult question, but does properly acknowledge the doubts recently raised by Martin Carver, writing principally about nearby Stafford. Much information relevant to any fresh discussion of the issue can be found in these pages, although perhaps the volume’s thematic structure and organisation mean that such can be dissipated in various sections – on settlement, tenure, topography, etc. Confined to the town and one adjacent parish, too, the volume’s restricted scope may afford the wrong – i.e. too limited – framework for such a question.

This is volume XII in the VCH’s series on Staffordshire and the fifteenth published in the intended coverage. The enlightened interest and continuing sponsorship of Staffordshire County Council and Keele University that have brought the series so far place us greatly in their debt. But the notable landmark of this volume is its being the last of its diligent and resourceful editor, Nigel Tringham. It is a splendid end to a forty-year career.

PAUL EVERSON
Nantwich

A History of English Placenames and Where they Came from. By John Moss. 16 × 24 cm. xix + 388 pp, 10 b&w maps. Barnsley: Pen & Sword History, 2020. ISBN 978-1-52672-284-3. Price: £25.00 hb.

This is an excellent piece of work for anyone with more than a passing interest in English place-naming. It is of course not as comprehensive as the county publications of the English Place-name Society but is by no means lightweight. The primary audience will be those wishing to examine place-names more closely than simply in their local area.

It begins with a very useful glossary of terms – not a full dictionary but more than enough for the enthusiast or anyone with an academic interest – followed by a brief resumé of English history from prehistory to the Norman Conquest, the history and origin of place-names and their main elements. The last section of the Introduction covers land ownership and the social structures which gave rise to the naming conventions of each period.

Thereafter the country is dealt with in broad sections: North-east, North-west, West Midlands and so forth. Each section deals with a broad sample of name types, most of which are uncontroversial, though there were a couple of locations where I felt a slightly fuller explanation, if only a few extra sentences, would have added greatly. For example, the entry for Bawtry on the boundary of Yorkshire with Nottinghamshire, covers only one of the possible interpretations, whereas A.H. Smith (*The Place-names of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Part I: Lower & Upper Strafforth and Staincross Wapentakes*, Cambridge, 1961) details several. And Hagworthingham in Lincolnshire is considered to derive from a personal name *Hagubeard* but this interpretation is missing.

There are a few small issues which disappoint in the historical summary. The unquestioning acceptance of the idea of ‘invasion’ as an explanation of cultural change and the use of ‘Celt’ for the pre-Roman population may grate with some. Similarly, to suggest that Anglo-Saxon women ‘had few if any rights of land ownership’ is incorrect: in the will of *Leofflad*, wife of the *thegn* *Oswy*, she bequeathed land in her ownership to the church at Ely and *Wulfric Spott* left land to female relatives. That there are few examples is more likely a case of documentary survival: absence of evidence is does not constitute evidence of absence.

Although lacking a bibliography, happily the book has a comprehensive index – a rarity in many publications of late. Overall, my criticisms are minor issues which relate to only a few pages in a significant and otherwise well-researched piece of work: this is not a Gelling & Cole nor an Ekwall, nor is it intended to be, but it is a tidy detailing of place-names in England and their origins, both readable and generally quite comprehensive as a summary. I would recommend it to anyone with an interest in how we named our towns, villages and countryside.

GRAHAM ALDRED
School of Archaeology & Ancient History
University of Leicester

Deer Parks of Suffolk, 1086–1602. By Rosemary Hoppitt. 18 × 25 cm. xvii + 331 pp, 128 colour and b&w pls, figs and tables. Needham Market: Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, 2020. ISBN 978-0-9521390-9-6. Price: £18.50 pb.

Hoppitt's monograph, much enlarged from her 1992 PhD thesis, is probably the most rigorous study of a county's deer parks yet published, based equally on documentary evidence – often notably vivid – and fieldwork. The organisation is extremely sensible, with introductory chapters being followed by ones which separate the material on Suffolk's 130-odd parks into four date-bands (Domesday; to 1200; to 1450; and to 1602), within which are gathered together those owned by lay landholders and those held by ecclesiastics. The volume is richly illustrated with photographs and maps, both the author's own – often cleverly amended first edition six-inch maps – and a good number of sixteenth-century and later estate maps. The scholarly apparatus is all there, and there's an excellent index.

Hoppitt concludes that there is nothing unusual about many aspects of Suffolk's deer parks: some were short-lived, others lasted half a millennium or more; they ranged in size from 9 to 900 acres; and within the parks all manner of stock-farming (including fishponds) was carried on alongside the management of deer and woodland. That said, she draws out various important points of difference: for instance, that Suffolk's notably rich collection of manorial documents pushes back the date when parks start to appear in some number into the twelfth century, whereas a reliance on calendared grants has often suggested a slightly later chronology; and, among the early imparkers were churchmen, for whom parks were always favoured places of retreat. While acknowledging that parks were often created in well-wooded landscapes, including on interfluvies and parish boundaries, Hoppitt argues convincingly that these were not 'marginal' areas nor wastelands but resource-rich and carefully managed components of demesnes. This is an important corrective.

The chapter on 'later parks' (those of 1450–1602) is especially valuable as the Tudor era is often neglected in park studies, falling as it does between the heyday of medieval deer parks in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the emergence of the new, formal designed landscapes popularised after the Restoration. Most of the 44 parks first recorded in Suffolk in the period were created by members of the gentry and knightly classes, with moneys coming via commerce and the law. These parks often encompassed a new house, setting it apart from local rural society as a greater emphasis on privacy and the family emerged, reflected within the house by the decline of the great hall in favour of the private chamber.

PAUL STAMPER

*Centre for English Local History
University of Leicester*

The Wandering Herd. The Medieval Cattle Economy of South-East England c.450–1450. By Andrew Margetts. 19 × 25 cm. xix + 272 pp, 26 colour pls and figs, 96 b&w pls and figs, 22 tables. Oxford: Windgather Press, 2021. ISBN 978-1-91118-879-7; epub: 978-1-91118-880-3. Price: £34.99 pb.

This book aims to demonstrate the importance of cattle in the medieval landscape archaeology of three south-eastern counties: Kent, Surrey and Sussex. The

argument is based on diverse evidence: documents are quoted which refer to pastures, dairying, byres and other aspects of cattle-keeping; details are given of place-names which derive from words meaning cattle (e.g. Rotherfield) or to places where cattle could be kept (e.g. *wic*); roads connecting varied landscapes (coastal lowlands, weald, downland) are identified as droveways; cattle herding may be connected to the oval enclosures (similar in size to parks) scattered over the region, and to square or rectangular earthworks on the downs which were probably used to impound or pen animals; and animal bones show that cattle were kept in large numbers, though in varying proportions in relation to other species. The surveys of the region culminate in two excavated sites in Sussex: Hayworth and Wickhurst – one a farmstead, the other a rare early shieling.

Such information, gathered in great detail, is used to support speculations about the importance of cattle in the region. However, place-names like Cowfold suggest that some places were distinctive because they were associated with cattle, implying that the animals were not ubiquitous. Names like *wic* and *fold* have many possible meanings, not necessarily connected to cattle. Droving was a likely use of roads, but they served many other purposes, such as the transport of grain and timber. The oval enclosures could well have contained herds of cattle, and the square earthworks are likely to have been used for impounding strays or penning selected animals, but they could have been intended for sheep. The animal bones are used to calculate the proportions of cattle among the livestock kept in different regions; further analysis of the gender of the cattle and their age at slaughter, ought to shed light also on their roles (for dairying, hauling or beef production) and so tell us more about management practices. The identification of the two sample sites as centres for cattle rearing depends on one building, namely a shed open on one side, just over 30 m long. In sum, the author's suggestion that the South-east region featured a significant number of vaccaries remains unsubstantiated.

Margetts admires interdisciplinary approaches, but although the archaeological and place-name evidence is presented in plenty and is carefully analysed, the documentary evidence appears in the form of small items mostly from deeds – not the best sources for this subject. Hundreds of manorial accounts in fact survive for the region from 1208 onwards, and they itemise every bull, ox, cow, bullock and calf on manors, with costs associated with ploughing, milking, byres and transhumance. They might even mention vaccaries, if they existed. The documents are criticised for their seigneurial bias, but Surrey and Sussex are especially rich in manorial court rolls, which contain plentiful evidence for peasant cattle. Some of this material is available in English translation and there are secondary sources such as Smith's study of Canterbury Cathedral Priory.

The publisher has a good reputation, but this book would have benefited from more careful editing. It could have been much shorter and the author should have been advised that the French word *pays* does not have a singular of *pay*. A great deal must have been spent