

Book Reviews

THE Grosvenor Museum and in particular its Curator, Mr. Graham Webster, are to be congratulated on having produced at the remarkably low price of one and six, "A Short Guide to the Roman Inscriptions and Sculptured Stones in the Grosvenor Museum, Chester." Its appearance fills a gap of long standing, for little has appeared in print to assist the student when visiting the Museum. Indeed until the great array of inscribed and sculptured stones had been sorted and better arranged, there was little to tempt the visitor to stay for long in the former gloomy, overcrowded gallery, even though Chester possesses one of the best collections of Roman material in the country. The new guide accompanies the great transformation which has taken place under Mr. Webster, notably during the past twelve months. The title is quite clear and the reader must not expect to find a printed catalogue of the Museum exhibits. It is in fact a much more useful and important document for the visitor because it presents the study of the Chester material against the background of its period. In several short, clearly described sections, Mr. Webster deals with the composition and organisation of the Roman Army and the dispositions of its units in Britain. A map of considerable interest shows the birthplaces of the legionaries of the Chester garrison. A further section deals with the growth and significance of Roman Chester. There follows an account of the different kinds of Inscriptions one might expect to find in Britain, such as altars, building dedications, tombstones, stamps and other official proprietary marks and *graffiti*. The last section gives an account of some thirty-three of the important inscriptions and sculptured stones in the Museum prefaced by a well tabulated list of abbreviations. The Guide is admirably illustrated with photographs and had it been twice the price it would have remained an outstanding bargain.

MISS MARGARET GROOMBRIDGE the Chester City Archivist has written a "Guide to Charters, Plate and Insignia of the City of Chester" and it will certainly take its place amongst the guides which will remain of permanent value. Both price (1/6) and cover are attractive although the latter gives little indication of the nature of the contents to the uninitiated. Numerous charters and other manuscripts ranging from the 12th to the 19th century are listed with short descriptions, eight of them being illustrated in whole or in part. Part two is also illustrated and deals with the coats of arms, seals and civic insignia of the City, together with a short (too short) description of the City plate. It is in this section that greater detail would have been welcome for it is unfortunate that in an otherwise admirable guide no record is given of assay

marks on the silver. There are very few adverse criticisms to be made and the most striking are typographical. It is for instance unfortunate that the 17th century Done document (73) should have been post dated to the first World War.*

*This error has been corrected in the second edition now published.

NOTE. An Exhibition of the City Charters and Plate in the Town Hall will be open to the public every Thursday afternoon from 2.30 p.m. to 5 p.m.—Ed.

The Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological and Historic Society, has appeared in a new uniform and in step with the recent changes in format which have taken place in her neighbour the *Archaeologia Cambrensis* and her even older parent, the *Antiquaries Journal*.

Volume 38, admirably edited by Mr. P. H. Lawson, F.S.A., and printed by G. R. Griffith of Chester contains four articles of outstanding interest, though strangely biased towards the city of Chester. Indeed it is a considerable time since North Wales appeared in the pages of the journal, an omission which the Editor might do well to rectify in future volumes.

The four articles which appear are the outcome of careful and original research and are put together by persons of authority. With the generous support of the Council of British Archaeology, the report on the Excavations in Goss Street, Chester, two years ago by Prof. Ian Richmond and Graham Webster, has put on record the discovery of the origin and first developments of the Roman *principia* and established beyond further question the fact that the first *principia* and indeed the first Chester fortress was a wooden structure erected about the eighth decade of the first century and was not superseded by stone buildings until the first half of the 2nd century.

Graham Webster in the second article throws interesting light upon Chester in the Dark Ages and helps by inference to indicate in part why some five hundred years of history has left hardly any mark upon the buried foundations of our city. He makes no attempt to solve the many problems still attached to Saxon Chester but collates valuable material which one day may contribute to a solution of them. It is perhaps unfortunate that the find, whose preservation is due to Mr. Webster, of the Saxon silver coins etc., recently made near the Castle occurred too late to appear as an appendix to this account, it may do so in some future journal.

Archdeacon Burne continues his careful study of some of the most critical years of the history of the Church in Chester, the Marian period and the Elizabethan settlement as it affected the Cathedral and adds a valuable note upon the rape of the Cathedral lands. The very copious references to the Cathedral accounts, the main source of his material, add considerable interest and authority to an already detailed paper.

The final account is that by the former Vicar of Holy Trinity, dealing with the surviving transcriptions of the Church wardens accounts of his city church from 1532-1633, which span the important year of change, decay and restoration, providing us with important documentary evidence for the way in which state decrees influenced individual parishes in particular areas.

The volume which is wholly satisfactory and well illustrated, must please every member and should be a great incentive towards adding new members to a very excellent Society.

MAURICE H. RIDGWAY.

The Effigy and Tomb of Sir Hugh Calveley, by C. Blair, B.A. No. 4. THE BUNBURY PAPERS, edited by Maurice H. Ridgway, Bunbury.

The high standard of these papers has been well maintained in this number. Mr. Blair has not only written a very full account of the finest mediaeval monument in Cheshire but has also given us a useful introduction to military equipment of the late 14th century. The account is illustrated with three views of the tomb and the Stothard drawings. A full-length modern view of the effigy from above would have improved the paper.

GRAHAM WEBSTER.

CESHIRE MATERIAL CULLED FROM THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE LANCS. AND CESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY, 1949, vol. lxi.

CESHIRE BELLS, pt. ii, J. W. Clarke.

THE PRE-REFORMATION EFFIGIES OF CESHIRE, pt. ii, by C. Blair, B.A.

THE CESHIRE ACTIVITIES OF MATTHEW BOULTON AND JAMES WATT OF SOHO, NEAR BIRMINGHAM. 1776-1817. by W. H. Chaloner, M.A., Ph.D.

ASSESSED TAXATION IN ASHTON ON MERSEY IN 1820-21, by E. Ogden, B.A., and G. H. Tupling, M.A., Ph.D.

PROCEEDING.

WHEELED STOCKS, by Dr. J. T. D'Ewart.

COMMUNICATIONS.

A SAXON MONEYER'S HOARD AT CHESTER, by A. J. Hawkes, F.S.A.

RECENT FINDS IN THE WIRRAL PENINSULA, by P. Culverwell Brown, M.A., F.S.A.