

historical archaeological studies. The main course, however, is yet to come.

References

- Girouard, M. 1978. Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History. London, Yale University Press.
- Taylor, C. 1983. Village and Farmstead: A History of Rural Settlement in England. London, George Philip.

* * *

MARK PATTON, Jersey in Prehistory. La Haule Books, Jersey, 1987. 153pp (47 figs. and 18 plates). £15.00 ISBN 086120-016-0.

Reviewed by Ian Kinnes

Mark Patton is one of several young Jerseymen who have been anxious in recent years to revitalise and capitalise upon a rich insular archaeological heritage. This is his first book, and the first attempt at a synthesis of the island's archaeology since that of Jacquetta Hawkes nigh on fifty years ago. The latter was the foundation of a distinguished, if eclectic, career. It would be good to foretell comparable success from the volume before me: I wish I could, but I can't.

The book is avowedly written for a general readership, presumably for Cyril Connolly's "omnivorous middlebrow who cares about his origins", the readership perceived by Glvn Daniel for Ancient Peoples and Places. That particular Disney professor would have had little hesitation in defining one of the volume's failings as "old covecat": if not, and I am wrong, he will no doubt forgive me from Elysium. But

covecat certainly, accounts of sites and circumstances, drawings of pots and plans lifted wholesale, or even cheaper, from Hawkes: little evidence here that much has changed in half a century. Another failing is intriguing: Jersey is recurrently set in the context of processes elsewhere, thus the island is near-final recipient of Holocene economic change, 'spreading' all the way from Catal Huyuk: undergraduate notes (Part 1, Prelims.?) are to the fore, but surely mine of the early '60s not the author's of the post-structural '80s.

So far, so poor, but Patton must be commended for an attempt at communication, a raison d'être for an abstruse discipline too often forgotten, but it has failed through being boring and rather dully written. God knows what its natural constituency is, but many people in the Channel Islands buy books for title alone and others might be persuaded by the bold attempt at a Heron Books Skivertex look-alike cover by the local publishers.

Setting aside all this, we should establish good reason for being concerned with such archaeological circumstances. The Channel Islands do have a remarkable archaeological heritage: the Lukis family are the unsung heroes of 19th century thought and practice. There are many surviving and, unquestionably, undiscovered sites and monuments of great importance. They are islands, and John Cherry has shown us what that can mean, and they are very close to France, a mainland, it seems, of unlimited fascination. Apart from Bob Burns' realisation of the Iron Age of Guernsey, my own limited foray into Early Neolithic oddities at Les

Fouillages and the Cambridge demonstration of notable Palaeolithic circumstances at La Cotte St Brelade (now triumphantly published), this heritage and potential remains unknown, unpublished or ignored. It deserves better.

We shall take a second tack. Having accepted that Patton has disavowed a role as text-book writer, he must nevertheless be aware that the volume may well serve as such. The tentative reviewer should therefore draw attention to failings.

Chronology brings confusion: BC is used throughout, even where it must be bc -- as Chalcolithic 2200-1800 BC; and its combination with typology produces a strange departure from the prevalent systems -- hence the Middle Bronze Age does not exist and Iron Age inception varies from page to page by several centuries. On the early Neolithic the justly-famous site at La Pinacle follows Hawkes' perceptions: my brief study of the material suggests woeful confusion of stratigraphy and assemblages by the excavators -- Neolithic coarse ware becomes EBA, EBA becomes LBA etc. and surely no dolerite axe-hammers with Cerny. The site is ritual from start to Gallo-Roman finish -- well worth a definitive treatment -- but not here.

On megaliths, we see much the same approach -- nominally the author's forte but hardly so on this evidence. In Brittany passage graves are dolmens à couloir not à galérie. The carvings at La Hougie Bie -- spiral and écusson claimed here -- do not exist and the identifications made here are most dangerous. The entire argument for

free-standing phases of complex monuments demeans understanding of megalithic phenomena and the tragic mis-comprehension of 'arena' chambers such as Le Faldouet and Mont de la Ville debases a unique insular circumstance, as Hibbs and I will shortly demonstrate. La Hougue Boete, rightly perceived by Patton as a plausible contender for Early Neolithic grand tumulus status, is not disqualified by having a round mound -- Mané er Hroek was already there.

To later things: the terms Chalcolithic, Beaker and Seine-Oise-Marne are not interchangeable and, as the north French have found, such confusion breeds only confusion pre-Blanchet. The extraordinary pots and cists-in-circle monuments will not yield their places to such broad treatment. Les Huguettes (Alderney) and Jerbourg (Guernsey -- unmentioned here) are LBA sites of international importance whose implications even for Jersey are not recognised. Was the famed St Helier gold torc (not "torque", please) really a LBA import and not later loot?

On more general matters: why no decisive statement of the real status of Jersey and the rest of the archipelago, why no explanation of the processes that follow fossilisation or deposition (Hibbs, at least, has shown the way for Jersey), why no declaration of insularity vs mainland as explanation, why this book? I have spent two hours of my life in reading other references and one half in writing this review: I emerge older, sadder but no wiser, but I hope Mark Patton will.

* * *