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*London Bridge and its Houses, c 1209–1761.* By GERHOSLD DORIAN. 240 × 295mm. Pp 168, 123 figs and plans many in col, tabs. London Topographical Society Publication No 182. London Topographical Society, London, 2019. ISBN 9870902087699. £28 (hbk).

During the medieval period, numerous urban European bridges possessed a variety of buildings. First, many possessed gatehouses and other fortifications (including drawbridges) as often bridges formed an integral part of the defences of the communities they served. Second, many bridges possessed chapels as a visible reminder that building or maintaining bridges was pious charitable work. Third, some bridges possessed water mills. Lastly, houses and shops on bridges attracted high rents that contributed funds towards maintenance costs.

It appears fairly certain that from its completion in *c* 1209 the masonry phase of London Bridge possessed three out of four of these types of structure. The two-storey chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury, which was situated on an enlarged central bridge pier, closed in 1549 as part of the cessation of the chantries; the Drawbridge Gate was replaced by a residential property, Nonsuch House, in 1577, but the Stonegate or barbican remained until 1760; and the timber-framed houses and shops that lined both sides of the bridge's roadway were retained until the roadway was widened and the whole bridge was 'modernised' in 1757–61.

Before the mid-1680s, when the bridge roadway was slightly widened, its average width was only about *c* 15ft, or 4.57m, wide – barely wide enough for two lanes of vehicular traffic. In 1722, to try to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion on London Bridge, the 'keep left' rule was introduced. This is apparently the first documented observance of a rule now enshrined in the *Highway Code*. Water mills for grinding cereals were not added to the bridge until 1590, possibly because the tidal flow of the estuarine Thames required reversible driving wheels. In 1578–82 a water extraction works was added to the northern end of the bridge. Medieval and Tudor London Bridge also housed public toilets, stocks and a cage (for imprisoning people). It was also a setting for pageantry and ceremonial entrances to the City of London. So, this bridge was much more than just a way of safely crossing a river: it was

home to a sizeable community and a symbol of civic pride.

The primary focus of this publication is a detailed and scholarly chronological study of the documentation and graphical evidence concerning the houses and shops on London Bridge. However, for the sake of completeness, all the other structures present on the historic bridge are also described and illustrated. The whole text is extremely well-illustrated by a medley of historic views and some splendid colour reconstructions (including cut-away views) of the houses on the bridge, produced by Stephen Conlin and Peter Urmston, so for the first time their layout and structural complexity can be realised. For instance, the houses on the bridge piers possessed stone-lined cellars built into the piers, while those built between piers and also those built on piers extended out over the river on a series of horizontal timber beams, braced by struts. The decision to publish this volume in landscape (in contrast to the usual portrait) format means that its large rectangular images occupy the optimum page space.

The Bridge House archive contains a wealth of material relating to many aspects of London Bridge's buildings and their occupants from 1381 onward, which, apart from Harding and Wright's (1995) publication of selected accounts and rentals, has been largely overlooked by researchers, so it is wonderful to see more of this archive being published. For instance, this is the first time that data such as the 1358 rental survey of the 140 dwellings on the bridge and its abutments has been properly analysed and tabulated. Likewise, study of the Bridge House rentals has allowed the range of shops present on the bridge from 1358 onwards to be statistically analysed; initially bowyers, cutlers, fletchers, glovers and haberdashers were the most common occupations listed in the rentals. In Appendix Five the rentals of the houses on the bridge from 1358 until 1760 is discussed and prices compared with other areas of the City of London. It is to be hoped that this publication encourages the Bridge House estate (now a registered charity known as the City Bridge Trust) to start taking a serious interest in their own history and abandon their disgraceful policy of not funding 'academic research' (<https://www.citybridgetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/grant-making/who-we-fund>; accessed 6 Dec 2019).

While many people have written about diverse aspects of London Bridge over the last

400 years (including myself), it is good to see someone approaching this well-travelled path with a fresh perspective. My only disappointment is, while the presence of buildings on other medieval bridges is briefly mentioned in the opening chapter, this was a subject that deserved more attention as the reader is left wondering if the phenomena of inhabited bridges was relatively commonplace or rare. In fact, in medieval England it was relatively common. Documented examples include: Avon Bridge, Bristol; Clopton Bridge, Stratford-upon-Avon; Exe Bridge, Exeter; High Bridge, Lincoln; Ouse Bridge, York; and Tyne Bridge, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Harrison *et al* 2010, 49). However, numerous suburban or urban English bridges (at least ninety-two examples) possessed chapels (defined as a place of worship situated at the end of or attached to the structure of the bridge). Exe Bridge unusually possessed three chapels, one of which became a parish church during the thirteenth century (Brown 2019, 43–59). At least eighteen English urban bridges were fortified, normally by single gatehouses, but the Old Welsh and English bridges at Shrewsbury, plus the Tyne Bridge at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, all possessed drawbridges and gatehouses or barbicans (like London) providing defence in depth.

BROWN, S 2019. *The Medieval Exe Bridge, St Edmund's Church and Excavations of Waterfront Houses, Exeter*, Devon Archaeol Soc Monogr 1, Devon Archaeological Society, Exeter

HARDING, V and WRIGHT, L 1995. *London Bridge Selected Accounts and Rentals, 1381–1538*, London Rec Soc 31, London Record Society, London

HARRISON, D, McKEAGUE, P and WATSON, B 2010. 'England's fortified medieval bridge chapels and bridge chapels: a new survey', *Medieval Settlement Res*, 25, 45–51

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*The Ludlow Castle Heraldic Roll*. By ROSALIND CAIRD, JOHN CHERRY, PHILIP HUME and HUGH WOOD. 235mm. Pp xii + 242, many col ills, maps, plans. Logaston Press, Eardisley, 2019. ISBN 978910839379. £12.95 (pbk).

The Ludlow castle parchment roll was purchased relatively recently from an antiques market on the Portobello Road in London. Its previous ownership is entirely unknown, but it is closely linked with the chapel of Ludlow castle, and has been dated by the authors to 1576–80.

It records the heraldic scheme from an extension to St Mary's chapel undertaken at the behest of Sir Henry Sidney KG and completed in 1574. The roll begins with the eleven perceived owners of the castle in chronological order, followed by the twenty-three members of the Council of the Marches of Wales as constituted in 1570, beginning with Sir Henry Sidney as Lord President of the Council. The roll concludes with seven previous presidents, again in chronological order, with the most recent four presumed to have been lost due to the destruction of the end of the manuscript.

The roll provides an excellent vehicle for explaining the entire history of the castle and of the Council of the Marches. There are many interesting snippets of information, such as the fact that the fifteenth-century sword of state for the Council of the Marches has upon it the unidentified coat *argent a chief azure*. This is intriguing because of its similarity to the Templar arms *argent a chief sable*. Gilbert de Lacy, whose personal arms are unknown, built the round chapel of St Mary in the mid-twelfth century in emulation of Templar churches, and died as a professed Templar knight. The chapel was eventually allowed to fall into ruin, and the interior is no longer extant, but was recorded by the Reverend William Mytton in *c* 1735.

The authors were keen to explore the purpose of the roll, and have subjected it to painstaking scrutiny, including pigment analysis. The latter demonstrates the use of valuable pigments, including azurite and ultramarine. It has not been possible to determine with certainty who commissioned the roll, but it is clear that it was not created to inform the painter of the chapel shields, because there are significant differences in colour for two of the shields from those observed by Mytton, with that of Bishop Smyth having the tinctures reversed, suggesting that the artist was working from a carelessly tricked drawing made in the chapel. Sidney had a close working relationship with the heralds, four of whom were mentioned in his will of 1585, and he is known to have employed the painter-stainer Robert Greenwood. Robert Cooke, Clarenceux, was a particular friend who obligingly fabricated the first 150 years of Sidney's pedigree. Although appointed as Sidney's executor, he