

evidently fairly corroded, look little different in this respect from large numbers of Viking spearheads from elsewhere, but perhaps additional drawings based on reconstructions from X-rays would have made the point more clearly. Also on the subject of the Dublin type of spearhead, reference is made (p 103) to their being relatively short and their blades being relatively narrow compared to others in the Scandinavian world. These sorts of assertions are, however, rather meaningless without a more rigorous statistical analysis of dimensions and relationships between them (see, for example, Ottaway 2013). In fact, as the authors admit (p 107), 'there is no absolute division between Dublin-type spearheads and other contemporaneous forms', which rather undermines much of the previous five pages of discussion. This is not to say that there were no local stylistic features in Dublin's ironwork, whether tools or weapons – the case in regard to shield bosses seems much clearer – but teasing them out will probably require more detailed analysis of morphology (using X-rays), as well as metallurgy, and one accepts this will need consideration of the much better preserved finds from the excavations as well.

In a brief review of a large volume it is always difficult to do it justice, but in spite of my comments in the previous paragraph let there be no doubt that this is a great achievement which will probably be the standard work for far longer than Bøe's seventy-four years. What is now needed is for similar reviews of the evidence from England and Scotland. If perhaps, Messrs Harrison and Ó Floinn have a little time on their hands ...

Bøe, J 1940. *Norse Antiquities in Ireland* (trans T Gleditsch), H. Aschehoug, Oslo

Ottaway, P 1992. *Anglo-Scandinavian Ironwork from Coppergate. The Archaeology of York. The Small Finds 17/6*, Council for British Archaeology, York

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*Viking Dublin: the Wood Quay excavations*. By PATRICK F WALLACE. 310mm. Pp xxiii + 568, 468 ills (chiefly col), maps, plans. Irish Academic Press, Sallins, Co Kildare, 2015. ISBN 9780716533146. €70 (hbk).

Patrick Wallace, former Director of the National Museum of Ireland, has spent much of his distinguished career studying the archaeology and early history of Dublin. This volume is subtitled 'The Wood Quay Excavations', which were directed by the author in 1974–81, but it is much more than that, being a detailed study of all aspects of the city from the time of its foundation in the 840s to the early years of the Anglo-Norman era in the late twelfth–early thirteenth century. It takes account of pre-Wood Quay, and many subsequent excavations, which mean that Dublin is now the most extensively excavated early medieval urban centre in western Europe. This has allowed detailed reconstruction of its layout, which Wallace regards as the most important single result of the excavations (pp 32 and 478). Reconstruction of layout, and other aspects of the early city, is, of course, aided by the ground conditions, which ensure the archaeology is remarkably well preserved.

*Viking Dublin* is divided into thirteen chapters, eleven of which tackle different aspects of the material culture from the buildings, through metalwork, leather, textiles and so on to the many artefacts that illustrate the various art styles practised in the city. Even if one is already familiar with the archaeology of Dublin, one will be impressed once more by its richness and variety, admirably illustrated here by numerous excellent drawings and stunning colour photographs.

Throughout the volume Wallace links the chapters together with discussion of a number of overarching themes of considerable interest, often relevant well beyond the confines of the city itself. I can only refer briefly to two of them here. First, there is the question of Dublin's origins. Unlike England, Ireland has no Roman towns to which later citizens had to adapt and it

does not really have any seventh-/eighth-century urban places such as Hamwic and Lundenwic, from which fully developed towns would emerge. Perhaps following a brief proto-urban phase as a *longphort*, Dublin was a creation *de novo* of Scandinavian invaders and so it clearly shows us how they thought a town, in the sense, primarily, as a centre of commerce and manufacturing, should best be organised in the late ninth century. It probably had a simple, roughly cross-shaped plan and along its streets were densely packed tenements, or 'yards', divided up by wooden fences and crammed with buildings. In addition, the town was surrounded by defences in the form of an earthen bank. This was a quintessentially urban environment, quite different from anywhere else in Ireland. Moreover, Dublin was not like, for example, contemporary Winchester, with an orthogonal grid within former Roman walls, or York, where the early Viking Age town, partly within Roman walls and partly undefended, was, in essence, an elongated settlement along a main street. Dublin was a distinct variant of contemporary approaches to town building, which, as Wallace shows us, gives it a particular importance for the study of urbanism in north-western Europe as a whole.

Second, one may ask who lived in early Dublin and where did the people come from? The author discusses these issues at some length (notably in Chapter 12: 'Archaeology, history and relative ethnicity'). While it can be difficult to relate material culture directly to the ethnic identity of the makers, it would seem that, although Scandinavians were probably a distinctive component of the city's population for more than 200 years, the indigenous element was dominant from fairly early in its existence. In addition, Wallace suggests there was a steady influx of migrants from England and elsewhere. A craft that he regards as exhibiting a strong Scandinavian influence is iron working (p 443). One would like to see the detailed results of the metallographic examination referred to before commenting further, but I was very struck by two tinned iron strap-ends in fig 9.53 which are so similar to mid-tenth-century strap-ends and fittings from York (Ottaway 1992, figs 296 and 299) that they must surely have been made by the same smith or at least one who had worked with the person responsible for the York objects. How ideas about artefact design travel is, of course, difficult to determine – was it through trade, word of mouth, or migration of individuals? However, it would be nice to think of a York man, perhaps of Scandinavian stock himself, going to Dublin and taking his skill in making

cheap dress fittings with him – or perhaps a Dubliner came to York?

As a reviewer I always think it unnecessarily mean-spirited to point out minor errors or typos, but one glitch in *Viking Dublin* I feel I have to mention is that fig 1.1, which shows the city's excavation sites (all numbered), has no key which often leaves the non-Dubliner rather guessing as to what site the text is referring. I hope the publishers will insert an erratum slip to cover this. Let this not, however, distract the reader from an eloquent and compelling account of the archaeology of one of Europe's great cities. *Viking Dublin* will be essential for anyone who studies the archaeology of urbanism, the history of Ireland, the Vikings and many other topics besides. It is as interesting and thought-provoking a read as I have come across for many a long year and can be warmly recommended.

Ottaway, P 1992. *Anglo-Scandinavian Ironwork from Coppergate. The Archaeology of York. The Small Finds 17/6*, Council for British Archaeology, York

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*Medieval Rome: stability and crisis of a city, 900–1150*. By CHRIS WICKHAM. 240mm. Pp xix + 501, b&w ills, maps. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2015. ISBN 9780199684960. £20 (hbk).

Chris Wickham's goals within *Medieval Rome* are twofold: first, to draw the narrative of the city in the pre-communal period away from a running account of the emergent papal monarchy and, second, to highlight the similarities between the political changes occurring in Rome during this period with those which resulted in the cities of northern and southern Italy. In contrast with the majority of other works, Wickham addresses the city as a whole. He incorporates a study of the popes (although only those who were able to reside in Rome), but places a considerably greater emphasis on the changing position of the laity and on the economic and political circumstances of the city and its extensive hinterland. He draws on a vast series of charter and narrative sources alongside architectural and archaeological evidence to support his wide-ranging research. This command of the primary sources is coupled with extensive use of secondary