

*West over Sea. Studies in Scandinavian Sea-Borne Expansion and Settlement Before 1300. A Festschrift in honour of Dr Barbara E. Crawford*, by Beverley Ballin Smith, Simon Taylor and Gareth Wells (eds) (Leiden and Boston: Brill, *The Northern World* 31, 2007; pp xxx + 586; 68 illus. EUR 135; US\$ 200).

This volume celebrates the 20th anniversary of Dr Barbara Crawford's *Scandinavian Scotland* and her wider contribution to the subject. Thirty contributions appear under the headings of 'History and cultural contacts' (Paul Bibire; Dauvit Broun; Clare Downham; Christopher Lowe; Elisabeth Okasha; Élisabth Ridel; Jón Viðar Sigurðsson; Frans-Arne Stylegar and Liv Kjørsvik Schei; Gareth Williams; Alex Woolf), 'The church and the cult of saints' (Lesley Abrams; Haki Antonsson, Sally Crumplin and Aidan Conti; Margaret Cormack; Sarah Jane Gibbon; Hans-Emil Lidén; Christopher D Morris with Kevin J Brady and Paul G Johnson), 'Archaeology, material culture and settlement' (Beverley Ballin Smith; James H Barrett; Neil G W Curtis; Ian Fisher and Ian G Scott; Mark A Hall; Jo McKenzie; Brian Smith and Steffen Stummann Hansen), and 'Place-names and language' (Gillian Fellows-Jensen; Katherine Forsyth; Peder Gammeltoft; Simon Taylor; William P L Thomson; Doreen Waugh). The range offered by this stellar list of scholars from many generations is warm and fitting testimony to a widely held, deep respect and affection for Crawford as a person, her networking prowess, and impressive 'can do' attitude that so effortlessly over-rides traditional academic boundaries (see Nicholas Brooks' Foreword).

Festschrifts generally contain papers of mixed breadth, significance and levels of development, with authors using the opportunity to update thoughts on favoured subjects (Thomson on *papar* names in Orkney), introduce preliminary developments in new areas of work (eg Fisher and Scott on early medieval sculpture from the Faroes or Okasha on Anglo-Saxon inscriptions outside the British Isles), to herald wider published studies (eg Lowe on 'hostage stone' from Inchmarnock, an early medieval monastery excavation just published; Forsyth on Bornais inscription) or simply to clear a dusty corner of their desk (eg Morris on Shetland chapel sites), and this is no exception. Festschrifts, particularly one as costly as this, also run the risk that valuable contributions to key or emergent debates, or insightful and important reflections on topics of wide applicability (eg Bibire on how we use Old Icelandic sources) may be 'lost' to a wider readership. Curiously, given Barbara's hallmark was working *across* disciplines, three of the four parts are rather traditional in how they are grouped ('history', 'archaeology' and 'place-names'), but I have a sneaky feeling this reflects blocks of works that individual editors felt most comfortable handling. Themes contributed to include: questions of identity (Broun's 'uniquely significant glimmer' on process of becoming Scottish through the perceptions of monks in Melrose in the 12th and 13th centuries; Downham on hybrid or liminal identity in frontier-town Dublin); conversion (Abrahams on the Hebrides); or the favourite Pict/Gael relations with the incoming Vikings (Gammeltoft on value of place-names recorded in sagas in filtering the post-Norse gaelic layer of place-names). Several essays introduce things we may not have previously thought about (Woolf on eastern growth of Norway, Cormack on the possibility of Armenian ecclesiastics in Ireland; McKenzie on the value of 18th-century sources in opening our eyes to the non-agricultural drivers behind the range of manuring practices in Scotland), give a voice to places that get less attention (Williams on Caithness/Sutherland through a discussion of marriage alliances between local families on the Scottish mainland and the rulers of both Orkney and the Kingdom of the Isles) or develop our understanding of Scandinavian Shetland (Waugh) and Shetlanders (Stylegar and Kjørsvik Schei), the Norse

impact on the Tayside area (Hall; Taylor) or how Scottish medieval material made its way to Scandinavia in modern times (Stumann Hansen). A deceptively simple essay by Smith focuses on some Shetland settlement sites that differ from the norm and why this could be, pointing to significances in the archaeological record not previously appreciated, while Gibbon and Barrett present mature studies on parish formation in Orkney and the political economy of a medieval maritime society respectively.

Curtis's essay on 200 years of the development and workings of the Treasure Trove system in Scotland deserves a particular mention: more than a very useful summary of how and why new discoveries end up where they do and why controversy attaches to this, it is insightful and makes interesting suggestions for the future. This is the sole marker of Crawford's notable contribution, outside of academia, to the wider historic environment in Scotland: not least, she was Chair of the then Treasure Trove Advisory Panel from 1993-2003 (she is now President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland).

Ballin Smith's claim that 'a good century before the raid on Lindisfarne there is evidence to indicate that settlers from Norway had occupied Norwick [Shetland] ... and built a permanent settlement there' (p295) is a remarkable claim and a seemingly incautious interpretation of the radiocarbon dates: the evidence in the (yet) forthcoming publication will require careful scrutiny.

Putting this volume together and in a timely fashion must have taken a supreme effort on the part of all involved. As such, we may make allowance for some uneven contributions, editing and careless mistakes in both text and maps. Some papers (notably Antonsson et al) needed a stronger editorial hand, and there are contributions where the average reader might have been given a little more help, with less assumptions about comprehension of technical language ('epexegetic' in Gammeltoft) or personal knowledge of Scandinavian geography (eg Woolf). The reader must beware the use of a single numbering system for illustrations in the text and in the 'plates' at the end of the volume, and the cross-references to location maps in other papers (on p287 you have to learn to look for illus 35 in the back of the book, and flick through to p421 before you find illus 47).

I will continue to turn back to and enjoy this volume, with its comfortable to hold and handsome binding, for it contains some real gems. But at over £100, the off-putting price for individuals makes me wonder if there are not other models for publishers to consider for such volumes. While the challenge is keeping a festschrift secret, adding a list of individual subscribers who show their appreciation of the dedicatee, pay up front and then receive a substantially discounted copy of the book seems an option to consider, likewise institutional and individual purchase rates.

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