



## Woolworth's: 100 Years on the High Street. The Royal Ordnance Factory at Hayes: the Story of a World War II Gun and Tank Factory at Hayes in the London Borough of Hillingdon. Prairie Forge: the Extraordinary Story of the Nebraska Scrap Metal Drive of World War II

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of agency, reading the objects and landscapes created by and with Europeans as statements of aspiration, ethnic identity and indigenous revolt.

Secondly, a particularly fascinating theme involves the material dynamics of cross-cultural encounter. Within Europe, these two volumes explore the material transformations of Hungary under Ottoman rule, the complex identity of Iceland as simultaneously a unique Scandinavian culture and Danish colony, the role of Italian specialists in the architecture of 17th-century Vienna and the legacy of the Forest Finns within colonial Sweden. Overseas examples of trans-national encounter offer even more powerful material examples, with case studies considering the shared heritage of Danish-African and Danish-Indian mercantile societies, settlement patterns within the German cultural transformations in colonial Panamá and the exchange of Native American and Scandinavian goods in Delaware, North America.

Ultimately, a refreshing balance is maintained between chapters focused on the crucial specifics (national literature overviews, pottery types, battlefields, urban architectural styles, etc.) and the wider interpretations (comparative theoretical implications, macro-level social models, interdisciplinary questions) that must together frame archaeological research. Together, these edited volumes represent a significant review of existing research and future directions within under-represented, yet centrally important, global regions. Particularly at this time of Brexit anxieties, they offer worthy contributions to our understandings of the post-medieval/historic past by illuminating the complex entanglements that formed Europe's shared material legacy.

Manchester

ELEANOR CONLIN CASELLA

*Woolworth's: 100 Years on the High Street.* By Kathryn A. Morrison. 232 pages, colour illustrated. Swindon: Historic England, 2015. ISBN 978-1-84802-246-1. £50.00 (hbk).

*The Royal Ordnance Factory at Hayes: the Story of a World War II Gun and Tank Factory at Hayes in the London Borough of Hillingdon.* By Nick Holder. 48 pages, colour illustrated. London: Museum of London Archaeology, 2011. ISBN 978-1-901992-88-5. £7.00 (pbk).

*Prairie Forge: the Extraordinary Story of the Nebraska Scrap Metal Drive of World War II.* By James J. Kimble. xv, 236 pages, illustrated. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014. ISBN 978-0-8032-4878-6. £12.99 (pbk).

Historic England's *Woolworth's*, by Kathryn A. Morrison, follows the history of that company from its origins in the USA, through expansion into Britain, continued growth and its role in the 'retail revolution' of the post-war period and, finally, the end of the company. The book is an incredible survey, tying the history of the company's development into an international context, not just in retail, but in architectural design. As such, it deserves a place on many shelves, not least for extensive illustrations that would be of use to post-medieval archaeologists even without the interesting text. It ends with two useful appendices, a timeline of the company's development and a list of all of Woolworths UK stores; 1275 regular stores and a number of later variations. The publication also works as a social history, exploring Woolworths not just in terms of its impact on the lives of its customers, but also of its staff. Of particular interest is the chapter dealing with the immediate post-war period. At this time there was, of course, much rebuilding of town centres across the country. Woolworths played a particular role in this development as being a national, multiple-unit retailer it was in a position to dictate — to a point — the nature and form of reconstructed town centres and buildings (the Multiple Traders Federation played a particularly strong role in dictating the redevelopment of central Bristol). This was good and bad, balancing architectural and retail innovation against the wider problems of recovery from the war. There is, for instance, mention in the book of the Minister for Housing being approached by developers angry that a new Woolworths on Deansgate in Manchester was using up such a large amount of steel. A real strength of this publication is the way in which it covers the company's end in 2008/09 and the afterlives of former Woolworths premises. It even offers a glimpse of future, with the postscript mentioning 'speculation that the brand name *Woolworths* might be sold, and possibly applied to a new high street chain. We might not, after all, have reached the end of the story'. Overall, *Woolworth's* is an excellent book, for general interest and for specialist interest in modern retail and architecture. The illustration is superb and the text rewarding. I would usually make mention of a £50 price-tag as a problem, but I think this is one of the rare occasions on which it is justified.

*Prairie Forge* tells a similarly fascinating and important story, albeit a little shorter in duration. The book presents a historical account of the 'Nebraska Scrap Metal Drive' during the Second World War, literally a competition to

see who could recycle the most metal for the war effort. The idea caught on and similar initiatives expanded nationally, a sure contributor to the enormous military might of the US armed forces, especially in the Pacific theatre. Although not overtly archaeological, the book will prove rewarding for anyone interested in material networks or the role of material culture in social identity. Many of the sources discussed by Kimble mention that joining the recycling drive was a chance for civilians to be soldiers. We will all be aware of the concept of the home front and of all kinds of contributions to conflict beyond combat, but the direct co-designation of combat troops and civilian contributors is perhaps rather rarer and it is presented here as more than simply clever marketing. Either way, the result is a series of stories that could happily be called a social archaeology of recycling that takes in not just the structures of the recycling network and analysis of its successes, but a wealth of interesting detail about children saving the aluminium inserts from gum wrappers or 'enterprising' schoolboys staging raids on the sheds of unsuspecting farmers. The book is relatively sparsely illustrated, but what pictures there are add to the story it is telling. It makes for a study that manages to be entertaining as well as informative, and a good start point for anyone thinking about modern social-political-material networks.

*The Royal Ordnance Factory at Hayes* presents a more traditional piece of buildings archaeology, but one that usefully makes use of a large amount of illustration and oral history. It tells the story of the titular factory from construction in 1940 to post-war re-use and finally disuse. Having its origins in archaeological fieldwork, it shows a nice combination of original archaeological recording, modern photography and archive material, and the pamphlet length is enough to tell the site's simple story, one that finds parallels across the country (perhaps the world), although the oral histories included suggest that this could have been fairly easily extended.

If anything connects these three publications, it is that they all approach social-material networks that are distinct to the 20th century: multi-unit retail, industrialized war production and recycling. These are all concerns for post-medieval archaeology that do not perhaps find as much expression in the field as they might. In particular, they are all situated in that overlap between contemporary and historical archaeology, both in terms of period and theoretical and interpretive potential, and will hopefully find interested readers from a number of different sub-fields.

London

JAMES R. DIXON

*Victorian Turkish Baths*. By Malcolm Shifrin. 366 pages, colour illustrated. Swindon: Historic England, 2015. ISBN 978-1-84802-230-0. £70.00 (hbk).

Published by Historic England, this extensive and beautifully produced book is a high-quality publication that is part of a project that also includes a regularly updated associated website, full of articles, photographs and drawings. In this publication (and the website) Malcolm Shifrin has produced a resource that could be used extensively by both professionals and those who have a personal interest in the field. The initial project developed the website where individuals exchanged information, rapidly becoming a resource used by many interested in the subject. It reflected some 20 years of extensive part-time research by the author. The book is extensive and wide-ranging, covering sections on Background to the Victorian and Turkish Baths, Early History of the Victorian and Turkish Bath, Problems and Attitudes, Victorian Turkish Baths for All, The World of the Bather and Victorian Turkish Baths in the 21st Century. The author makes the point that there is still more to cover by researchers, hoping the book could become 'a trigger for academic research on a wide-ranging and interesting subject' (p. vii).

The publication is extensive, covering issues such as Baths in Hospitals, Asylums, Hotels Clubs and private homes. It also deals especially with baths for women. There are chapters on diverse elements such as baths for animals and 'sites of sex and sociability'. It traces the early developments of baths — both problems and their solutions — whilst including extensive descriptions of individual baths and a full chapter devoted to the advertising methodologies of bath owners. The individual chapters can be useful as stand-alone sections, but the author has also succeeded in producing a publication that flows with a narrative of development and use.

Each individual chapter is not only well illustrated, but contains extensive relevant information for the scholar. The style of writing is engaging and enjoyable, whilst managing to contain a level of detail that is impressive. This extensive level of attention to detail gives an impression of a well-researched and studious volume. It covers over 600 individual baths, as well as providing a thorough analysis of the early development and spread of Turkish baths. There are also international dimensions ranging from early mud baths at Saki in Russia, to David Urquhart's account of his travels in Morocco and Spain. The book deals not only with buildings and apparatus, but also details several key individuals who played significant roles in the development of the Turkish bath movement. It contains relevant and appropriate materials for use by the historian, archaeologist and student of broader material culture.