

Fishman, William J. *East End 1888: Life in a London Borough among the Labouring Poor*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988. Pp. xv, 343. Illustrations, tables, map, index. \$34.95

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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between 1459 and 1464. The town is the external expression of "the inward spiritual grace inherent in the life of a Renaissance commune." However, Pienza is not the "ideal" city of the "gridiron-inspired Renaissance planner." It is neither regular, as is Antonio Filarete's Sforzinda, nor calculately irregular, as is Vincenzo Scamozzi's Sabbioneta. Rossellino follows instead Alberti's approach to architecture. In the process he "recognizes the antisocial nature of too much rigidity" and strikes "a happy medium between discipline and freedom" and in so doing he provides a legacy for the modern planner.

This account is indeed fascinating and at times eye-catching, especially in matters of architectural detail, which are preserved in a series of beautiful photographs and clear maps (printed, alas, on rather mediocre paper). It is a pity, however, that Mack never properly develops the connection between architecture and what he calls the Age of Humanism. This short-coming becomes more tantalizing because of hints he drops here and there about the relationship. He also, on the basis of the evidence presented in the book, seems to overstate the ties between Rossellino and the other great architect of the era, Battista Alberti. An example is Mack's discussion of the connection between Alberti's Palazzo Rucellai in Florence and Rossellino's Palazzo Piccolomini at Pienza (the latter often seen as an imitation of the Rucellai's facade). Mack seems to think that Rossellino's work predates Alberti's. He argues that it is possible that Rossellino received his inspiration from Alberti's *De re aedificatoria*. Then he goes on to conclude on the basis of rather tenuous evidence that Alberti had "a direct influence ... even the controlling influence" on Palazzo Piccolomini - a statement which is soon tempered by the assertion that Alberti's "possible participation in preparing the plans (for Palazzo Piccolomini) should not be overemphasized." Now the question is how can a person have a "direct" or "controlling influence" without

allowing that role to be overemphasized? In all, however, the book is well written and interesting and its overall interpretation is acceptable even if one should be a little cautious in agreeing with Mack's views when he leaves the specific area of his interest, Pienza, to tie the town's renewal to the larger issues of the Renaissance period.

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Fishman, William J. *East End 1888: Life in a London Borough among the Labouring Poor*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988. Pp. xv, 343. Illustrations, tables, map, index. \$34.95.

The Jack-the-Ripper murders, the first match-girls' strike, and the first full year of Frederick Charrington's nocturnal crusades against prostitution and intemperance all share one thing in common: they occurred in 1888 in East London. William Fishman of Queen Mary College, University of London, was inspired by the conjunction of these and other events to embark on a detailed investigation of East London during that year. The choice is a good one, for by 1888 East London had the reputation (especially among West Enders) of being uniformly poor, dirty, violent, and diseased. As such, it was one of the most threatening urban districts in Victorian Britain, a potent symbol of urbanization at its worst.

To carry out his study, Fishman read widely in newspapers, magazines, and government reports (both printed and manuscript) for 1888. Indeed, his deployment of a diverse array of primary sources is one of the outstanding features of this work. Of special note is his skilful handling of relevant fictional works, notably *In Darkest London* and other novels by Margaret Harkness. Other primary sources could have been used more effectively, however. Many are simply quoted at great length - in some places these

quotations seem ready to swamp the narrative. Perhaps as an antidote, Fishman inserts dozens and dozens of exclamation points - even into quoted material where no such punctuation exists in the original. Moreover, his command of relevant secondary sources is somewhat weak. Particularly surprising is his failure to incorporate the work of James Schmiechen and Duncan Bythell on the sweated trades and George Behlmer on the abuse of children.

Still, the resulting monograph adds significantly to our knowledge of Victorian London and demolishes a number of stereotypes. The author finds many positive things to say about Poor Law guardians, for example, and he repeatedly emphasizes the immense variety of occupations, living standards, and attitudes to be found in East London. This is not to say that Fishman has produced a balanced survey. His chapters on crime and "The Ghetto" are disproportionately long, and, when taken together, they comprise about one-third of the book. In the former he provides copious details on the violent context of the Ripper murders and spends considerable time evaluating the documentation on the six murders themselves. Following Stephen Knight, he concludes that "the most plausible evidence" points to the killings "as a series of ritual executions carried out under the direction of Freemasons in high places to protect the Prince of Wales' son, Albert Edward, ... from exposure to public scandal." In the other lengthy chapter, it becomes clear that the East London Jewish community was hardly a "ghetto," like those of Eastern Europe, but was more of an urban immigrant enclave of a kind found in many times and places. As such, the conflicting attractions of ethnic solidarity and assimilation with the wider English society were strong and enduring. Fishman is especially good on the community-building activities of East London Jews, which included the Jewish Board of Guardians, the Jewish Orphans Asylum, and the Jewish Working Men's Club. Apart from

Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

Judaism, incidentally, Fishman has little to say about organized religions except for occasional references to their charitable activities.

These and other parts of the book brim with colourful anecdotes. In one place, the reader learns that a surgeon to the poor operated "in a frock coat of black cloth stiff with blood and the filth of years. The more sodden it was the more forcibly did it bear evidence to the surgeon's prowess." In his chapter on women and children, Fishman comments: "It was not uncommon, day or night, to come across two drunken besoms, naked to the waist, clawing and beating each other, egged on by a howling mob revelling in a knockabout piece of street theatre." In addition, Fishman provides useful information on the people and institutions committed to help the downtrodden. They include the Reverend Samuel Barnett and Toynbee Hall, Doctor Barnardo and his homes for destitute children, William Booth and the Salvation Army, and Charles Booth, Beatrice Potter, and their grand survey of London's labouring poor. In general, however, the author favors government welfare initiatives under the inspiration of socialist ideas, especially those of William Morris and the Socialist League.

All in all, Fishman has produced a lively book that will be of interest to scholars of Victorian London and to investigators of both modern urban problems in general and the policies and the initiatives that have been devised to solve them.

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Ebner, Michael H. *Creating Chicago's North Shore: A Suburban History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988. Pp. xxx, 338. Bibliographical essay, notes, maps, photographs, index.

Stilgoe, John R. *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1820-1939*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988. Pp. xiv, 353. Notes, bibliography, illustrations, index.

J. R. Stilgoe and M. H. Ebner continue to make major contributions to the history of suburban America. Stilgoe's *Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1820-1939*, and Ebner's *Creating Chicago's North Shore: A Suburban History*, should encourage further research and writing in this important subject area. Both books contain useful footnotes and extensive bibliographies. Also, both authors are aware of recent historiographical trends and appreciate them: Ebner declares in his book, "Some academic historians, myself among them, have set upon a self-conscious course to recapture a lost tradition by writing books that aim to reach expanded audiences of general readers."

Stilgoe examines the outer suburbs, the "borderland areas" between the urban residential ring and the rural regions that existed prior to World War II. Focusing on the visual elements of these communities, he takes readers to the early suburbs of New York City, Cincinnati, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Boston. Using a variety of pictorial as well as written sources, he shows how many Americans sought an existence free from rapid urban growth and urban problems. He describes the lives and interests of the men and women who lived in the borderlands, emphasizing their desire to escape the evils of the city and enjoy the attractions of the suburb, especially the landscape. In this well-written and beautifully illustrated book, Stilgoe makes it clear that the good life, as perceived by countless Americans, was to be found in the borderlands. The suburbs that were

shaped by this traditional affection proved to be an important dimension of the American story.

Stilgoe's command of the diverse literature is impressive, and his ability to extract great quotes from it makes for fascinating reading. While the author devotes most of his attention to the borderland experiences east of the Mississippi River, he also discusses the phenomenon in the western United States, notably along the Pacific coast. A concluding chapter on the influence of the post-World War II years on suburban growth illustrates the persistence of the borderland ideal. "It endures to this day," Stilgoe declares, "a sort of attic in the national superstructure, a place of calm, a place of older things, a height to visit when downstairs all is commotion, all noisy busyness."

Ebner examines the origins and evolution of Evanston, Wilmette, Kenilworth, Winnetka, Glencoe, Highland Park, Lake Forest, and Lake Bluff, the eight communities that by 1914 made up Chicago's North Shore. These suburbs, although sharing much in common over the years, preserved separate identities. Located along the commuter rail corridor that followed the western shoreline of Lake Michigan due north of Chicago, the towns, starting with Evanston in 1857, were founded during the last half of the 19th century. The affluent suburban settlers wanted to escape from the evils of the crowded, dirty city of Chicago, and create a suburban paradise in which to live the good life. The North Shore became a distinctive region composed of posh communities that retained their own individual identities. Ebner is especially adept at explaining how the growth of Chicago affected the evolution of the North Shore, and how suburban development influenced the city.

Ebner's book, like Stilgoe's, is well written and beautifully illustrated. In both works the illustrations complement the texts, serving as strong visual evidence. More localized than Stilgoe's subject, Ebner's North Shore study