

Mary Hammond and Barry Sloan (eds.), *Rural–Urban Relationships in the Nineteenth Century: Uneasy Neighbours?* London: Routledge, 2016. x + 218pp. 9 figures. 3 tables. Bibliography. £95.00 hbk.
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Historians have long examined the effects of urbanization on the countryside, or conversely the effects of rural-to-urban migration on the town. What have often been neglected are the ways in which the urban and the rural interact with each other, the reciprocal relationships that formed between the country and the city and the permeability of the urban-rural divide. Mary Hammond and Barry Sloan's edited collection is, therefore, a very welcome addition to urban-environmental historiography. The collection offers an interdisciplinary approach to the subject, with contributions from social and cultural historians, literary studies, population studies and criminology. Whilst the book primarily focuses on rural-urban relationships within Britain, there are chapters on the Old South, Prague and Mississippi. Although not global in span, the inclusion of these examples reflects an admirable attempt to explore these relationships beyond British shores, although this can lead to the collection feeling slightly disjointed. The real strength of the collection, however, comes from the case-study approach. The relationships between rural and urban settings differ according to social, cultural and economic factors to name a few, which are often specific to place. By looking at different towns, or indeed certain events as Andrew Walker does with his examination of Lincoln's April Fair, relationships emerge which are specific to that area. This allows the reader to examine the plurality of relationships highlighted by this book.

The collection is split into four sections. The first section examines the sites of rural-urban encounter, in order to identify where these interactions took place. Contributions by Walker and Guy Woolnough on the Borough Hill Fair examine this in an intriguing manner, often cross-referencing the similarities and differences between their respective cases. The second section looks at how changes to work during the nineteenth century affected these relationships. Andrew Hinde and Michael Edgar's chapter on the migrations networks of Purbeck on the south coast is particularly adept at showing this changing relationship through the use of census information to trace former stone workers. The third section illustrates the impact of modernity on rural life. Two contributors, Michelle Deininger and Jakub Machek, utilize provincial newspapers in order to highlight the ways in which rural Wales (in the case of Deininger) and Prague (in Machek's study) were presented to their readership. Machek's chapter is particularly insightful in revealing how the popular press helped rural workers to gain a new urban identity as they moved to Prague at the turn of the twentieth century. The final section of the collection explores the anxiety associated with rural-urban migration. All three contributors – Christopher Ferguson, Mary Hammond and Barry Sloan – highlight how the cases under investigation, be it the real James Carter, the fictional Pip from *Great Expectations* or the analogous country bumpkin, moved between rural and urban settings, and never truly fit in either locale, thereby helping to shine a social lens on urban-rural migration.

All the contributions add to the social investigation of rural-urban relationships. The collection eschews examining these relationships in larger urban centres,

looking to focus on more peripheral locations such as Doncaster or the Exe Valley. Whilst this commitment to underresearched areas is to be lauded, it would be interesting to compare these findings with similar investigations on larger cities such as Leeds or Manchester, in order to gain a fuller picture of how rural–urban relationships developed during this period. In addition, one of the negatives of an edited collection such as this is that space is at a premium. This collection seems to scratch the surface of each case-study, often meaning that writers focus on one aspect of the rural–urban relationship and do not consider the other side as fully as they are limited by the space available. If anything, these issues highlight that there is a significant amount of research that remains to be done on rural–urban relationships.

This collection will hopefully be a starting point for more discussion and more investigations into rural–urban relationships. It provides an insightful look into the ways in which rural–urban relationships developed over the nineteenth century, in areas which have attracted less scholarly attention in the past. Its interdisciplinarity highlights how approaching this subject from different perspectives and different sources can add to the ways in which rural–urban relationships are viewed. The case-study approach in particular strengthens the collection by highlighting how different relationships formed in different areas. This collection is a very good starting point for examining how relationships between the rural and the urban were formed, and is a worthwhile addition to urban–environmental historiography, whilst simultaneously highlighting that there is more that can, and should, be done on this subject.

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Graeme Davison, *City Dreamers: The Urban Imagination in Australia*.
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Renowned urban historian Graeme Davison has recently published *City Dreamers: The Urban Imagination in Australia*. It brings together five decades of scholarship on the Australian city into one impressive volume; some of which pre-dates his influential first book *The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne* (1978). Davison is a foundational figure of the ‘Melbourne School of Urban History’, and since his retirement from Monash University, he has been more productive than ever. Reviewing his recent family history *Lost Relations* (2015) the contrarian historian John Hirst identified Davison as a ‘master historian’. In *Trendyville* (2014), co-authored with Renate Howe and David Nichols, Davison provided a captivating comparative examination of nationwide post-war battles that shaped Australia’s inner suburbs.

This volume continues his recent trailblazing efforts. As with Davison’s *The Use and Abuse of Australian History* (2000), *City Dreamers* assembles previously published articles, book chapters and essays; this time, the Australian city is the central concern. Some eleven of the sixteen chapters have appeared in scholarly journals, whilst the opening and closing chapters are reflective pieces, originally published in literary journals. This volume reflects the strength, adaptability and