

technical detail that even the specialist has to pause for thought at the end of each sentence. There are some good line drawings in the book, but they are too few and, infuriatingly, are not numbered or alluded to in the text.

Printers' errors are few, but factual errors are easier spotted: e.g. medieval church towers were not primarily defensive (p. 128), and William of Sens was employed as architect at Canterbury, not Westminster (p. 61). There are some unfortunate repetitions, not only of examples cited, but also of the actual wording used (compare the descriptions of arch-deformation

processes on pp. 71 and 100). At times Fitchen's writing is overwhelmingly verbose: there are too many adjectival phrases; countless sentences begin, 'To be sure, . . .'; and almost every piece of builder's equipment, from a ladder to a camel, is described as 'indispensable'.

Despite these shortcomings – essentially resulting from the conflation of a general work with a technical treatise – this book should be read by all who are concerned with the archaeology of buildings.

WARWICK RODWELL

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