

aquifers, and I have no idea what a mesotrophic brown earth is (the only soil mentioned in the book). Notwithstanding these criticisms, this is a useful book, which I shall certainly distribute to people who ask me about the nature of British carbonate terranes.

KELLAWAY, G.A. and WELCH, F.B.A., 1993. *Geology of the Bristol District. Memoir of the British Geological Survey*. London. H.M.S.O. 199pp. ISBN 0 11 884466 0.
(Reviewed by Andy Farrant)

This book has finally come into print, 21 years after the Bristol District Special Sheet was published, and long overdue. The book covers most of the major aspects of the region's geology, and is guaranteed to become the main reference work for the geology of the Bristol area, which includes the northern part of the Mendip Hills. The book is divided up into nine chapters, including a good introductory chapter which has a nice account of the history of early geological research in the area. This is particularly welcome given the importance of the Bristol region in the early history of geological research in Britain. The rest of the chapters follow on in stratigraphical order, except for one chapter on economic geology which for some reason comes before the Pleistocene and Recent. The layout is generally good, with some good clear diagrams and maps, which are not over reduced and the text is generally very readable. The use of colour photographs overlain with text for the Avon Gorge section is particularly commendable.

However, there are some major criticisms, not least that imperial measurements are used throughout. For what should be an up to date geological text this seems a little absurd although in the preface they state that metrification would introduce errors because of problems of recognition of the thicknesses on the old borehole logs. They suggest the reader is better off converting the figures into metric values, which seems a bit of a mystery. In fact the whole book appears to be somewhat dated, less than ten percent of the cited references date from the 1980's or later, and many of the observations are not placed in a modern geological context. For example the Carboniferous Limestone series is not described in sequence stratigraphy terms and there are several recent works, for instance on the Triassic faunas at Tytherington quarry, which have not been cited. This is almost certainly a result of the long gestation period of the book and reduces the books appeal a little. As with many of the geological memoirs the Pleistocene is dealt with very superficially (if you pardon the expression!), the chapter being just over four pages long. This is a shame as the Pleistocene is perhaps one of the more important geological periods. Only one paragraph is devoted to cave deposits, which often provide the only hard evidence for the changing environment over the last million years. Another major omission is the lack of a chapter on the structure and tectonics of the region. Although this is dealt with in a separate paper by Kellaway and Hancock (1983), its omission here is rather frustrating, especially in a structurally complex area such as that covered by the memoir. The same can be said for the publication of the Lower Jurassic stratigraphy in a separate memoir (Donovan and Kellaway, 1984), when its inclusion here would have been far more satisfactory.

Those criticisms aside, what is in the book is generally of high quality and reads very well. Although its appeal may be limited for the average speleologist, for anyone interested in geology, or who needs to know about the geology of the Bristol district this book is useful. It

certainly gives a far more comprehensive account of the geology of the Bristol district than any other published to date, and as such can be highly recommended for both library reference and for the interested amateur geologist wanting to know more.

REFERENCES

- DONOVAN, D.T. and KELLAWAY, G.A., 1984. Geology of the Bristol District: the Lower Jurassic rocks. *Memoir of the British Geological Survey*. London, H.M.S.O. 69pp.
- KELLAWAY, G.A., and HANCOCK, P.L., 1983. Structure of the Bristol District, the Forest of Dean and the Malvern fault zone. pp. 88–107, in *The Variscan Fold Belt in the British Isles*. Ed. Hancock. P.L., Bristol, Adam Hilger Ltd.