As the Preface states, this is a pictorial record rather than a history, and accordingly not necessarily complete. Rather than containing a single chronological sequence throughout, the book consists of a theme within each chapter, although beginning with the hospital's building and antecedents, and ending with its closure. However, by giving the reader thematic glimpses, rather than a direct sequence, of events, it does show the variety and changefulness – as well as in some cases the unchanging nature – of work and life at Haslar.

Themes include hospital interiors, the two chapels, and QARNNS and VADs (contributed by Captain Julia Massey RRC) among others: recent excavations by Cranfield University's Centre for Archaeological and Forensic Analysis team are also featured. Many of the illustrations are those to be found in any history of the hospital, but some, especially of smaller details less readily noticed, are both unusual and interesting.

Books with more than one author often appear to have been designed by committee, but Eric Birbeck, Ann Ryder and Phillip Ward have between them avoided this failing. Nor can the standard of production be faulted: Phillimore have produced a good-looking book in which the illustrations, both colour and monochrome, have reproduced very clearly.

While most of the quotations are referenced, it is a shame there is not a bibliography, or at least a list of further reading.

A final note: Haslar, Stonehouse and Chatham were indeed the first three naval hospitals to be built in England (as referenced on the front flap of the book-jacket), they were preceded by the Royal Naval Hospitals at Jamaica and Port Mahon. Although, inevitably, resources for these hospitals are limited, it would be good, eventually, to see something similar undertaken for the history of the Royal Naval Hospitals abroad.

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