

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 68 DECEMBER 2007



Sheriff Hutton Castle

Photo: V. Fairhurst

*Sheriff Hutton Visit ♦ Burshill Carrs ♦ Ingleborough ♦ CIA Conference
Local News ♦ Durham Conference Report ♦ Round-up of work in the region ♦ Diary Dates*

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ERAS LOCAL NEWS . . .

Any Old Books?

If anyone has any archaeology or local history books which they do not need, ERAS would be pleased to have them to add to its sale stock. Committee members who did our stall at the ERYC's annual Local History Bookfair this year, noted that we do not have a large enough range of books to sell. Particularly welcome would be the very early ERAS volumes (East Riding Archaeologist 1 and 2) and the Hull Old Town Report Series Volume .8, No.5 1987, and Volume 4, No 2 1993. (We have plenty of the other Hull Old Town Report series so do not need those). Any local history or archaeology books can be given to Fiona at any of the lecture meetings.

Egyptian mummies

Prof. Rosalie David is coming to ERAS on 19th December to give the lecture which she had to cancel last year, due to an accident. *Ancient Egyptian Mummies: a Resource for Studying Diseases and Everyday Life*. It should be a very good evening and a chance to meet up with friends just before Christmas, so we are hoping for a full house.

Part-time Courses

Enrolment for the first year of the part time degree courses in Archaeology or Archaeology and History at Hull University has been healthy this year with over 20 students and a waiting list. The first two years study takes you to Certificate level, 4 years gets you to Diploma level and its six years if you want to complete a BA degree. Classes are only one evening a week though the background reading and study requirements are quite heavy. You don't have to commit to the degree level at the outset, but can enrol initially for the certificate level only. For the first time, a Fieldwork Module has been introduced on year four/five of the part-time course and students can report on a week's participation in the excavation normally run for full time students in the summer or can organise their own project. Three smaller pieces of work such as a finds analysis, drawing exercise, building survey, map regression, site interpretation or geophysical survey must also be presented to complete the module. For further details contact Helen Fenwick in the University's History Department on 01482 465543 or h.fenwick@hull.ac.uk. The courses will start again in September 2008, but you are advised to apply before July in case there is a high demand for places again next year.

Thwing Excavation

Prof. Martin Millett ran a Cambridge University student training excavation on a Romano-British site at Thwing this year. Unfortunately his appeal for ERAS volunteers

just missed the June newsletter so only those we could contact by email got to hear about it. Only three ERAS members took part which was unfortunate as it was an excellently run site with very good learning opportunities. Only just beneath the surface of the topsoil, a chalk built Romano-British building, probably with several phases of construction, was recorded partially overlying an earlier ditch. Some floor levels had survived, overlain with what were thought to be fragments of wall plaster. Also at least one burial was recorded on the periphery of the site. The building itself was a manageable size for a training excavation and has been investigated for more than one season. It is thought, unfortunately, that a potato crop is to be planted on the field next year so any possible adjacent features might be subject to some disturbance.

Email addresses

If you have not already given (or updated) your email address to the treasurer, please do so, if you want to be kept informed of excavation opportunities. Also keep an eye on the new ERAS website run by David Clarke (see below).

ERAS Website

The ERAS website is now up and running and Dave is hoping to add recent newsletters and possibly an index for material from older newsletters. If you have any ideas for stuff to go on the site, contact Dave. The website is at <http://www.eras.org.uk>

Field Studies

The Field Studies Group has been experimenting with holding working meetings at Southburn Museum on Saturdays (daytime) rather than on Wednesday evenings. They have not been well attended, on the other hand, perhaps not many people knew about them as your editor has been a little late with this newsletter and the website has only recently got going. If you are interested in doing some practical work please contact Graham Myers the Field Studies officer for the society on 01482 324857 and he will be able to give you the date, time and place of the next planned work session.

Membership cards

If you did not pick up your card from the September/October lecture meeting, it should be included in this mailing. Don't forget your card entitles you to a reader's ticket at Hull University Brynmor Jones library. Just take your card and some proof of identity and ask at the reception desk.

Editor

HUMBER ARCHAEOLOGY FORUM JULY 2007

The Forum meets about twice a year in Beverley, to keep abreast of archaeological news and discuss relevant matters. It is open to all interested, such as representatives of local societies, commercial archaeologists, museum curators, academic archaeologists and representatives of associated specialisms. Some of the issues discussed are summarised below, although not all contributions have been noted.

Dave Evans reported on archaeological work along the route of the Easington to Ganstead pipeline by contractors Network Archaeology. Part of the work was to include taking core samples across the site of the former Lambwath Mere. The four volumes for the Flixborough excavation had gone to print. Dave also pointed out that changes at the Home Office might result in difficulties with applications for licenses to excavate human burials and take pathology/carbon dating samples. The situation was currently chaotic but would be clarified in the future. Changes to the marine aspect of heritage protection were to be welcomed. However, possible changes to the Planning Consent designations for local authorities were not thought to be feasible and much retraining would be needed. There has been a recommendation for the provision of SMRs for public information to be a statutory duty. A suggested benchmarking scheme for basic standard SMRs would need a large injection of funding as there was little provision at all in some areas.

Dave Marchant of East Riding of Yorkshire Council's museum services reported a successful series of events with a Celtic Life day and an Autumn public lecture series coming up.

Terry Manby reported (via Rod Mackey that the Implement Petrology Group was hoping to publish its most recent conference papers on the web. Terry is keeping a fairly low profile at the moment, but still does the occasional lecture.

Alan Williamson representing Hedon Museum reported that mid-18th century glassware recently restored by York Archaeological Trust was to go on display at the museum, the restoration having been funded by the site developer.

Peter Halkon is currently on study leave writing a book *The Parisi - Britons and Romans in an East Yorkshire Landscape* for Tempus. Work is continuing on preparing a report on the possible Roman temple complex at Millington for publication in *Britannia*, also the final report on Hayton.

Helen Fenwick reported that after July 2007, the display in Bridlington library relating to the work carried out at Sewerby Cottage Farm on the outskirts of Bridlington was to tour around different libraries.

CONFERENCE REPORT

Western Europe in the 1st Millennium BC.

Durham, November 2007

With titles such as *Is J.D Hill the new Barry Cunliffe?* from Niall Sharples and *If I ask you to describe later prehistoric societies, do you have to picture them as triangles?* from J.D Hill, this was a lively and controversial conference with a real buzz. There were presentations from Spanish and Portuguese archaeologists, whilst papers from John Collis, Carole Crumley, Robert van de Noort, Rachel Pope, Ian Ralston, John Barrett and Raimund Karl, kept the standard of discussion very crisp, if a little exhausting. There were many other excellent papers. Several ERAS members attended the weekend event at Durham University, including Greta Anthoons from Belgium.

One of the most interesting aspects of the weekend was the underlying academic debate on the history of Bronze Age and Iron Age studies and how academic theory has affected interpretation. These wide scale considerations are crucial to our understanding of the period. Richard Hingley warned against a reliance on literary sources, which, he argued could not be extrapolated from one geographical area to another. In sharp contrast, Niall Sharples considered the Iron Age to be reliably researched, but asked us to consider the role of career paths and the internal politics of academia in bringing to the fore the views of specific archaeologists.

JD Hill's picture of a torc captioned '*this is not an elite object*' encapsulated his view that Iron Age society was far more egalitarian than has been supposed. He proposed that wealth and power may have belonged to and been bestowed by the community, rather than resting in the hands of elite families. He was challenged for too much reliance on ethnographic models, although many agreed society was far more complex than the simple tribal model.

Carole Crumley spoke about the vastly underestimated disruptive effect which the major climate change in the period must have had and pointed out how inability to adapt to major changes disrupts social systems. The landscape we study is usually the final result of political struggles and we have to work back to trace the changes.

Raimund Karl gave Celtic linguistic evidence of change from a kinship-based to a more hierarchical society and John Collis stressed the difference between a society with weapons and a *warrior society*. Congratulations to Sarah Ralph of Network Archaeology who had the courage to remind her fellow and somewhat august speakers that excellent though the academic debate was, it was important to get new views and ideas out to contract archaeologists working on sites, as they are the ones recording and interpreting the primary evidence.

K. Dennett

Lecture Summary

Re-thinking Ingleborough

Yvonne Luke, October 2007

The rampart on the summit of Ingleborough, on the west side of the Penines, is one of the highest archaeological sites in the country. It has always been interpreted as an Iron Age Hillfort and was considered, in the 19th century, to be comparable to the hillforts of North Wales. Parts of the site were investigated many years ago, but no records of the excavation survive. Yvonne Luke began studying Ingleborough as part of her Ph.D work and found it somewhat bizarre that people would choose to take their cattle and live, even seasonally, in such an inhospitable place. She spoke to ERAS about alternative interpretations of the site.

She had begun by studying aerial photographs of the site and initially thought she could distinguish three distinctly different areas, comprising a central area with 'hut circles' and empty areas to the east and west. In the otherwise empty western area, she detected a large circular feature on two of the photographs with a suggestion of a trackway leading down to the rampart and realized that further research was necessary on the site itself. Getting up to the site is not to be tackled without forethought, is always dependent on weather conditions and means that research tends to be a long and unpredictable process.

On the ground itself, in the western area of the site, there was indeed a break in the scree cover where a trackway could have been situated and there appeared to be a break in the perimeter rampart at the point where the trackway would have entered. It was apparent that the rampart comprised several sections which were quite different in character from each other, but whether this was partly due to topographical conditions, to erosion, or to differing periods of construction and use is not yet fully clear. Breaks in the rampart appear to be marked by large standing stones which seem to be part of the original layout. At the points where the standing stones were positioned there was no adjacent quarrying scoop or ditch. Although the site has previously been interpreted as a hillfort, the rampart appeared to have the quarry ditch on the inside, which makes a defensive function highly unlikely. Another factor which makes a defensive function less likely and a ritual function more likely is that the rampart is most impressive at the point where the site has least need to be defended, due to a sheer natural drop.

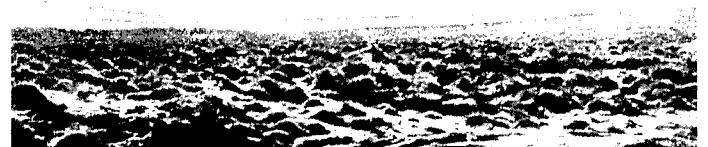
Yvonne considered whether the small circular features visible on aerial photographs and previously interpreted as hut circles were in fact ring cairns. If so, this totally

undermines the traditional interpretation of the site. Could this possibly be an earlier use of the summit such as the Bronze Age site at Mam Torr in Derbyshire?

Ring cairns, mostly found in the uplands of Wales, Ireland Scotland and south west England have been the subject of much recent research. They are being found in increasing numbers in the Yorkshire Dales and are thought to have a ritual function. The possible ring cairns on Ingleborough are not completely circular but have slightly flattened sides, and some half rings, not thought to be due to erosion or low visibility, are apparent. Yvonne considered that the half circles were not for domestic use.

There is no evidence for hearths on the site and very little in the way of domestic debris. If the site did indeed have a ritual function, such as a sanctuary, associated with contemporary belief systems, then it provides a new chronological framework and at the same time, explains the topographical setting. Only excavation will cast further light on its function, however, the site is now a scheduled monument. Whilst providing a degree of protection this status also limits the chances of being able to excavate.

Erosion by both natural and human causes is a major problem on the site. Yvonne Luke was hoping that an appeal could be made to walkers in the area not to build new cairns by removing stones from their existing position.



Summary: editor from notes by self and Angela Gowland

Lecture Summary: September 2007

A Round-up of Work in the Region

As most people will know, much of the archaeological work carried out nowadays is done prior to development taking place and is subject to competitive tendering by commercial archaeological contractors. As Archaeology Manager for Humber Archaeological Partnership (HAP) Dave Evans' job includes monitoring the work done by all archaeological contractors working in the Humber area. He described some of the work carried out recently by archaeological contractors coming in from outside the Humber area.

Dave Evans

Howden has been subject to several small developments since the Press Association offices opened in the town, creating over 600 jobs. Adjacent to the Market Place, a rich sequence of water logged deposits was found with over 2m of occupation evidence from 11th – 18th century. The backs of properties were exposed, including foundation padstones of Medieval timber buildings and a range of organic rubbish.

On the outskirts of Goole, work was carried out at the Tesco Distribution centre, adjacent to the glass factory, where previous work showed deep deposits of silt and clay sealing the archaeology. The trenches cut were able to show how the warping sequences had built up soil levels. Below the warping deposits, timber lined retting pits and other Medieval pits were found, beneath which were peat deposits over Neolithic forest levels. At Southgate, Market Weighton, a Tesco development on a former garage site revealed good sequences of deposits dating back to the Bronze Age. There were also late Saxon period finds.

Work on the Sproatly-Aldborough pipeline, linking up with the existing gas facility produced Iron Age and Romano-British sites (1st c BC to 2nd c AD) including round house gullies and a pit complex. Useful deposits of possible earlier date were also recorded. A piece of worked whalebone from the 19th century was also recovered.

The Easington to Ganstead gas pipe line, cutting through much of rural Holderness involved large-scale geophysical surveying and fieldwalking, producing 189 sites along the pipeline, to be evaluated by trenching. Material dating from the Mesolithic through to Post-Medieval was recorded. On a large settlement east of Patrington, dumps of pottery and bone from the Antonine period included good quality mortaria, North Lincolnshire greywares, and flagons etc. A complete glass bangle was also recovered. Much information was gained, enabling the many gaps in our

knowledge of the Iron Age and Romano British period for Holderness to be filled. The main phase of work will be in February-March 2008 and work is ongoing to try to clear the archaeological sites before then.

Ken Steedman: Humber Field Archaeology

Ken, who is the project manager of one of the local commercial archaeological contracting firms, Humber Field Archaeology, spoke about some of the work recently carried out in the region by HFA.

Beverley

Work was carried out on the site of the former Beehive pub where the Medieval chalk foundations gave the earliest evidence of occupation as 12th/13th century. At Well Lane, also in Beverley, a late Medieval brick and tile surface was exposed. There were problems with standing water on the site but beneath a dumped deposit of 13th 14th century building materials, structural timbers were preserved.

Stamford Bridge

Work was done at High Catton Road, in October 2006, prior to a sheltered housing development. In the lower levels of a ditch fill, a fragment of what was thought to be a small, Roman portable stone altar was found.

Preston

At a moated site, slots and gullies relating to Medieval buildings were recorded, as was a late Medieval pond and a pathway running westwards from Preston church.

Pocklington

In August 2007, features revealed at a site at Market Street included Medieval tanning pits.

North Cave

The ongoing work at North Cave, prior to sand and gravel quarrying is one of the largest sites excavated recently. The stripped area has shown trackways, ladder settlements, sheep, horse and cattle burials. Iron Age and Romano-British burials and a square barrow cemetery with 8-10 barrows. Unfortunately the flooding of summer 2007 had a very detrimental effect on the site, due to the soft and unstable nature of the sand.

Other sites reported on included Citadel Way, Hull and Eastgate, Driffeld.

Summary from notes by editor. Responsibility for any errors on this page lies with the newsletter editor.

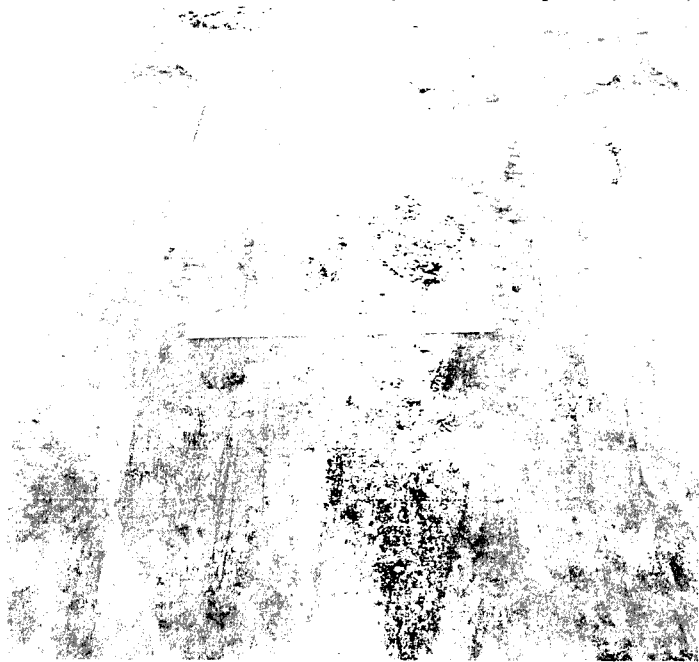
Lecture Summary

Work at Burshill Carrs, East Yorkshire

Richard Coates: September 2007

The Burshill Carrs site is north-west of Leven on the eastern edge of the River Hull flood plain on an area of glacio-fluvial gravel. After noticing a large crop mark in 2006, the farmer contacted ERAS member Mick Carr, who arranged to fly over and photograph the area, prior to harvesting. Mick was subsequently able to identify a large circular feature within a larger rectilinear feature on what appeared to be a slightly higher area of the field. Along with Phil Gregory, he opened several small trenches in the area to determine the exact position and approximate diameter of the circular feature.

A 20m square area was then stripped by mechanical digger and then trowelled back. To improve drainage, the field had been extensively sub-soiled, over a long period, resulting in an irregularly striped surface on which features were very difficult to identify and interpret (below).



However, a ring ditch approximately 15m in diameter, with an entrance facing east was visible and was subsequently excavated by Mick and Phil with Graham Myers and Richard Coates, and occasional help from others. The ditch, on average in excess of a meter wide, had a U shaped profile with at least one major re-cut apparent. The depth varied from c0.5m near to the entrance to c0.8m on the north-west side. The central area of the ring ditch was almost completely devoid of pottery and the few sherds found were considered to have been moved from within the ditch-fill by the sub-soiling activity. However, a single

complete base found in the south-east quadrant can be considered with confidence to be *in situ*.

Some circular features, visible in plan within the ring, approximately 1m from the inner edge of the ditch and appearing to respect the ditch have been tentatively identified as post or stake holes. Additionally, two pairs of pits or possible post-pits were identified and excavated. One pair was near the entrance and the second pair was in a central position. These may reflect the position of structural supports inside the ring ditch. Several sections were cut through the ring ditch itself. The large assemblage of Iron Age pottery recovered came predominantly from sections close to the entrance. These sections also produced animal bone.

Coring was carried out beyond the western side of the ring ditch and a small trial trench cutting the large rectilinear feature seen on the aerial photographs revealed a ditch approximately 1m wide and 1m deep. Close to the north-east corner of the first ring ditch, a small trial trench revealed what might be second ring ditch inside the large rectilinear enclosure.

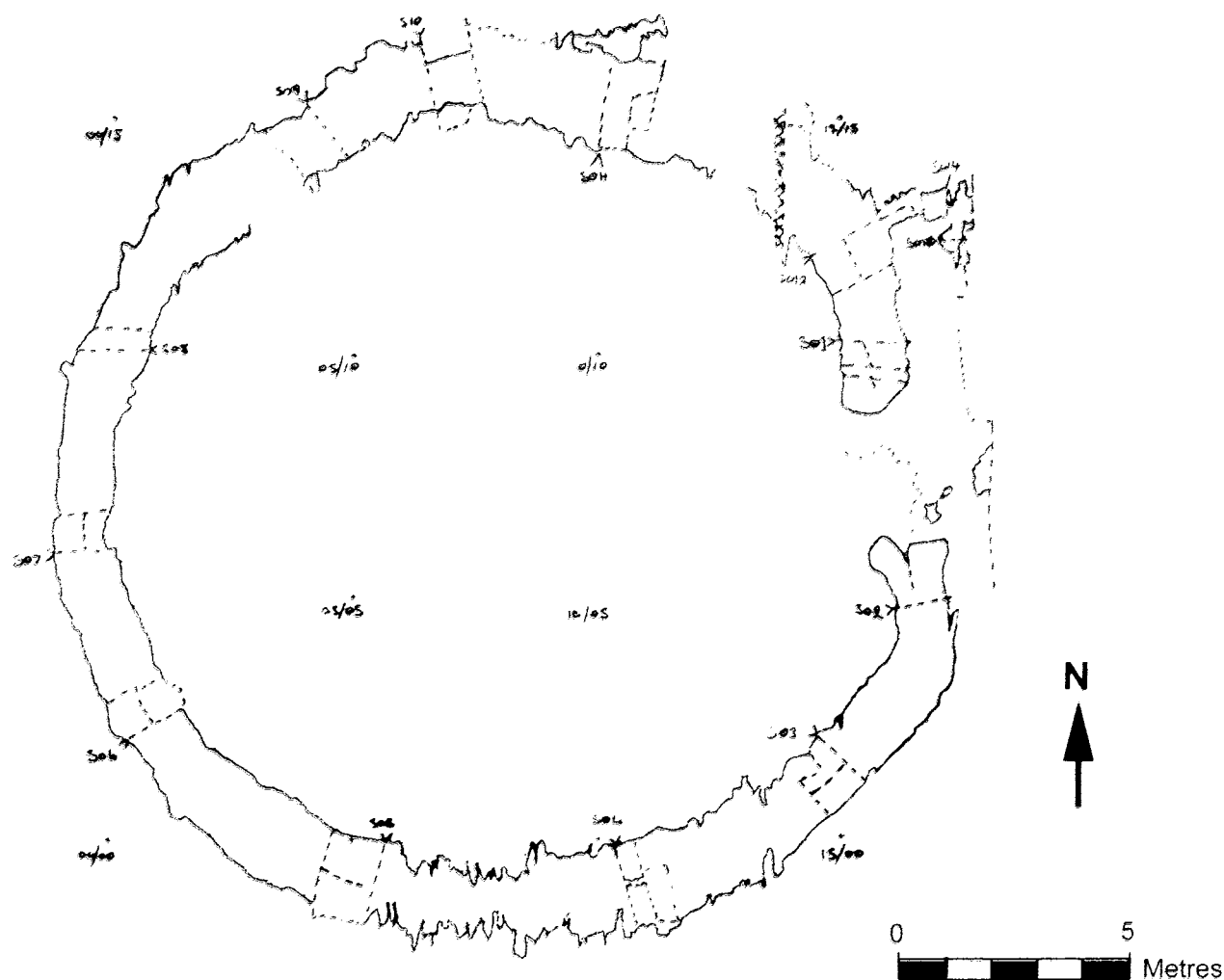
The initial interpretation of the site is that the large ring ditch might be the drip gully of a large round house. If the circular features within, which appear to respect the ditch are post or stake holes, this would suggest the structure was approximately 12m in diameter. The pottery assemblage and animal bones recovered from the ditch are consistent with occupation, although the quantity is small. There is evidence of an earlier phase ditch and it is possible that the site was only used seasonally. The size and depth of the ring ditch are very significant aspects to interpreting the function and the activities that might have taken place. It seems likely that the rectilinear feature is an enclosure ditch surrounding the round house. Any entrance gap might be expected to be on its eastern side to coincide with the round house, but this side is not visible on aerial photographs. The presence of a smaller ring ditch inside the enclosure to the north has yet to be confirmed.

The pottery assemblage is typical of Iron Age pottery found elsewhere in East Yorkshire, but dating by typology from hand-built pottery is very difficult. The site can only be considered as part of a large complex of rectilinear and circular features which appear as crop marks on Burshill Carrs. Mick Carr has been working in the area, on land owned by the same farmer, during the last two years

following his metal detecting finds in 2003 of a cosmetic mortar, a bronze South Ferriby type stater and an Iron Age bronze bowl, the latter subsequently excavated by Humber Archaeological Partnership. The riveted method of construction of the bowl is similar to that of early Iron Age cauldrons from Wales and Sussex. In 2004, a small trench, excavated close to the area of the above finds, was thought to show human activity but was inconclusive. Artefacts recovered from this area included a piece of worked jet, a blue glass bead, an assemblage of Iron Age pottery and what is currently thought to be the most northerly find of Dragonby type pottery.

Tentative and on-going excavation work this year on a trench adjacent to the 2004 excavation and has revealed a substantial east-west ditch with further Iron Age pottery and animal bone. Thanks are due to all who helped with this work but especially to farmers Ken and Martin Voase for their cooperation and interest and for giving permission to work on the site. Martin is now a member of ERAS. Several finds of prehistoric stone tools from the Carrs area are coming to light and the area obviously has much potential for further study, so it is very helpful to have farmers with a genuine interest in archaeology.

Summary: Richard Coates



ERAS Visit to Sheriff Hutton Castle

The success of the Society's visit to Sheriff Hutton was largely due to Ed Dennison, who has been leading a programme of archaeological survey and historic building recording in and around the village since the 1990s, and also to the owner of the later castle, for allowing access. Like many people, I had known that there was a ruined castle in the village, but not that there had been two castles, a planned deer park and a double canal. The village of Sheriff Hutton lies some 16 km to the northeast of York, on a prominent east-west aligned ridge on the southern edge of the Howardian Hills. The position, surrounded by flat agricultural land and overlooking the Vale of York, means that even today the remaining towers of the later castle make a striking picture against the skyline.

We started our tour at the church, where we were shown around by Robin Wardell, retired inspector of coconuts somewhere in the South Seas and now part-time sexton, village historian and narrator of tales. The earliest fabric of the church is generally considered to be 11th century in date, or perhaps slightly later. Both the first castle and the church are first documented early in the 12th century; it is possible that it was in the early-mid 12th century that a planned village was added to the earlier settlement, when the manor became associated with the lords of Bulmer and the village gained its 'Sheriff' prefix. Inside the church is the alabaster tomb, famous (or infamous) as being thought by some to be a memorial to Edward of Middleham, Prince of Wales and son of Richard III. Outside, in the churchyard, is a more modern memorial: a (fortunately) rare war grave of a member of the Home Guard who died during a training exercise in which live ammunition was used. From the wall of the churchyard we could look across the low-lying flat valley which remains prone to winter flooding even today, a characteristic that might have been helpful in the transportation of stone from quarries at Mowthorpe, a couple of miles away, for the construction of the later of the two Sheriff Hutton castles.

The site of the first castle lies just south of the church, within the area of the original, possibly Saxon, settlement. There are no upstanding remains and even in 1367 it was documented as being worth nothing 'apart from its repairs'. No clear documentary evidence of its construction date has been found, but it is thought that it may have been built in c. 1115 by Ansketill de Bulmer, who was Sheriff of Hutton and of York. Though a substantial c.50m x c.40m platform, bearing several earthworks, rises steeply some 2.5m above an encircling ditch, this first castle site had been somewhat ignored in the recent past, perhaps because the ruins of the later castle are so impressive. The earthworks were not

accurately located on a map until the 19th century Ordnance Survey maps. In 2004 Ed Dennison carried out a detailed earthwork survey, revealing greater complexity in the earthworks. It has been suggested that the complex resembles a 12th century 'courtyard castle', though the size of the courtyard is rather small.



Ed Dennison and visitors on the site of the first castle.

The first castle would have been held by the Bulmers and then, from 1190 to c.1382, by the Nevilles. No documentary evidence has been found of permanent occupation by the Nevilles, but it probably served as their administrative centre for the area. It would also have provided the Nevilles with a base for hunting in their adjacent deer park, particularly after the Nevilles gained overlordship of the manor in 1331 and expanded the park a few years later. Some of the earthworks could be interpreted as medieval orchards and gardens. At a later date still, in the hundred or so years after the second castle was completed in c.1400, the complex might have been converted into ornamental garden features, with viewpoints and prospect mound, even a lodge, with views south over the park and west towards the new castle. The two castles are still linked by a footpath and still visible from each other. Ed suggested that the Nevilles might have deliberately kept the first castle site as somewhere they

could look back on, both visually and metaphorically, a link with their historic past. The site of the first castle still has a function today: it is managed as a traditional meadow, forming an important wildlife habitat.

Construction of the second castle was begun in 1382 by John Neville, and continued after 1425 by Ralph Neville. The majority of the stone used is an iron-rich oolitic limestone rubble, though the quoins, window and door surrounds are a grey-brown sandstone, both of which could have come from quarries at Mowthorpe. When completed, the second castle consisted of three separate areas, an outer, middle and inner court, covering an area seven or eight times greater than the first castle site. The outer court equates to the castle precinct and contained orchards, at least one large barn, stables and other structures. Almost all the middle court structures have been removed, but some idea of the layout can be deduced from earlier descriptions and recent archaeological investigation. A gatehouse in the east side was flanked by two towers forming the northeast and southeast corners, with ranges running along the north and south sides of the court.

The inner court lay on the west side of the middle court and is now represented by the four ruined towers which provide a spectacular backdrop for the village. It was entered through a gatehouse, above the arch of which can still be seen the carved heraldic devices of Ralph Neville. Within the inner court, an open courtyard was surrounded by the four towers and connecting ranges. The four towers rose to corner turrets and were probably substantially taller than those of the middle court, so that the whole building appeared to step up from east to west when approached through the outer court.

Leland mentions five or six towers in the second area in 1534 and one of these may have enclosed a 'statley Staire' rising up to a great hall on the first floor. Geophysical



Looking up at the second castle.

Photo: V. Fairhurst

survey suggests irregularities in the alignment of the inner court; one of the possible explanations for this is that at the death of John Neville in 1388 a new master mason perhaps took over, with a different set of demands from Ralph Neville. There were three known major overhauls of the buildings in the 16th century, but by the early 17th century the structure was described as a 'naked carcase'.

The final part of our tour led us to the southern part of the outer court, where it became the part of the surrounding designed landscape, some of which has survived as a series of earthworks. These were originally surveyed in 1998 and re-visited in 2005. Parts may be late medieval, but many are probably 16th century in date. There is documentary evidence that the gardens persisted until at least 1511 and relatively major additions were still being made in the 1570s, when the 80 yards long 'Lady Bridge' was built across the double canals to the south of the castle, very probably to link the gardens and the park to the south.

The most prominent features of the designed landscape are the parallel double canals flanking a raised earthwork to the south of the castle. It is possible that the double canals were created for, or during the residence (c.1525-32) of, Henry Fitzroy, Earl of Richmond and bastard son of Henry VIII. Though now overgrown, the central earthwork between the canals is still an attractive walk; Ed suggested that the creation of the canals coincided with the clearance and grassing-over of a large area of the park so that the raised walkway gave a view both of the park and the southern towers of the castle. Deer within the park may have formed part of this view, either as a contrived idyllic scene or as part of a hunting spectacle.

The Ancient Monument status of the second castle prevents any extensive excavation, though the consolidation work of one of the towers in 2002-3 allowed some detailed recording of that part of the structure. The excavation of 2m-3m of fallen material at first floor level and the inspection of the surfaces hidden and preserved by the debris.

Once more, I'd like to thank Ed Dennison for giving his time generously. I have also been greatly helped in the production of this account by his provision of the text of an article in the Castle Studies Group Journal, which I have made extensive use of. Any errors I have unwittingly introduced are my own.

Valerie Fairhurst.

Richardson, S and E Dennison 2007-8 The Castles of Sheriff Hutton *The Castle Studies Group Journal* 21: 173-189

Dennison, E (ed) 2005 *Within the Pale: The Story of Sheriff Hutton Park*

Successful CIA Conference in Conjunction with ERAS

The 12th Congress of Independent Archaeologists held in conjunction with the ERAS over the weekend of the 1st - 2nd September 2007 took place at Bishop Burton College. This had advantages and disadvantages. The advantage was that being an agricultural college, its courses include floristry, so the grounds were beautiful and for the opening drinks session in the Victorian Conservatory we were surrounded by exotic flowers. The disadvantage was that early on the Saturday morning all the lights went out, because a tractor had knocked down an electricity pylon on the site and it was feared that our PowerPoint presentations would vanish. Luckily they had a standby generator. However, they also had 200 cows to be milked and cows take precedence over archaeology, so we could not go ahead until all the cows had been milked. In the end all went well and it was a very successful event.

A main theme of the congress was the relationship between archaeology and agriculture. Opinions by two outside experts gave very different accounts on the subject. Margaret Nieke from Natural England was optimistic. Natural England was established in 2006, bringing together English Nature, parts of the Countryside Agency and the Rural Development Service. (It was set up in the aftermath of the previous foot and mouth disaster so that there should be a coordinated response in the future.) Margaret distinguished between two different types of stewardship schemes, firstly the Countryside Stewardship scheme which closed in 2004, though as these were ten year schemes, many will be running for some time yet. The Stonehenge scheme for instance, set up in 2002, took 450 hectares out of arable and put it down to grassland as well as paying for much wider protection areas around individual barriers, all at considerable cost. Similarly Thornborough Rings were protected by one of the classic schemes in 1998 as well as an area of the Yorkshire Dales.

These early schemes have been replaced by two Environmental Stewardship schemes, an Entry Level one, which pays up to £30 per hectare, and a Higher Level one, which pays between £16 - £500 per hectare. These are highly competitive schemes which result in ten year agreements and include for example the maintenance of high water levels to preserve historic water logged areas and the maintenance of historic farm buildings. Already £16.5 million has been committed, of which £10 million a year is used for taking sites out of cultivation, a classic example being the remains of Iron Age fields located west

of Reeth in Swaledale, also the Birdsall estate which includes the DMV of Wharram Percy.

A rather more pessimistic assessment was given by Carl Champness of Oxford Archaeology, commissioned by English Heritage to carry out research into the effects of modern agricultural practices and farm machinery on buried archaeology. This sprang from the MARS project (Monuments at Risk Survey) which ended in 1998 and which revealed that agriculture was a serious threat to 42% of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and that in 35% there was need of management action. This was followed by the COSMIC project (Conservation of Scheduled Monuments in Cultivation). Based on a survey of some 159 sites in the East Midlands, a model was prepared to show how ancient monuments could be conserved in cultivation, but there was found to be something of a gap between the predictions of the model and the real situation. The project involved digging 500 test pits on 116 sites where landowners allowed access and results were grim. In 70% of scheduled monuments and 79% of non-scheduled monuments there was evidence of serious degradation. There is a general 'class consent' to let farmers continue to plough over scheduled monuments, but 25% of the farms had not taken this seriously enough and had been ploughing too deeply. Part of the problem occurs when ploughing is done by commercial contractors who come in to plough at night and who are unaware of the existence of scheduled ancient monuments and who in any case would not be able to see the results of ploughing by night.

A new project called TRIALS to test the effects of modern agricultural practices and farm machinery on buried archaeological artefacts and deposits has now started. Ceramic flower pots are being buried under different depths of soil, indeed in some cases replica pots of different fabrics - flint-tempered, straw-tempered and grog tempered are being used. Various forms of agricultural equipment are driven over the area and the damage assessed. Damage appeared to relate to tyre pressures ie. the higher the pressure, the greater the breakage. Can farmers be persuaded to use low tyre pressures to disperse the weight? (This would mean re-adjustment before driving onto a road again.) A second problem for archaeological sites is that modern equipment compacts the soil and so every four years much farmland is sub-soiled ie. ploughed to a depth of 50cm or more to break up the pan. This is disastrous for the archaeology (see page 7) and is why metal detectorists keep on finding more new material as sub-soiling brings hitherto buried objects to the surface. Is

it possible to avoid this by direct tillage? This should also be cheaper for the farmer, but the answer appears to be that it is not and that after 15 years, direct drilling and minimum tillage cause almost equal amounts of damage.

Much of the conference was devoted to the more traditional aspects of hearing reports on the work of independent archaeologists. Here many different approaches were evident. Ed Archer from Lanark told us about his experiences. He was a school teacher, until four years ago when he gave up teaching to become a volunteer coordinator in the Clydesdale area. He has now built up a team of over 400 volunteers, all over 50! He had set them to work on a wide range of projects and he told us about the results of his scheme to record ancient farm buildings and the machinery that is often lying around in their vicinity. These are under threat from modern farming methods which encourage the establishment of mega farms. Although this work was being done by volunteers, he was keen to ensure that none of them was out of pocket for their work.

At the other extreme was the work of John Hunt. John used to be a brewer, a former director of Scottish and Newcastle Breweries, who on his retirement took to archaeology. He purchased one of the CIA resistivity metres for £1000 and has now become a sort of flying doctor to British excavations in the Mediterranean, offering his services wherever they are needed. In Southern Italy on a site near Gravina at Vagnari he detected the outlines of a large rectangular Roman building that appeared to be a pottery and tile factory with a circular feature in one corner.

Another interesting project was that being carried out by HADAS, the Hendon and District Archaeological Society who were faced with the problem of writing up excavations the society carried out in the 1970s. They asked Birkbeck College to set up an extra-mural course to train them to write up the excavation. The course is now in its 5th year of successful operation with one excavation already published. There are up to 12 members of the class, each of whom pays fees of some £200 a year which means that the project is more or less self-supporting. Birkbeck employs Jackie Pearce, one of the post-medieval pottery specialists in the Museum of London to conduct the classes and supervise the writing up, at the same time building up a core of expertise within the society about the dating of post-medieval pottery.

Then there are the excavations of the Roman villa at Piddington in Northamptonshire, now in their 27th year of excavation by the Friendship-Taylors and the Upper Nene Archaeological Society. This again is an excavation funded almost entirely by its own resources, though when they realised there was no museum where they could deposit

their finds, they had to set up their own. The excavations are on-going and Roy, keen to keep to the conference theme, talked about a garden in the villa courtyard, with evidence in the form of tree holes and channels for watering.

Tony Clifford, editor of the CIA Newsletter gave a fascinating talk about his excavations at Grove Farm near Upchurch in Kent, which again sprang from his purchase of one of the society's resistivity meters. A local farmer invited him to do a survey in his walled garden and in the adjacent field, where he discovered much evidence for Medieval activity. The strongest anomaly revealed the top of an archway which when excavated went 2 metres down to form what must have been a garderobe on the outside of what appears to be a Medieval manor house.

Other societies reported on mixed projects whereby independent self-funding societies worked alongside various official or semi-official bodies. A classic example of this was the work of Matthew Vickers and the Washingborough Archaeological Group who are conducting a survey of the Witham Valley, east of Lincoln. The project was set up by the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire to search the banks of the River Witham which in the past has produced so many ritual items. The research was carried out in conjunction with the Heritage Trust for Lincolnshire and with the water authority that is responsible for dredging the river and ensuring that it does not flood. In this they were helped by a Lidar aerial survey, carried out for the water authority, from which they were able to detect the position of the river in earlier times. Also their field walking was able to pick out numerous flints of the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age periods when there were probably a number of barrows strung out along the river.

Chris Hall then spoke about the 60 years work by Scarborough Archaeological Society which began excavating sites within 50 miles of Scarborough. Indeed it was the society which carried out the first three seasons of excavations at Star Carr, later to become a classic project by Graham Clarke. However more recently they have turned to urban archaeology and have carried out over 80 interventions within Medieval Scarborough which in the 14th century was one of the richest boroughs in the country thanks to the herring trade. The society has an excellent publishing record.

Another pair of talks concerned the work of ERAS itself. The Iron Age Cornfield Project was initiated by Alan Bakewell of the Ministry of Defence Conservation group at Leconfield, who wished to create a semi-arable plot for the over wintering of birds. This idea developed into the replication of an ancient cornfield. Alan was made aware of

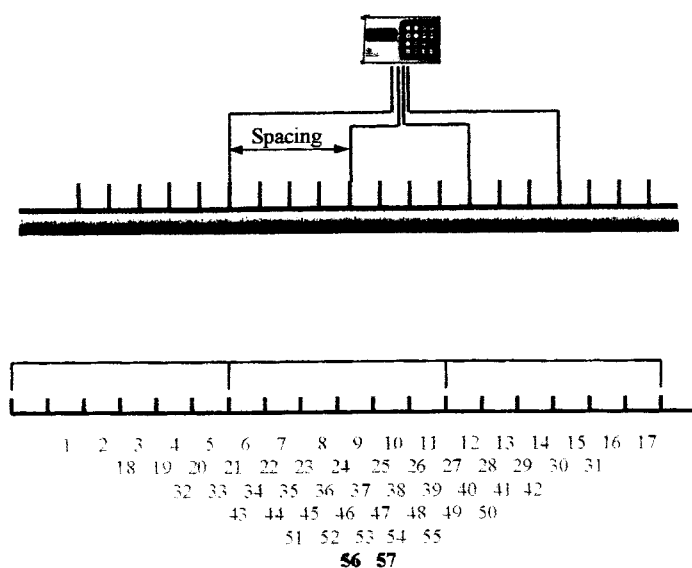
the Iron Age/Romano British Arram Chapel Garth excavation being carried out very close to his conservation site by ERAS, and it was decided to take soil samples from the excavation, have them analysed, ascertain the corn varieties being grown and attempt to grow a replica crop. The samples were funded partly by the M.O.D. and also by money raised at an open day on the excavation site. Soil samples revealed that Spelt (*Triticum spelta*) was the favoured wheat grown on the site, with Emmer (*Triticum dicoccum*) also present and chaff indicating processing was taking place. A small cornfield was grown, using the ancient varieties, and despite being plagued by rabbits, deer and slugs, a crop has recently been harvested and it is planned to grind it using a quern stone and to make bread. The project gained the runner-up prize in the M.O.D. Sanctuary awards for conservation.

Another fascinating report was by Bill Coultard of the Southburn Archaeological Museum Project, just west of Driffield on the Yorkshire Wolds. This dealt with one of the classic problems: what do you do with a 20th century archaeological collection, after the person who set it up has passed away? The most famous of these collections is that of the Grantham brothers, the butchers of Driffield who built up a collection of flints and pottery from the Yorkshire Wolds which is said to rival that of the British Museum in its richness and variety. As butchers they visited many farms, plying their trade and at the same time, collecting archaeological artefacts. Their collection is still in storage. At Southburn, a similar collection was built up by Brian Hebblewhite who died in the 1980s and a community project is now underway to catalogue the remains and make them accessible for study at the fledgling Southburn Archaeological Museum. The collection is now being augmented by the work of the Portable Antiquities Scheme which is adding a range of Anglo Saxon material.

One of the advantages of holding the CIA Congress in conjunction with a local archaeological society was that participants were able to hear about the archaeology of the local area. Thus the opening lecture was by Rod Mackey whose excavations at Easington recently formed a major article in *Current Archaeology* No. 202. Rod summarised the geological and archaeological background to the East Riding of Yorkshire, looking at major prehistoric sites and features. Then David Neave looked at local vernacular buildings, of which relatively few remain, due to the absence of good quality natural building materials. Many buildings were built of cob and chalk and were replaced by brick relatively early on. Some of the finest brick buildings were the farm buildings erected in the late 18th and early 19th centuries when East Yorkshire underwent enclosure and great estates were formed.

Peter Halkon, gave an after dinner talk looking at the history of antiquarians and archaeologists in the area and particularly at the rivalry between the two great archaeologists of the late 19th and early 20th century, Canon Greenwell, the upper class intellectual who in practical terms was surpassed by J R Mortimer, the rather humbler corn chandler, born and brought up on the Yorkshire Wolds, whose work *Forty Years Researches in British and Saxon Burial Mounds in East Yorkshire* is one of the classic publications.

One of the highlights of the conference was a talk by Bob Randall, an engineering expert who designed and manufactured the TR/CIA resistivity meter, though this is now out of production due to the EU regulations on lead soldering making the production of small scale electronic equipment unviable. He has been experimenting with an alternative use of the resistivity meter, that of producing vertical sections. The method is well known to geologists who use expensive equipment on a very large scale, but Bob has adapted it for use on a small scale, reading down to three metres, in conjunction with existing CIA resistivity meters. It involves setting out a line of 20 steel probes at one metre intervals, connecting up the four wires of the Wenner Array to the first four probes, taking a reading, then moving the array a meter along, taking another reading and repeating the process until the last probe is reached. The procedure is then repeated all over again, but with the array wires connecting at two metre intervals and then at three metres and so on, until a 6m interval is completed. The last line gives only two readings.



Top: Readings being taken at 4m intervals
Bottom: Completed set of readings at 6m intervals

This long process provides the basic data to which a piece of mathematical magic known as inversion is applied by the software. A limited version of the software (perfectly adequate for archaeology) can be downloaded for free from the internet. It is usually used for far more complex applications and the producers are happy, so far, for it to be used in the more limited way for archaeology. Bob has put all this together in a special kit which he is offering to archaeologists for the bargain price of £250 plus £20 carriage. This consists of 20 probes made by hand by Charles Corner, a special set of electrical wires to make up the Wenner Array and an instruction book with full details. He had brought 5 kits along to the conference and all 5 were promptly snapped up, ERAS being the first to buy. (at the time of writing it has already been tested out with considerable success, although it is a somewhat tedious process.) More kits will be available from Bob at his address of bob.randall@tiscali.co.uk.

Finally the Congress reached the broader question of what the Council for Independent Archaeologists should be doing. Barry Horne, now of the Leighton Buzzard Archaeological Society put forward some interesting and provocative ideas. The (former) Culture Minister, David Lammy, recently called metal detectorists the 'unsung heroes of the heritage movement' – presumably words suggested by civil servants at the DCMS. But what about amateur archaeologists, who are doing far more valuable work without the destructive overtones, but whose activities remain not only unsung but unknown to civil servants at the DCMS? What can we do about this? Barry suggested that local societies should also submit their finds to the Portable Antiquities Scheme where they can gain some valuable publicity.

More importantly however, he wondered whether the CIA should set up its own scheme, publishing summary reports of the work of local societies on the internet, so that they can be down loaded by fellow societies, thus expertise in this way could be more widely shared. Professional archaeologists and academics can to some extent do this through the work of ADS which is funded by the government and which publishes Internet Archaeology for a subscription of £39.50 per volume.

Could we not provide a similar service free to amateur archaeologists and in a form that will enable it to be searchable by Google and other search engines? Following his lecture, Barry was volunteered to take this project further and he asked any local societies which would like to take part in a pilot scheme to contact him.

The CIA's AGM had been held earlier at which members voted to increase membership fees from £8 a year to £10 a

year or £36 for 4 years which must make it one of the cheapest archaeological societies in the country. However, costs are low, and money would be available to set up a website, as suggested above. All in all, the Congress was most interesting and stimulating and we look forward to the next one in two years time.

If you are interested joining the Council for Independent Archaeology, please contact the secretary, Keith Foster, 2, The Watermeadows, Swarkestone, Derby. DE73 1JA

Tel. 01332 704148

Material for the CIA newsletter can be sent to telcliffd@gmail.com

The above report is based on original text prepared by Andrew Selkirk but has been heavily edited by the ERAS Newsletter editor Kate Dennett.

Conferences, meetings and training courses

- Wed 19 Dec** **ERAS Lecture.. Rosalie David.**
Ancient Egyptian Mummies: A Resource for Studying Diseases and Everyday Life.
- Wed 16 Jan** **ERAS Lecture. Alex Gibson**
Dyffryn Lane, Powys, Wales and some thoughts on British henges
- Thur 14 Feb** Lecture by Martin Millett at joint meeting of the Classical Assoc. and the Historical Soc. at the Danish Church, Osbourne St. Hull. 7.30pm. Archaeological Survey of Roman Towns in Italy: some recent results. Further information from Sylvia.usher@hull24.com
- Wed 20 Feb** **ERAS Lecture. Tony Wilmott. The Chester Amphitheatre Project.**
- 8/9 Mar** Finds from the Frontier. Meeting hosted by Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle University, bringing together finds specialists for the Roman period, to give an insight into daily life. £15/25
Details Robert.collins@ncl.ac.uk
- Wed 19 Mar** **ERAS Lecture. Vicki Score. Ritual Hoards and Helmets**
- 4/5 April** International Conference hosted by the Graduate Archaeology Org. Oxford University.
discussing Mobility, Transition and Change on the premise that the physical remains of the past are fixed in archaeological contexts, but are not the product of a static environment.
Details- gaomobility@hotmail.co.uk
- Wed 16 Apr** **ERAS AGM**
Followed by Lecture. Robert White
The Conservation of Archaeological Objects.

ERAS lectures, are held in Room S1, Wilberforce Bldg, Hull University, 7.30pm. Members free, visitors £1.

It helps our treasurer very much (and saves postage) if you renew your membership using the form below (or a photocopy of it) without having to be sent a reminder.

I would like to join/renew my ERAS membership from January 2008 - January 2009

Name(s).....Address.....

email.....Tel.

I would like to pay by direct debit, please send me a form

Or

I enclose a cheque payable to ERAS for £..... (£5 *fulltime student, £15 ordinary member, £20 family)
Send to the treasurer, Lesley Jackson, 24 St Stephens Close Willerby , E. Yorks. HU10 6DG

* Students please give institution, course & year