

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

No. 58 JULY 2004



Graham Myers and Fiona Wilson watching Wil stripping the topsoil at Arram

Photo: Kate Dennett

*Roman Signal Stations ♦ Arram Excavation ♦ Stanwick & Vindolanda
Committee ♦ Local News ♦ From the Bookshelf ♦ National Archaeology Days ♦ Diary*

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ERAS Local News

AUTUMN LECTURE PROGRAMME

In order to save postage, we might not send out the new lecture programme cards until the next newsletter is ready, probably at the end of September or the beginning of October. Lecture titles up to December are listed in the back of this newsletter and lecture meetings are always on the third Wednesday of each month. So don't worry if you don't get a new card in the post at the end of August or beginning of September, just come along to the lectures anyway.

NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY WEEKEND

See the back page for news of events in the region for National Archaeology Weekend. (Appropriately enough, it is also the starting date for the Arram excavation, see page 6). Hull & East Riding Museum in High Street will be putting on a special event when people will be able to talk to the archaeologists and handle various artefacts and there will be a display about the ERAS Foulness Valley website (see page 5). The society will also have a small display of general activities and a chance for children to see if they can date a range of pottery sherds.

LOCAL HISTORY BOOKFAIR

This popular event, normally held in the Memorial Hall, Beverley will be held in **Beverley Minster**, this year, on October 16th. If you are willing to do an hour or so on the ERAS stand, please contact Rose Nicholson, on 07770 470443. It is usually a very good opportunity to see what projects other groups are carrying out and what they are publishing, also to snap up a few bargains.

THANKS

The committee would like to thank Prof. and Mrs Neale for their kindness in continuing to provide a room and refreshments for committee meetings. Their hospitality is greatly appreciated.

FURTHER LIGHT ON THE PARISI

The first edition of the above book edited by Peter Halkon had sold out but has now been reprinted and is available for £4 (plus postage) from Ed Dennison, (01482 870723) or from ERAS meetings, if you let Kate know in advance.

ANGLO-SAXON CRAFTS

The first edition of the above book by Kevin Leahy

(reviewed by Helen Fenwick on page 9) had also sold out, but has now been reprinted and will be on sale at ERAS meetings, at a special price of £16 (RRP£17.99).

BUTCHERY DEMONSTRATION

Krish Seetah, an award winning PhD student from the MacDonald Institute, University of Cambridge, will be coming to the October Field Studies meeting to demonstrate what close examination of animal bones from archaeological sites can tell us about eating habits and choices of meat cuts, in the past. How people jointed their meat, for example, can tell us about levels of Romanisation, acting as a cultural indicator. Many thanks to Peter Halkon for arranging this.

FINDS IDENTIFICATION DAYS AT HERM

Hull and East Riding Museum holds finds identification sessions for finds made by the general public on the last Saturday of each month, from 11.0am - 1.00pm, but please note that valuations cannot be given on these occasions.

SHIRES BOOKS

ERAS gets a very good discount on buying Shires books in small quantities and sales help to boost our funds. The range of titles is extensive, and includes many which are more substantial than the basic cheapest ones. Please ask if you would like to check the catalogue or if you want to order any books through ERAS.

APPEAL FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

The editor is always grateful (indeed desperate) for articles for the newsletter. So if you are doing any piece of research, large or small, or have any interesting finds, observations, questions or suggestions for the newsletter, please get in touch. If you are a careful note-taker at lectures, we would be especially grateful for lecture summaries. These seem to be appreciated by readers but are the most time-consuming items to produce, as it is essential that they are accurate and well written.

Field Studies Work ...

Resistivity survey at Arras

MA student Matthew Phillpott recently borrowed the meter to carry out a survey of a Medieval site at Arras (quite a feat of dedication, considering he did most of it on his own and carried all the gear on public transport). He produced some good, well balanced results, which he brought to the July Field Studies meeting to show others. As well as the Medieval features, some circular features appeared to be showing up which could possibly be barrows. Interpretation is never easy, but with some further work with the software programme, he may be able to get more detail in the image.

Beverley Westwood Resistivity Survey

Phase one of the survey, covering the Iron Age cemetery and possible Bronze Age barrow has been completed. Many thanks to all who helped. If you took part and have not seen the final results, please contact Rod Mackey, who will email them to you. Whilst it is disappointing that the barrows did not show up better, it gave interesting results and many people learnt a lot from the exercise. We are still trying to find the origin of the linear features, which showed up running roughly parallel with the Tan Gallop. Our grid pegs, hammered level with the ground, are still in place and the grid could be re-established if necessary, for further work. Phase two, which we had anticipated would be on the area alongside the road, opposite the race course, didn't ever get going because the first phase involved more of a major commitment from the organisers than had been anticipated.

We are sorry if you didn't get chance to participate, due to work being on weekdays, but the golf club had

requested that we avoided surveying at weekends.

Urban Commons Survey

The English Heritage topographical survey of the Westwood, using GPS, over the same and a wider area, did not get going until the grass on the Westwood was rather too long, making it difficult for them to locate significant features visually. The ERAS survey grid points have already been tied in, so that the two surveys can eventually be linked.

Roman Glass Bangles

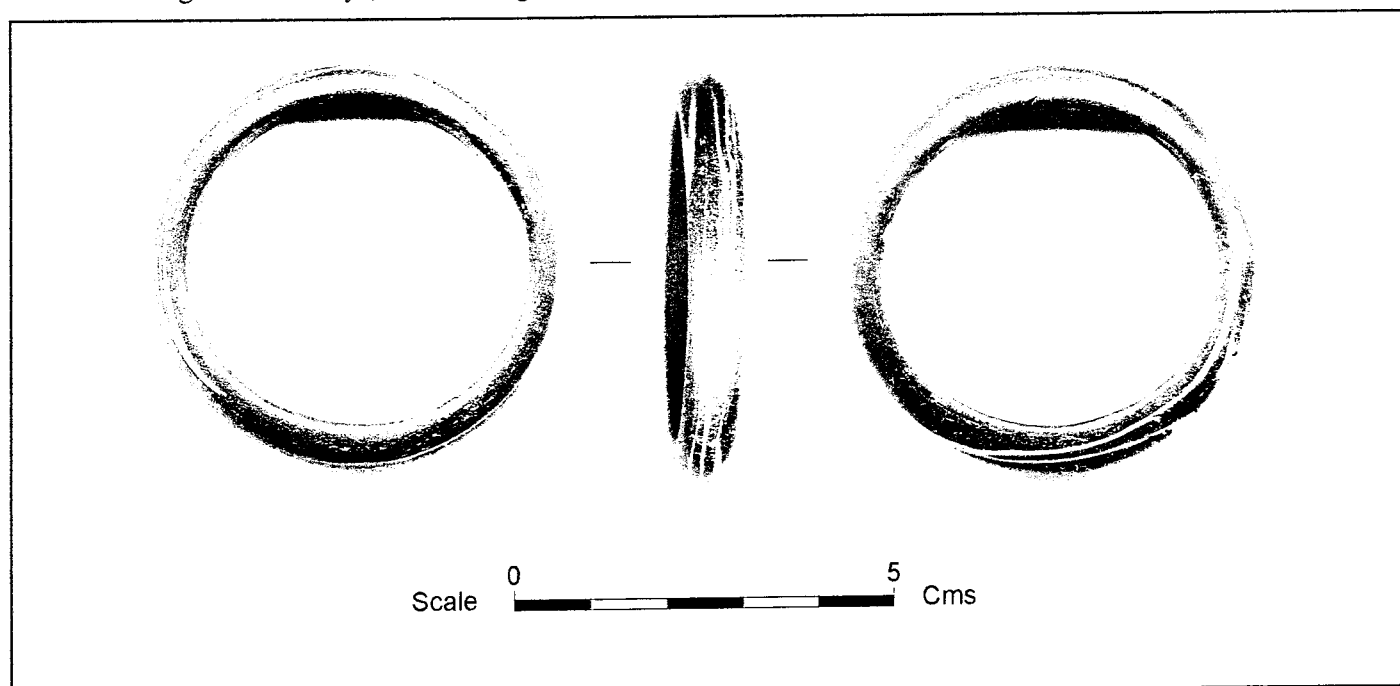
Rod Mackey brought to the July Field Studies meeting, a complete, small, Roman glass bangle he found recently in plough soil close to Beverley Westwood. The bangle, pictured below, is of green glass with decorative trails of yellowish white and is D shaped in section. It is quite rare to find one of these bangles complete and its survival in the ploughsoil is amazing.

Another member of the Field Studies group showed a fragment of a Roman bangle (type 3i/j) of blue glass with upstanding decorative trails, of white and yellow. It was found recently whilst excavating on his own land between Hull and Beverley.

Butchery Demonstration

The October Field studies meeting will be devoted to a demonstration of Iron age and Romano-British butchery techniques by Krish Seetah. (see previous page)

Kate Dennett

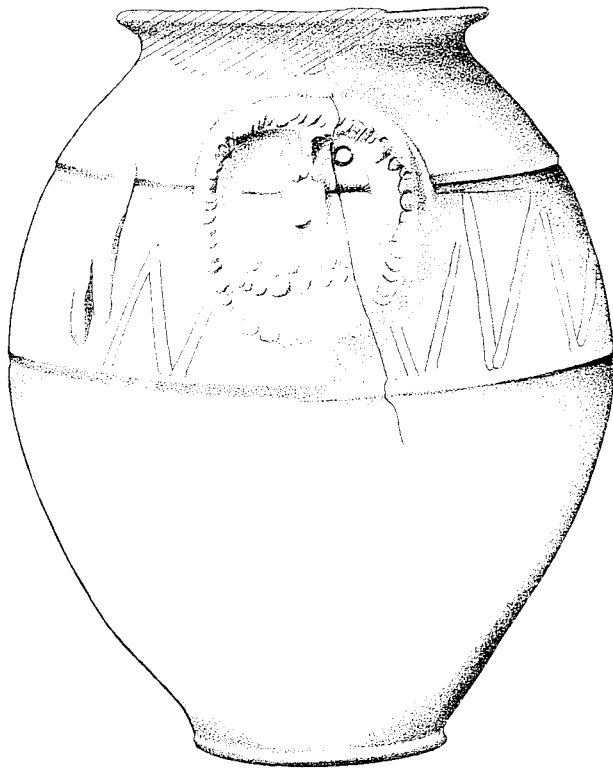


Romano-British green glass bangle, found in plough soil adjacent to Beverley Westwood, 2004.

Photo: Rod Mackey

Valley of the First Iron Masters

The lottery funded web based virtual landscape



Good progress is being made on this ground breaking web site, run jointly between ERAS and the University of Hull, with Martin Millett of the University of Cambridge. The website is driven by a database which will include information about archaeological sites within the 20km x30km area covered by the project. This landscape block is the watershed of the River Foulness.

There will be two main ways of navigating through the site. Firstly, there is an interactive map based on layers of geographical information, such as topography and soils, upon which there will be clickable points denoting archaeological sites. Clicking on these will generate information including images, videos, reconstructions and information about what was found there.

The other method will be through three themes: clothing, food and shelter. You will be able to select these themes and see how the artefacts and other evidence can build up a picture of these fundamental aspects of human life in this region, from the Palaeolithic to the Roman period.

Richard Green is the project officer responsible for the innovative web structure, while Mark Faulkner has created some excellent 3D reconstructions, based very carefully on accurate archaeological information. You will be able to see in an animated model, how an iron smelting furnace worked and what the landscape was like around the Hasholme Boat. You will also be able to fly through the Roman fort at Hayton.

In order to people these virtual reconstructions, members of ERAS will become re-enactors for a day, dressing in accurate costumes loaned by the Danelaw Village, Murton, who now have a Celtic village and a Roman fort. They will be filmed in the HIVE (Hull Immersive Virtual Environment) in the computer science department and find themselves in a Roman fort or an Iron age village!

ERAS representatives from the committee continue to monitor the project, which runs until 31st December 2004. We hope to go on-line with the full version in early December. There will of course be an opening event.

Peter Halkon

The project was entered for the 'Awards for the Presentation of Heritage Research, 2004' and Peter and the rest of the team are delighted to say that they have been short-listed. A presentation of the project has now to be made at the Festival of Science in Exeter on September 10th. Peter says this will be a nerve-wracking experience, but we wish him and the team all the very best. Presenting with Peter will be Martin Millett, Ian Dolphin and Warren Viant. It would be wonderful for the project to win the award, but there is a lot of competition and they have done very well to be short-listed.

Others projects short-listed are Myers Wood Medieval iron-working site, the underwater excavation of a 17thc warship off Mull, the Vindolanda writing tablets interpretation, a Pictish monastery at Portmahomack, and Castles and Communities? new light on medieval town defences.

Excavation at Arram, Summer 2004

Preparations for the excavation of the Iron Age/Romano British site on the Wilson's land at Chapel Garth, Arram are well underway. The grid has been laid out, some of the topsoil stripped off by machine and volunteers are welcome from July 17th. You have probably already filled in the form and been contacted by Fiona. If you haven't heard anything or are a new member or you forgot to send in the form, you can ring her for details on 01964 550831 or just turn up to help. (Camping enquiries to Fiona, also)

It is very time consuming for the supervisors to have to keep showing new volunteers around the site and explaining things, so even though you are working as a volunteer, it will be helpful if you can turn up at the start time of 9.00am for mornings or 1.30pm for afternoons. Enclosed with this newsletter is a separate guideline sheet for those new to excavation, so please bring it with you or read it before you set out. There is a portaloo on site, a caravan office and a steel lock-up for tool storage etc. Large tools are provided, but bring your own trowel if you have one. If you are coming by car, the Arram turning is in the

middle of Leconfield village. In Arram, immediately after going over the railway crossing, take the left turn and the field is then on the right. If it is not too wet, you can drive into the field to park. Arram station on the Hull-Bridlington line is very convenient, being only a few steps away from the field entrance, but if you are thinking of coming by train, be sure to get one which stops at Arram, as not all do so.

Unfortunately, the CBA insurers will not cover anyone under 18 or over 77 years of age. We are quite dismayed by this, but legislation regarding young people is now quite strict and ERAS site supervisors cannot be responsible for unaccompanied youngsters, nor have we the time to go through police vetting procedures. Therefore, we have to say that under 18 year olds are welcome but must be accompanied by an adult and are at all times the **personal responsibility** of that adult.

The Arram site has much potential and excavation may continue on into September if there are enough volunteers and the results warrant it.

Kate Dennett



Part of the site, showing post holes and the corner of a possible structure over a silted-up ditch.

Photo: Rod Mackey

Lecture Summary: Roman Signal Stations on the Yorkshire Coast (Patrick Ottaway, April 2004)

After the 2004 AGM in April, Patrick Ottaway of York Archaeological Trust gave a talk on Roman Signal Stations. He summarised current knowledge, making reference to Goldsborough, Huntcliff, Scarborough, and Filey and showing previously unpublished images from the early 20th century. However, the basis of the lecture was the recent excavation carried out at Filey signal station by York Archaeological Trust.

The Trust was called in to recover and record evidence at the site, because of increased erosion of the cliff. It was a somewhat precarious operation, as the spur where the signal station is sited is now only three metres wide at the top. The site was discovered in 1857 after a cliff fall revealed five stone blocks similar to ones found at Scarborough and Goldsborough. The blocks were socketed to support upright timbers and one had an animal carving- possibly a hunting scene. The Filey 'signal station' was first excavated in the early 20th century, at the same time as the Scarborough site (which was not then on the cliff edge, as it now is).

Traditionally, the so called 'signal stations' have been interpreted as a response to the barbarian attacks of AD367, but 30 Roman coins found, have led experts to believe that Filey could have been built later, by Magnus Maximus, possibly in the early 380s. In discussing the function of the building, Patrick Ottaway said that he doubted the value of signalling. He felt that not only was it a somewhat blunt tool for the job, but that the intervisibility of the currently known 'signal stations' along the north-east coast could not be confirmed. They possibly acted more as look-out stations. He considered that an important part of the function could have been protection for villa dwellers in times of crisis. This was not an idea which received particularly strong support from the audience, as neither the siting of the buildings nor their design would seem to render them suitable.

The reconstruction visualisation drawings, shown in the lecture, were based on the Dover Roman lighthouse beacon. Although the Filey signal station is now in a very poor state, evidence showed that it had a square central tower, within a walled courtyard,

probably with bastions at the corners. The tower had a very solid, two metre wide, foundation with a stone edging, neatly built, but which would not have been not visible in use. Entry was from the west, through a threshold into the courtyard area. There may have been a staircase up to the central tower. Only a very small amount of flooring remains. Within the tower, which had rounded corners, the function of the remains of the base of an inner rounded structure at each corner has still not been satisfactorily interpreted.

An outer ditch survives, to the west, at least three metre wide and 1 metre deep. Although there has been much erosion and it is also possible the ditch has been masked by later features, it is not thought that the ditch continued all the way round ie on the seaward side. The ground rises towards the east, ie towards the sea, and the recent excavations have revealed an interesting feature which appears to post-date the 'signal station'. A massive turf rampart, two metres high and approx. 30 metres wide at the base appears to have been built to seaward of the Roman building. It is not known at present how this rampart relates to the building, but it may be an interesting addition to the argument for supporting a Post-Roman date for Danes Dyke.

A careful soil sampling strategy was carried out during the excavation of the signal station, something which was not done in the 1920s excavation. Samples revealed large amounts of cattle, sheep and pig bones, enabling a valuable study and analysis to be carried out and showing that the provisioning of the fortification was well organised. There were massive amounts of mussel and limpet shells and some guillemot and cormorant bones. Few fish bones were found.

In the courtyard area, a build-up of dark material was noted. Remains of shrews, voles, lizards and snakes found at the interface of the dark overall deposit and the rubble layer above it, are thought to be the remains of barn owl prey. This evidence would seem to indicate that the site lay open, possibly during the 5th century.

Summary: Kate Dennett

From the Bookshelf

As you all are hopefully aware, ERAS members can obtain a reader's ticket for the Brymor Jones Library at the University of Hull. This ticket allows you access to the Library and the book and journal collections. Although you cannot take books out of the Library, it does open a world of opportunity for anyone with an interest in reading more about archaeology. In the start of a new regular column, Helen Fenwick presents reviews of the delights that await anyone venturing between the bookshelves. In each newsletter she will review one of the archaeology journals to which the University Library subscribes, one of the existing archaeology books within the collections and one of the new or recent additions. As this is the first of this series, there is also an introduction to the Library and the collections.

ORGANISATION OF THE LIBRARY

Over recent years, the archaeology collections within the library have been growing rapidly. The initial input of books was through Ted Wright's donation of his book collection to ERAS. With having nowhere ERAS could store these books which would allow easy access to members, it was decided to place them in the University Library. Alongside this donation, the growth of archaeology teaching within the University has meant that there have been increased purchases of books for these courses.

When looking for archaeology books within the library you have to get use to travelling in the lifts. On the first floor is the current periodical section. Recent volumes and issues of journals are found on this floor before they are bound and put on the shelves. The number of volumes stored in this location can be quite large especially of journals such as current archaeology.

Floors 2 to 7 contain the rest of the library collection. Archaeology books can be found on most floors though they are concentrated in a couple of areas. The archaeology section itself is quite small and located at the classification mark CC on the 4th floor. The books located in this section are mainly methodology books as well as some of the archaeology journals. Any book which is on a specific period of archaeology or a specific place will be found elsewhere. Books on periods from the Iron Age onwards are located in the history section at classification DA

(again on the 4th floor) if it is British history, but in other sections if you are looking for a different area of the world. Books on British prehistory are located in the anthropology section GN which is located on the 7th floor. Books are also found in areas such as architecture and art (books on medieval buildings including castles and monastic sites), and in economics and politics. Books that are large or oversize are located in special areas on each floor which have a class mark beginning with a lower case q so don't forget to look within these sections as well.

The key to finding the book you want is the computer system. You can access this through the web (www.hull.ac.uk/library) before you visit the library or on computers on the ground floor in the library. There are also computers on each floor. Whether you are looking for a particular book or just browsing, you can always make unexpected discoveries within the University collection and it is well worth just spending a little time wandering around the shelves looking at what is available.

JOURNAL REVIEW

Antiquity (Library catalogue CC 1 A64)

Antiquity is a quarterly journal of archaeological research. It has been the main journal of international archaeological debate and reporting for 75 years, and aims to present interesting topical and accessible material to a wide audience. It has been published on the first of March, June, September and December since 1927 and the Library has a complete run thanks to the recent addition of missing volumes from the Ted Wright Collection and the continued subscription through ERAS donations. The articles are always varied in nature, and since the editing of the journal moved to the University of York in 2003, the journal now includes an editorial, sections on research, method and debate, full review coverage of new archaeological books and occasional special sections on selected topics. On the Antiquity website at <http://antiquity.ac.uk> you can also find the Project Gallery which includes short news items on recent research.

Although many of the articles feature more foreign climes than East Yorkshire, members may find articles of note and further reading on sites and periods

mentioned in the society's lecture programme.
As an example of the contents, listed below are the contents of the latest volume published June 2004.

Research

Eastern Central Europe during the Pleniglacial. (A. Verpoorte)

An infant cemetery of the Classic Kerma period (1750-1500BC), Island of Sai, Sudan. (P. Murail, B. Maureille, D. Peressinotto & F. Geus)

Trees for food - a 3000 year record of subarctic plant-use. (L. Östlund, I. Bergman & O. Zackrisson)

An Indian trader in ancient Bali? (J.S. Lansing, A.J. Redd, T. M. Karafet, J. Watkins, I.W. Ardika, S.P.K. Surata, J.S. Schoenfelder, M. Campbell, A.M. Merriwether & M.F. Hammer)

Interpreting standing stones in Africa: a case study in north-west Cameroon. (R. N. Asombang)

Three cemeteries and a Byzantine church: a ritual landscape at Yasieleh, Jordan. (A Al-Shorman)

The beginnings of Slavic settlement between Elbe and Oder. (S Brather)

The Rose Theatre, London: the state of knowledge and what we still need to know. (A Gurr & J Greenfield)

Method

A hidden Stonehenge: Geophysical Survey at Stanton Drew, England. (A. David, M. Cole, T. Horsley, N. Linford, P. Linford & L. Martin)

Non-destructive provenancing of blue-stone axe-heads in Britain. (O. Williams-Thorpe, P.J. Potts & M.C. Jones)

The degradation of archaeological bronzes underground: evidence from museum collections. (I. Ullén, A.G. Nord, M. Fjaestad, E. Mattsson, G.Ch. Borg & K. Tronner)

Evaluating CORONA: A case study in the Altai Republic (South Siberia). W. Gheyle, R.

Trommelmans, J. Bourgeois, R. Goossens, I. Bourgeois, A. De Wulf & T. Willems

Debate

The repatriation of human remains - problem or opportunity? (Laurajane Smith)

Bring out your dead - peoples, pots and politics. (Don Brothwell)

Handle with care: thoughts on the return of human bone collections. (Sebastian Payne)

Buried treasure at the British Museum. (Neil Price)

Retrospective. (Philip Rahtz)

New for June in the Project Gallery

- Cultural response to demographic and environmental stress during the Classic Mimbres period (AD 1000-1130/40), Southern New Mexico: the cook-stone evidence
- Prehistoric Sitio Drago, Bocas del Toro, Panama
- Archaeological Research at north-west Patagonia (Argentina)
- Location and dating of Atlantis
- The great flood legends - ancient misreadings of the fossil record?
- Excavations at the Buddhist monastic site of Bhasu Vihara, Bangladesh
- Searching for the origins of African rice domestication

BOOK REVIEW

Simon Davies 1987 *The Archaeology of Animals*

London: Batsford (Library catalogue CC 79.5 A5 D2)

This book, from the library's collections isn't a 'how to identify animals bones' but discusses what they can tell us about the past. Split into two parts, the first looks at the methods that are used to retrieve animal bones and the information that they can tell us about age at death and sex. It also explores the way that both bone and teeth are formed. The final sections of this part of the book look at the reconstruction of past environments and how examination of the bone assemblage can help in determining in which season a site was occupied.

The second part looks at changing relationships between humans and animals, from hunter-gatherers through animal domestication to finally more recent relations and other uses of animals rather than just for food. The final chapter of the book is entitled 'Britain: a zoo-archaeological case study' and looks at the changing animals through each period of British Archaeology, noting changes in the species of animal present, introductions of new species, the changing sizes and uses of these animals and the nature of animal bone assemblages in urban contexts. The book also includes an extensive bibliography of further reading.

Although this book is now a little dated and lacks up-to-date information, especially on the development of new techniques such as isotope analysis, it still

provides a useful introduction to the topic and what we can learn from the study of animal bones. As the introduction states 'This book is intended primarily for students of archaeology and anyone with an interest in both natural history and the history of our own species'. It still serves this purpose well, but those looking for a more specific 'how-to' guide may need to look to other sources.

NEW TO THE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Kevin Leahy 2003 *Anglo-Saxon Crafts*
Stroud: Tempus (Library catalogue DA 155 L4)

This new book, from an author who should need no introduction to ERAS members, fills a considerable gap in the books available on the Anglo-Saxon period. Unlike other books on the period which give you endless information on the types of finds and material discovered from this period, this book actually examines the way in which these objects were created.

Each chapter deals with a different material including wood and timber, animal skeletal materials, textiles, leather, pottery, glass, and the variety of different metals. It doesn't just deal with small or highly decorative items, but has a whole chapter on timber construction, and sections on the different tools that were needed for each craft. The book is accompanied by many useful drawings of finds as well as diagrams illustrating the methods of manufacture of different items.

The book is published by Tempus whose range of archaeology books is ever expanding and in recent years have republished several of the books formerly published in the Batsford/English Heritage Series. One criticism, which is not about this book in particular but about the series in general, is the method of referencing. All Tempus books include a list of further reading at the end rather than a bibliography which is linked back to sections in the text. This means that if you were particularly interested in woodworking, for example, you couldn't look at the references in the chapter text and find them in the list at the end. Instead you would have to read through the whole list of further reading to find those which are relevant to you.

With this in mind, this book provides an excellent introduction to the topic but can be hard to use for

further research. It provides a welcome break from books on Anglo-Saxon finds which tend to spend most of their time providing very intricate typologies but ignore what else the finds can tell us about the craftsmen and craftswomen of the period.

OTHER RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

- Field, N. & M. Parker-Pearson 2003. *Fiskerton: An Iron Age Timber Causeway*. Oxford: Oxbow.
Silverman, H. 2004, *Andean Archaeology*. London: Blackwells.
Wilkinson, K. & C. Stevens, 2003, *Environmental archaeology*. Stroud: Tempus
Beckensall, S. 2002. *British Prehistoric Rock Art*. Stroud: Tempus.
Beckensall, S. 2003. *Prehistoric Northumberland*. Stroud: Tempus.
Dorrell, P.G. 1994. *Photography in archaeology and conservation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Cunliffe, B. 1998. *Fishbourne Roman Palace*. Stroud: Tempus.
de la Bedoyere, G. 2001. *Buildings of Roman Britain*. Stroud: Tempus.
Reitz, J. & E.S. Wing 1999. *Zooarchaeology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Pollard, J. & A. Reynolds 2002. *Avebury: Biography of a landscape*. Stroud: Tempus.

Note: To get you reader's ticket, go to the desk at the entry to the Library and say you are a member of the East Riding Archaeology Society and would like to have a reader's ticket. You might have to show your ERAS membership card.

Helen Fenwick

Lecturer in Archaeology
Department of History
University of Hull

What Your Committee does

If you have ever wondered what your committee talks about at its meetings, below are a few of the items from the last couple of meetings. (Just in case you might feel interested enough to join the committee next year!)

2004/5 Lecture programme: The programme secretary reported on progress and the committee suggested further potential speakers.

Mortimer 2005 Celebrations: 2005 is the centenary of his famous *Forty Years Researches* publication. Plans were discussed for a celebratory conference in association with YAS and Hull & ER Museum.

Reserves Policy: in view of a question asked at the AGM, the financial holdings were discussed, with a view to formulating a policy for the future.

Publications: a major paper to be published by ERAS is not now to receive the expected EH funding, so has been delayed, until other funding can be found, causing a backlog of material for publication. It was agreed that *Further Light on the Parisi* should be reprinted. Problems with lack of material for the newsletters was discussed and some suggestions made.

Resistivity meter: those involved in projects reported on progress. Ideas for a more co-ordinated approach were put forward.

Valley of the First Iron Masters: committee members on the steering group reported on the current status of the project.

2004 Social Event: organisers were thanked for their contributions to making the event a success.

Arram Excavation: an application for funding for the hire of a toilet and for the purchase of some materials and tools for the the ERAS excavation in July was received and approved by the committee.

Vast quantities of tea, coffee and biscuit were consumed during the above deliberations.

Rose Nicholson (Hon. Secretary)

Orkney Update

Those who went on last year's orkney holiday may be interested to hear an update of work on Mine Howe. Excavation of the round structure, just outside the main ditch which surrounds the underground feature seems to indicate that it is indeed a workshop for the production of fine, non-ferrous metalwork. The assemblage of metalworking debris is one of the finest ever found in Britain. This summer, it is hoped the primary levels of the structure will be reached. Further work is also being carried out on the main ditch this year, to investigate an oval structure and a stone lined cist, found last year. The cist appeared to be associated with the inhumation of a small child.

The summer issue of the Foat bulletin (see below) describes the excavation of a newly discovered 'short' cist (1m x 0.66m - 0.78m) on Harray, containing 'a neat heap of burnt bone and copper alloy fragments, lying on stone slabs across the centre of the cist floor.' Most short cists date to about 1000-2000 BC, well before iron was in use in Scotland. This latest one seems to fall within that period, but it is hoped that the cremated bone will be sturdy enough to produce a radiocarbon date.

Another article in the bulletin describes gaming pieces, following the discovery of half of a split cattle phalanx, bearing the 'Peedie Pict', a tiny engraved figure. Recently discovered in an existing collection, it has now been joined by its newly found other half, engraved with a pattern of circles and a face. Dating is uncertain, but Orkney has many gaming pieces and boards and there is much scope for interpretation.

Volunteerwork is available in Orkney and although places will probably have been filled by now, it is always worth checking, as it is a wonderful place to gain experience and there is so much to see within a small area. You can keep in touch with what is happening there and support the work of archaeologists by joining FOAT (Friends of Orkney Archaeological Trust). They put out a bulletin several times a year and can help with queries etc. Membership is £10 /£7 and the address is FOAT, PO Box 6213, Kirkwall, Orkney, KW15 1YD (Email foat@orkney.me.uk)

Kate Dennett

ERAS Visit to Stanwick and Vindolanda

The stop off at Stanwick Camp en route to Vindolanda provided, for many members, their first chance to view the Iron Age fortifications. The massiveness of the construction, dating in parts to the first century AD, was extremely impressive and must have required a large commitment of both time and energy to achieve the final result. The size raises questions in respect of the level of organisation and power required, to both envisage and to follow through, such a construction. The visit promoted a discussion on the role of the massive earthworks.

The generally accepted view is that the earthworks were a defensive barrier to protect the occupiers from hostile neighbours. However, the sheer size of the construction raises the question of the practicality of this concept. How would it be possible to effectively defend all parts of the 'fortifications' given the length of 8km (5 miles), encompassing approximately 290 hectares (700 acres). It would require an impossibly large number of people to defend all areas during an attack or siege. The attacker could exploit the size by moving and probing the defences at a variety of points until a weakness was exposed. If the use of the earthworks was not defensive, then what was the role of the construction? Was the construction more a demonstration of power and control than a defensive barrier?

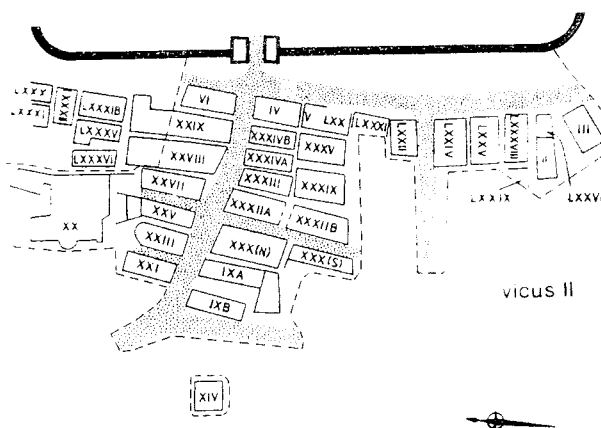
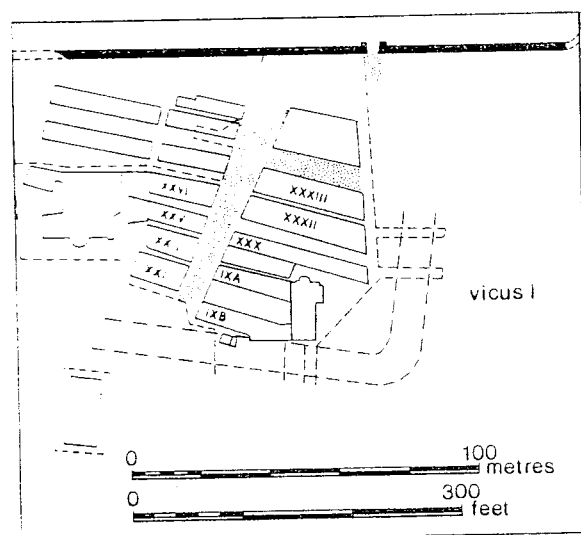
One idea suggested was that it was a barrier to keep stock and even people in. The suggestion being that workers or slaves, along with stock, may be viewed as a commodity and that the barrier would restrict their movement and freedom. It was also suggested that slave labour may have been employed for the construction of the earthworks.

The next site visited, that of Vindolanda, close to Hadrian's Wall, provided marvellous evidence of the layout of a Roman fort, the types of buildings and their development. It is worth remembering that the site was not static but underwent many changes during the 300 or so years of use. At Vindolanda, these developments are evidenced by the different phases of construction. The external walls and building foundations are very well preserved, such as the hypocaust under the bathhouse and the latrine blocks. Excavation at the site will be ongoing for many years and there will be much more to learn

from the site and the external civilian settlement areas. The museum at Vindolanda houses a vast and astonishing array of artefacts that covers the entire length of occupation of the site. The level of preservation of wood and leather artefacts is incredible and along with the vast amount of pottery, weapons, tools and every day utensils, provides tangible insights to life in Roman Britain. In addition, the reconstruction in the gardens, of a Roman temple, a civilian house and a shop provides an impression of what life may have been like in these times.

To conclude, I believe that for all members who went to Stanwick and Vindolanda, the visit was thoroughly enjoyable and informative. If you missed the trip and happen to be in the area anytime, both the sites are well worth a visit. Many thanks to Kate Dennett for the excellent organisation of the visit, which contributed in no small way to the enjoyment of the day.

Richard Coates



Top: The Hadrianic period vicus or external settlement
Below: The later, early 3rd century vicus.
(From English Heritage's *Roman Forts in Britain*.)

Odds & Ends

Lottery Cash for the YAS Project

The Leeds based Yorkshire Archaeological Society, has been awarded £50,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to catalogue, conserve and improve access to one of its most important archive collections, built up by Ripon antiquarian H. L. Bradfer-Lawrence and gifted to YAS in 1965. The ERAS representative on the YAS Council had urged them, several times to apply for lottery funding for projects such as this and is very pleased the money has been awarded. The Yorkshire Post (21.6.04) reported the award as follows-

‘... It is one of the most wide-ranging archive collections in Yorkshire, containing superb examples of family and estate documents, medieval charters, accounts, maps, manorial records and letters relating to large areas of North Yorkshire and adjoining Lancashire, the Bradford and Wakefield districts and the East Riding.’

The grant will fund a 13 month project under the banner ‘*Bradfer-Lawrence: a rather different kind of collection*’ to open up access to the treasures he accumulated during his lifetime. The society will work in partnership with the Access to Archives (A2A) team at London’s National Archives and the catalogue, once complete, will be loaded on to the A2A database at www.a2a.org.uk, where it will be freely available for all to see.

Part of the money is for the conservation of a 15th century stock book of Fountains Abbey. It contains the annual accounts of the ‘master of the beasts’ and the ‘master of the sheep’. Over the past 500 years the pages have become damaged and dirty. The volume will be disbound and individual pages cleaned and repaired. They will be digitally scanned before being sewn into new specially made vellum covers.

The collection includes family/estate papers of many families including the Listers, Barons Ribblesdale of Gisburn Park, the Wilsons of Eshton, the Pilkingtons of Chevet, and the Ingilbys of Ripley. There are deeds relating to Byland, Jervaulx and Salley abbeys and Kirklees and Nun Appleton priories, while business interests are represented by documents relating to calamine mining and there are major archives for the Craven area townships.

Interestingly, two forgeries, ‘medieval’ charters written in Tudor times, to improve a family pedigree are included in the collection! An interpretive website will be launched at the project’s later stage, containing images from the Fountains Abbey stockbook and the collection and partly aimed at Key Stage 2 schoolchildren, to whet their appetites for delving into their rich heritage.

Digital Archiving of Roman Pottery

The Study Group for Roman Pottery recently attended an excellent seminar at Cambridge University to enable participants to view progress of the English Heritage funded software development project. This aims to encourage a nationally recognised method of digitally recording Roman pottery. It was not about telling specialists what to record, but about putting the information into an acceptable and standard digital format. If the system is implemented, it will, for example, enable details of **all** black burnished ware vessels of type 1, form 5, on record, to be brought up on screen for study or distribution analysis.

A particular problem discussed was that the system needs good drawings to be done, preferably digitally drawn. Poor scanning of pencil drawings tends to homogenize everything and differences are lost. ADS (the York based Archaeology Data Service, which gave an excellent presentation) needs TIF files of pottery form drawings. However, many museums and archives still insist on paper archives and do not have the capacity to deal with digital material.

Catherine Hardman, of ADS presented some pretty scary statistics regarding current practice- Only 13% of people have their archive on a network. 47% have no protective back-up. In short, the archive could be decaying faster in its digital form than in the ground!

Many people have unlabelled floppy discs and no forward planning for re-use of their data, in terms of software migration. A distinct lack of codes for contexts has also been noted. (sounds familiar? - Oh dear, oh dear!)

With the ADS system, the depositor pays a fee, but access for users is free.

Kate Dennett

Events for National Archaeology Weekend

Saturday 17th July and Sunday 18th July

- ◆ **Hull and East Riding Museum**, High Street, Hull. Special events for the general public, including artefact handling, meet the archaeology team, display of the ERAS/University Foulness Valley web site, general display and pottery handling by ERAS
Saturday 10.00am-1.00pm, Sunday 1.30pm-4.30pm

- ◆ **Hovingham Weekend**. Exploring Yorkshire's Past. £25/30. Prior booking only.
Saturday, 10.00am-3.45pm-Lectures, 4.15pm- Guided walk, 6.30-7.30pm- Reception in Hovingham Hall ballroom.
Sunday, 10.00am-3.00pm- Lectures, 3.30pm Walk to examine archaeological features.
Probably too late to book lunches but may not be too late to book attendance.
Bookings-YAS, 23 Clarendon Rd. Leeds. Tel 0113 245 7910

- ◆ **Lincolnshire**, Ancaster C of E Primary School Field. Roman Archaeology Discovery Day.
Exhibits, treasure hunts, Roman games ,finds identification, village tours etc.
Details: Tel 01529 461499 or email dan@lincsheritage.org.uk

- ◆ **York**, Holy Trinity Church, Goodramgate. Pottery and drawing workshops based on imagery and patterns found in the church. 11.00am-12.45. 2.00pm-3.45pm.
Details: Tel 01904 613451 or email lwetherall.tcct@virgin.net

- ◆ **York**, St. Leonard's Central Library Garden, Museum Street.
Free guided visits to the training excavation, from 10am, last admission 4.0pm.
Displays and children's activities.
On Saturday, the Romans will invade. On Sunday-see the 'History Street.'
Details: Tel. 01904 663000 or email jstockdale@yorkarchaeology.co.uk

- ◆ **Scarborough Castle**. Fayre & Medieval Tournament
Musicians, knights and jousting hobby horses. 11.30am -4.30pm.
Details: Tel. 01723 372451 or email jonathon.hogan@english-heritage.org.uk

- ◆ **Saturday only**
Richmond, Richmondshire Museum, Ryders Wynd.
Finds identification, brass rubbing, making Roman mosaics. 10.30am- 3.30pm
Details: Tel. 01748 825611

- ◆ **Sunday only**
Castle Howard, Activities and events themed around the Castle's own archaeological dig. 11am-4pm.
Details: Tel. 01653 648333 or email house@castlehoward.co.uk

- ◆ **Sunday only**
Rievaulx Abbey, Displays by English Heritage of both traditional and hi-tech archaeology.
Plus displays by heritage artisans and crafts people from York Consortium.
Details: Tel. 01439 798228 or email jonathon.hogan@english-heritage.org.uk

- ◆ **Sunday only**
York, Murton Park. (follow brown signs to Yorkshire Museum of Farming)
Reconstructions of pre-historic and historic buildings. Guided tours of Roman fort 10.30am -1.30pm.
Guided tours of Viking Village 12.00-noon -3.00pm.
Details: Tel. 01904 489966 or email amanda@murtonpark.co.uk

Dates for your Diary

- Sat 17 July** **ERAS-** Excavation at Arram starts (see page 6)
- Wed 4 Aug** **ERAS Field Studies Meeting**
- Wed 1 Sept** **ERAS Field Studies meeting**
- Wed 15 Sept** **ERAS Lecture**
Reports evening- The first lecture of the season- A round up of new work in the region.
- Sun 26 Sept** A day conference at Helmsley Arts Centre in memory of Tony Pacitto. 10.00am-5.00pm £10.00
Speakers J. Dent, G. Lee, S. Leach, R. Mackey, T. Manby, G. McDonnell, D. Powlesland, I. Stead,
P.Wilson. Details: Tel. 01439 770657 or email g.lee@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk
- Wed 6 Oct** **ERAS Field Studies meeting**
Demonstration of Iron Age/Roman butchery techniques. (Not for the squeamish!)
- Sat 16 Oct** Yorkshire Landscapes Past & Future. (Soc. for Landscape Studies & the PLACE Research Centre)
Conference. St. John College, York. Details: Tel. 01904 716753 or email m.atherden@yorks.ac.uk
- Sat 16 Oct** Local History Bookfair 10.00am at Beverley Minster (NB new venue this year)
- Wed 20 Oct** **ERAS Lecture**
Paul Bahn: 'The Shock of the Old', discovering cave art at Cresswell Crags.
- Fri 22 Oct** Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group & Prehistoric Soc. joint weekend conference. Bradford
University. Details: Tel 01274 235385 or email a.m.gibson1@bradford.ac.uk
- Wed 3 Nov** **ERAS Field Studies Meeting**
- Wed 17 Nov** **ERAS Lecture**
Anthony Crawshaw: Archaeology and Aerial Photography
- Wed 1 Dec** **ERAS Field Studies Meeting**
- Wed 15 Dec** **ERAS Lecture**
Ed Dennison: Recent Work at Sheriff Hutton Castle

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

Field study meetings are at 7.30pm upstairs at the Friends Meeting House, Percy St, off Albion St, Hull.

No commitment is necessary, just come and help to plan and carry out projects etc. Meetings generally go on throughout the summer, but if you are a new member, you could phone 445232 first, to make sure we aren't out on site.

I would like to join ERAS from Sept 1st 2004 (This covers you until Dec 2005)

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

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