

ERAS news

No 29

March 1989

COMING EVENTS: ANNUAL DINNER and EXCURSION

The more observant amongst you will have noticed a lot of bits of paper falling out of the envelope with this newsletter. The East Riding Archaeology Society's calendar tends to get busy in the spring and this year is no exception. Like other types of mail which seem to fall through the letterbox with more regularity than ERAS NEWS, exhorting you to reply without delay, you need to be quick off the mark to make the most of the Society's offers in the next few weeks. We may not be offering a free gift with every order (though see the note on membership introductions on page 2) but we can say that you have been chosen to take part in two very enjoyable events.

The first of these is the annual dinner on 7 April, without which no society calendar is complete. The venue is again Thwaite Hall but the theme is distant both in space and time - the Ottoman Empire. In the following month there is an excursion to the Bronze Age site at Flag Fen, near Peterborough, on Saturday 13 May. In choosing Flag Fen as a worthy objective your Committee seem to be in agreement with more weighty opinion, as Francis Pryor's excavation recently was the first winner of the Hepworth Heritage Communication Award, the richest prize in British archaeology.

So, you may not find six lucky numbers inside this

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

newsletter but you should find all the necessary information and booking forms for both the dinner and the excursion. Non-members are welcome at both events. And if anyone is interested in the long weekend to Wessex proposed in the last newsletter - Avebury, Stonehenge etc, possibly in autumn this year, would they please contact myself, or another member of the Committee, as this trip can only go ahead if there is sufficient advance interest.

May I also remind you that the AGM is on 12 April and new faces are always welcome on the Committee. If there is anything you would like to change about the Society this is your opportunity to do something about it. The papers for the AGM are included with this newsletter and the AGM itself will be followed by a lecture on environmental archaeology in East Yorkshire by Barry McKenna.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

My next duty is to remind you that subscriptions are due on 1 January every year so to ensure your next copy of ERAS NEWS and minimise the cost of sending out reminders please check that you have paid for 1989. If you would like to reduce your subscription perhaps you might consider a proposal adopted at the last Committee Meeting: any member introducing a new member is entitled to a 50% reduction in their next subscription - two new members brings a year's free subscription. A membership form is included with this newsletter.

As we are coming up to the AGM this seems a good time to remind members of the readiness of the Society to consider applications from members for grant aid towards archaeological work in the area. To clarify the position of the Society, the Committee drew up a

set of guidelines for applicants and these are reproduced below. Further copies are available from the Hon. Secretary.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AWARDS: GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

1 The Society invites applications for grant aid from any individual member, or group of members, engaged in archaeological fieldwork in the East Riding or undertaking research pertaining to the archaeology of the area which is intended for publication.

2 Awards are at the discretion of the Committee and are made on the strength of a detailed written application submitted to the Hon. Secretary of the Society. Purchase of materials and equipment, hire of plant, photographic expenses, the cost of specialist services for scientific dating or geophysical surveying etc, preparation of artwork for publication, are examples of the type of requests for financial assistance that are envisaged. Out of pocket expenses, such as travelling or accommodation costs, are not deemed appropriate items, unless an exceptional case can be presented or such expenditure is central to research requirements.

3 Applications should be submitted in advance of the start of the project or excavation season for which financial assistance is sought. There is no annual closing date for submissions but for their own benefit applicants are advised to make requests as early as possible in the year to allow time for the Committee's deliberations. It is appreciated that special cases will nevertheless arise, such as rapid-response fieldwork situations, where applications in advance may not be possible. In such cases retrospective requests for grant aid will be considered but this will be on the basis of documented expenditure only.

4 For assessment purposes applications should be structured and must contain certain basic information. The points listed below (i-vi) are offered as a guide:

- i The nature of the project or research topic must be clearly stated and an outline of its history and forward timetable should be given. Both the overall aims and the immediate objectives of the work should be specified.
- ii The amount and purpose of the grant requested should be clearly itemised. Supporting documentation, such as written estimates, scales of charges or product specification, should be included as appropriate wherever possible.
- iii The involvement of Society members and the means by which this may be further encouraged should be described.
- iv A publication proposal should be outlined.
- v If financial support has been received or is being sought from other institutions, details should be given.
- vi The application should include the name of a person suitably qualified to comment on the applicant's ability to pursue the work effectively

5 A condition of the award is that an interim statement, or statements, on the results or progress of the fieldwork or research should be submitted for publication either in the Society's journal, the East Riding Archaeologist, or in ERAS NEWS as appropriate.

6 Where an application is related to an ongoing project and support for the project is given in one year, no commitment to continuing financial assistance should be implied. Each proposed season of work or phase of research will be judged on its own merits.

ERAS Committee

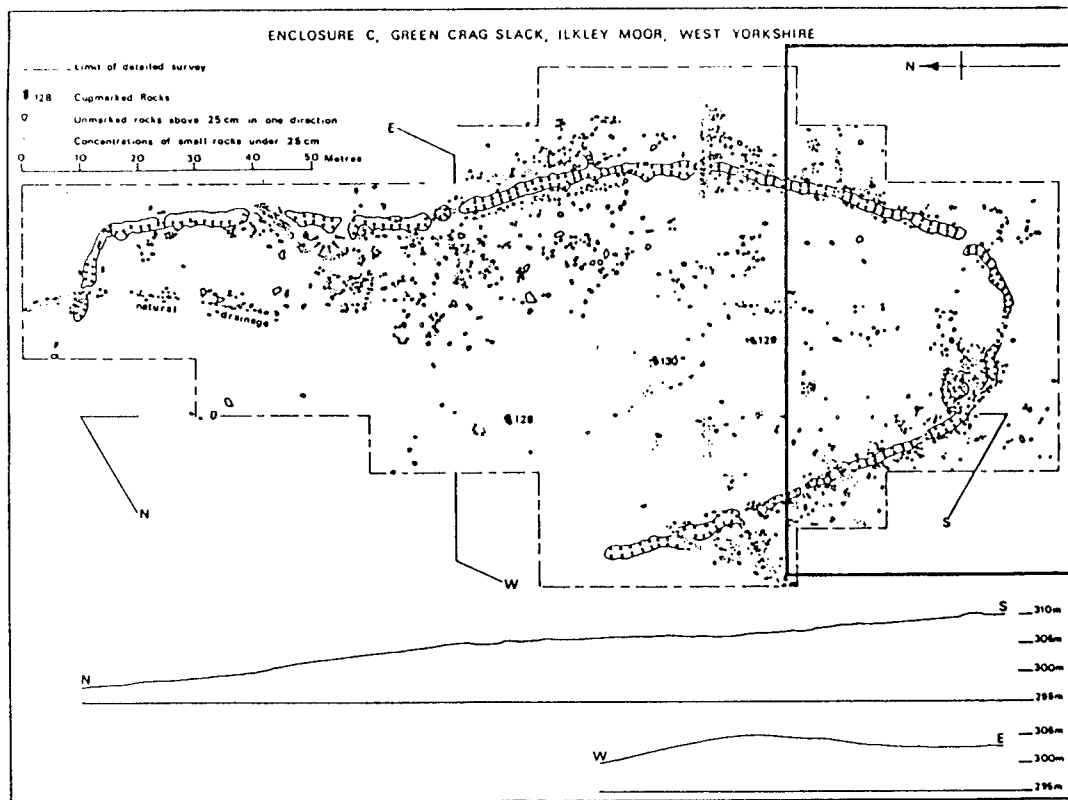
April 1987

ERAS EXCURSION TO ILKLEY: autumn 1988

The information leaflet said that the Cow and Calf rocks are a favourite training ground for rock climbers, and I did wonder, as our guide Bill Godfrey led the way from the Cow and Calf car park and directly up a rocky outcrop, whether I had mistakenly enrolled us on some sort of Outward Bound course, but ERAS members are obviously not easily deterred and everyone made it to the top by one means or another and thence to the Hangingstones Rock, one of the best-known prehistoric carved rocks in the area, which was probably carved in the middle or later Bronze Age. Other rocks we were shown included the 'Haystack', a fine example of a middle Bronze Age carved rock (1400-800BC). The carvings on this rock show cup-shaped depressions surrounded, in some cases, by carved rings.

Our next stop on the moor was the Bronze Age encampment site known as the Backstone Beck enclosure, one of several enclosures to be found on Green Crag Slack and excavated since 1983 by the Ilkley Archaeological Group. It is situated on a small ridge that runs north down towards the valley of the Backstone Beck, in a relatively dry part of the moor with boggier ground on either side of it. The fact that it is comparatively well drained may partly explain why the site was located there in the first place.

For this particular site and at least one other, the term 'enclosure' is not strictly accurate, for too large a section of the walling is missing for it to completely enclose the area. It does appear to be deliberate as the same section of walling is missing from the other enclosure. The visible walling appears before excavation as a low tumble of stones that only just protrudes through the vegetation. When the tumble is removed two lines of larger stones with



an infill of smaller stones is revealed, and it is taken that these lines of larger stones mark the inner and outer edges of the wall. Part of the walling has been rebuilt on site, and even though considerably more stone was used than had been recovered from the tumble, it could only be built up to a height of approximately 50cm. This could not have formed a barrier to animals or humans, and may indicate that the 'wall' was nothing more than a boundary marker.

From the areas excavated inside the enclosure a great deal of flint work and pottery fragments has been

recovered. These finds have also been found in those areas where the remains of hearths survive, but although there is this evidence of occupation the soil conditions have destroyed a lot of the archaeology making it difficult to associate the occupation evidence with the enclosure itself.

Some dating evidence suggests that the walling belongs to the late Bronze Age (800-500 BC) but it is thought that the area was a favourite camp-site for a thousand years or more before that. Charcoal from a pit yielded a radiocarbon date of around 770BC but some of the flints appear to be from earlier, neolithic times and may be totally unrelated to the enclosure itself. The fact that one site lies on top of the other may be due to the small ridge upon which both of them are situated having been, over a long time, an attractive site to occupy.

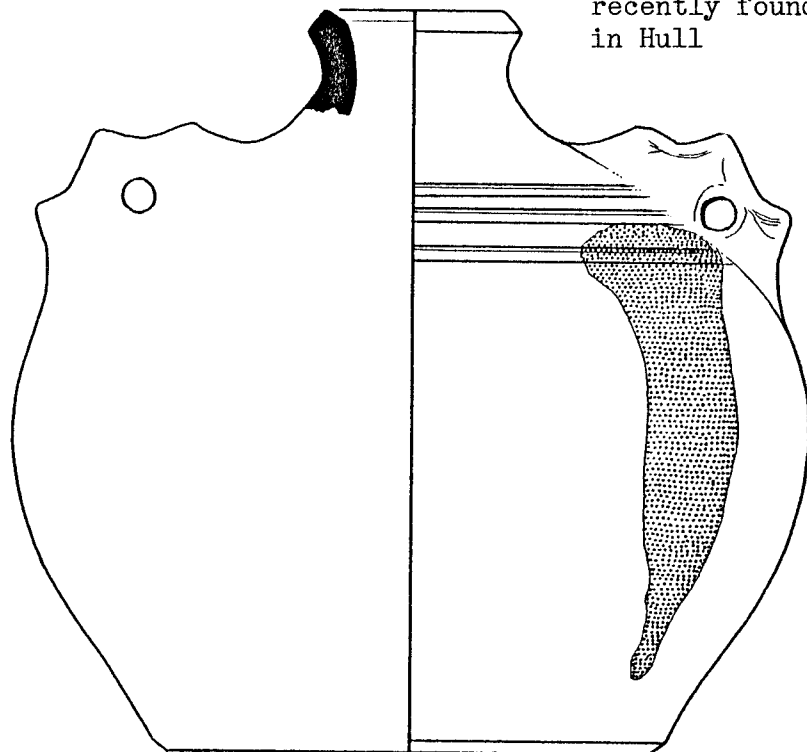
After lunch the party divided into two, some members returning to the moor to look at more distant sites while others opted for the fleshpots of Ilkley: both groups, I'm sure, would like to thank Angus Smith for organizing the excursion and Bill Godfrey of the Ilkley Archaeological Group for generously spending a day showing us so many rock carvings and sites on the moor.

DORSET POT FOUND IN HULL

The Transport and Archaeology Museum in High Street, Hull, receives many enquiries from members of the public who have found something interesting, and wish to know more about it. Recently a rather unusual complete pot, known as a costrel, was brought into the museum for identification. The costrel (see illustration) was found at the back of Cranbrook Avenue and Inglemire Lane on the present site of

St. Mary's School, when the enquirer dug into a Victorian rubbish dump in search of old glass bottles.

Dorset 'pill'
or 'owl'
recently found
in Hull



The costrel measures 12cm in height and 12.8cm in diameter, and has a fairly gritty buff fabric. It has been glazed internally and there are a couple of external accidental splashes of yellowish-green glaze on the base of the vessel. It has curious pinched handles with three grooves just above the shoulder and interesting wear lines around the handles suggesting that a cord was used to carry the costrel suspended from the shoulder.

The costrel has been identified as a Dorset 'pill' or 'owl'. The Verwood potteries in Dorset produced such 'pills' or 'owls' between the late seventeenth century and the 1950s, serving the large rural communities in Dorset, Wiltshire and northern Hampshire. Verwood 'pills' or 'owls' were to be used by agricultural labourers to carry ale or cider out to the fields (P.C.D.Brears, The Collector's Book of English Pottery, David and Charles, 1974, p71).

The discovery of the 'pill' or 'owl' is all the more significant when seen in the light of nineteenth century trade. Of course it is not unusual to find pottery, even coarse utilitarian wares, moving far from their production centres, a phenomenon which is archaeologically well-attested in the Roman period for example. Mr Peter Brears, Director of Leeds City Museum, suggested the Dorset 'pill' might have been carried up the East coast in pig-a-back fashion as part of the extensive Victorian coastal trade in bulk commodities such as coal, clay and slates. Mr Brears also pointed out that Dorset ball clays were shipped along the Humber for the West Yorkshire pottery industry, and no doubt supplementary items of cargo, such as pottery, were traded in large ports such as Hull. It would be very interesting to know whether any other Dorset 'pills' have been found in Humberside.

Finally I am pleased to report that the finder, Mr D. Cutsforth, has very kindly offered to donate the 'pill' or 'owl' to Hull City Museums and Art Galleries, where it will be available for research and display purposes.

Bryan Stich
Assistant Keeper of Archaeology
Hull City Museums

THE PHOENIX PROJECT

I must say, life at Hull Museums is never dull: Redcliff, the Hasholme Boat, joy of joys, a new post of Assistant Keeper ably filled by Bryan Sitch, even a new archaeology and natural history museum to tell the story of the region, its origins and development, is on the way. Incidentally, our working title for the new museum development has proved a real poser. "The Hull Corn Exchange: The Museum of North Humberside" was a good runner but not quite accurate, and looks likely to be pipped by "The Hull and East Riding Museum: A Landscape and Its Peoples". This had better get us honorary life membership to ERAS at the very least. But I digress, because to cap it all, we are soon to be excavating ourselves - a bizarre achievement matched only by the Wharram Percy Project's excavations in the 1980s of their own 1950s' latrines, and living proof that our collections storage methods are nothing if not flexible.

Anybody now over the age of fifty-odd, and who was born and brought up in Hull, will remember the City as it was before the Second World War. Indeed some may recall the horror of those indiscriminate night bombing raids over the City. Then, Hull represented an important strategic target with shipping, the railhead, and heavy industry all within range of German planes, and readily identifiable from the air. On some nights, the glow of Hull on fire could be seen from York as buildings in and around the City suffered the onslaught of high explosives and incendiaries.

Through all this, one of the City's greatest achievements, the Municipal Museum on Albion Street, remained open to visitors, with splendid galleries adorned with high columns and grand statues, mahogany display cases filled with delicate porcelain and glass, exotic birds, Roman bowls and dishes, and

fossils millions of years old, representing a century of collecting of material of international importance, offering a source of fascination, enjoyment and education to generations of Hull people. It represented, as much as anything else, the life's work of one of Britain's greatest pioneer curators - Tom Sheppard, who had retired in 1941. Bizarrely, a blitzed department store, Thornton Varley's, had moved in on a temporary basis: lingerie and lace jostled for position with ammonites and arrowheads. The museum basement meanwhile was packed with stored collections, including items taken off display.

Such was the situation on the night of June 24th 1943 when the bombers approached. Picture the scene: suddenly a fireball rips through the building, incendiaries tearing the heart out of the museum, incinerating everything to furnace heat in places. Floors and walls collapse, crushing parts, protecting others. The ground floor collapses into the basement, a crashing, burning pile of rubble and debris which finally settles and lies still.

From the ruins, some collections were salvaged but no one ventured beneath the dangerous rubble. After the war, the charred shell of the building was demolished and the ground cleared and levelled. From then until now, a busy car park with its crust of tarmac has covered and protected the sealed basement deposits, where collections lay out of view but not forgotten.

In October 1988, drainage works on the car park cut through the edge of the basement and the museum conducted a swift salvage and recording operation on site while engineering works were halted and diverted. Over 2000 items were recovered from a 30m length of pipe trench in those few days, proving that fossils, pottery, coins, flints, china, cloth, even charred paper, had survived. In the wake of publicity that took the story around the world, a major rescue

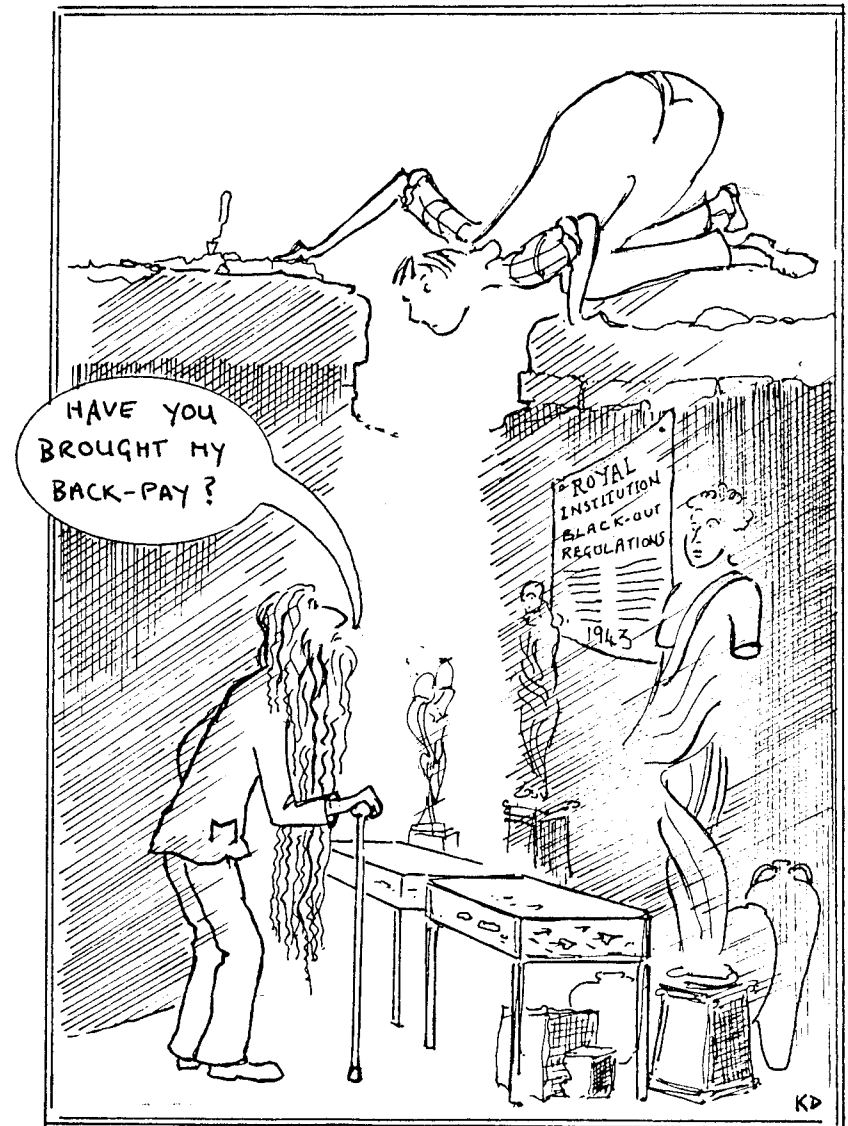
excavation project to recover the City's lost treasures was conceived. The Phoenix Project was born.

It is difficult to imagine a more outrageous archaeological excavation. Yet archaeology this most certainly is, and certainly no simple salvage or exhumation. Understanding the stratigraphy and patterning of finds distribution on this, as on any site, will hold the key to understanding what happened that night in 1943, and give us our best chance of restoring shattered collections. For this reason we hope to plot the location three-dimensionally of each and every find that is recognised in situ, perhaps a couple of thousand each day, and log their distribution using the latest computer technology.

All this will be done over the summer amid tight security but on public view. The Phoenix Project will involve local people in the recovery of their inheritance, and will invite the public to follow progress both on site and in a visitor centre where an oral history project will record people's recollections and memories, jogged by their visit.

We will need volunteers: help on site, help in processing finds, help in giving guided tours, help in the site visitor centre and shop and in a hundred other ways in the months ahead. We will also need money. Already international film-making rights have been sold as part of our fund-raising efforts. In 1989, "Museums Year", the eyes of the world will be upon us, it would seem.

David Crowther
Keeper of Archaeology
Hull City Museums



LECTURE SUMMARIES

16 Nov: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF WOODLAND -Oliver Rackham

Virtually the whole of the British Isles was covered by natural forest for the first half of the postglacial period - this forest was the 'wildwood' which disappeared very early in this country. Even in those areas where it is still represented, such as eastern North America, there is not much remaining. So Oliver Rackham's stated intention was not to speak about the wildwood, but about the ancient woodland which has been in existence for at least 200, and usually 500, years. It may have been derived from fragments of the wildwood, and therefore be primary woodland, or from areas that at some time in the historical past have been farmland, moorland, etc. and thus be secondary woodland. Since Dr Rackham is a member of the Botany School of Cambridge University most of his examples were taken from eastern England.

Trees are part of four quite different traditions of land-use:

(1) woods, where the trees have not (or not all) been intentionally planted; however, the management of woodland was already widespread and ancient by 1086. A normal wood consists of two kinds of trees, timber or standard trees and underwood or coppice. Every year an area or panel of underwood poles is felled and harvested as a crop. The stools remain and from them sprout coppice shoots which regenerate the underwood. Timber trees are allowed to stand for several coppice cycles and then felled to yield larger material. It is a myth that trees are killed by felling - this is the case with conifers but not with most trees which will still coppice after at least 100 years.

(2) wood-pastures, where the growing of trees is combined with grazing animals; this includes a) wooded commons, b) parks - private land on which the owner keeps deer, and often cattle, and c) Forests,

(meaning a place of deer) which are a Norman introduction. Forests differ from parks in having no ring-fence. Many wood-pastures have pollarded trees which are cut at 2-5m above ground, leaving a permanent base called a bolling. This sprouts in the same way as a coppice stool but at a height where animals cannot reach the shoots, and yields an indefinite succession of crops of poles.

(3) non-woodland trees;

(4) plantations.

Woodland history: the evidence

One of the sources for a study of woodland history is documentary evidence. Place-names may give evidence of pre-Domesday woodland but their interpretation involves many pitfalls. Anglo-Saxon charters record many hedgerow and free-standing trees and are our earliest record of woods in precisely identifiable places. Domesday Book attempts to provide a comprehensive survey of woodland in 1086: it gives particulars of some 7,800 woods. Oliver Rackham's calculations from Domesday Book for the presence of woodland in 1086 dispel the notion that Norman England was a very wooded land: he found that 6,208 out of a total of 12,580 settlements (omitting Lancashire and Craven), ie 49.5%, possessed woodland. When these settlements are mapped (figure 1) we see that the woodless settlements are concentrated in particular areas which include East Yorkshire - only 8% of its settlements had any woodland. Moreover the few woods of East Yorkshire were quite large so they were unevenly distributed, some in the southwest and in the Beverley area, little or nothing of which survives.

From 1250 there is a continuous string of documentation for some woods. These documents are most numerous for lands belonging to the Crown, Oxford colleges or religious houses: the Old Coucher Book of Ely is one of the earliest surviving topographical surveys, that of the bishop of Ely's lands, dated

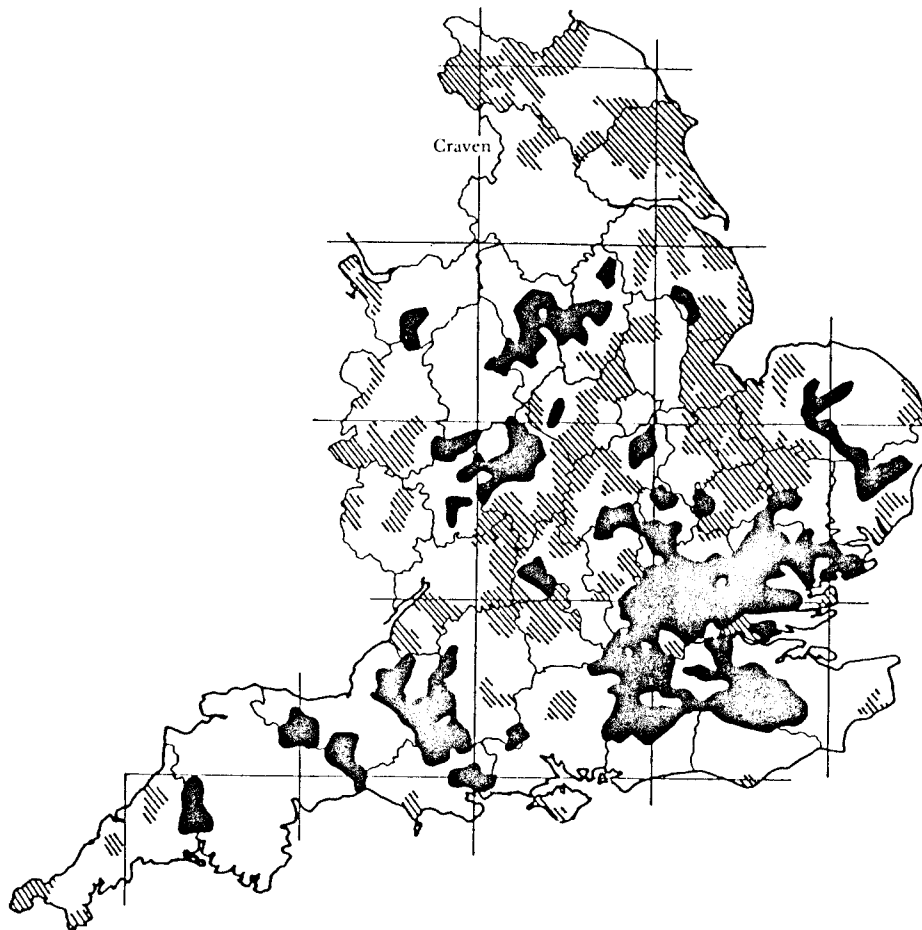


Figure 1. Presence of woodland in Domesday Book
England in 1086

Hatched areas: no woodland recorded at all
White areas: woodland possessed by some settlements
Black areas: woodland possessed by every settlement

1251. Early maps, usually of a single estate, begin about 1580 and increase in frequency through the 17th and 18th centuries. Maps at large scales continued with the enclosure or tithe maps of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Although on the whole works of art are not a good source of information, some late-medieval Flemish painters are exceptions and depict identifiable trees.

Earthworks and surface features can give information about the history of a wood. Medieval woods have a characteristic irregular shape: the boundary is either sinuous or is a series of zigzags. The perimeter is usually surrounded by a woodbank; this is a massive bank and ditch, with the bank on the wood side. The woodbank stabilizes the outline: it may be identified within a present wood when it records the former boundary of a wood which has been extended, or it may remain just as a soilmark to witness a wood which has been reduced or removed. A curious feature of woods is that they tend to have more ponds than the rest of the landscape. Eversden Wood, Cambridgeshire, (figure 2) is an ancient wood with a complex history, showing a number of surface features.

The actual vegetation itself in a wood can be a source of information about the history of that wood. The annual rings of living trees, or in the stumps of felled trees, tell us how old the tree is (and thus normally set a lower limit to the age of the wood) and also form a record of good and bad seasons, disease, and practices such as pollarding and coppicing. Ancient coppice stools of a great size may survive, testament of a wood's history. Examples more than 6m across exist and though the hollowness of these prevents a complete count of annual rings, Oliver Rackham estimates that some may be over a thousand years old.

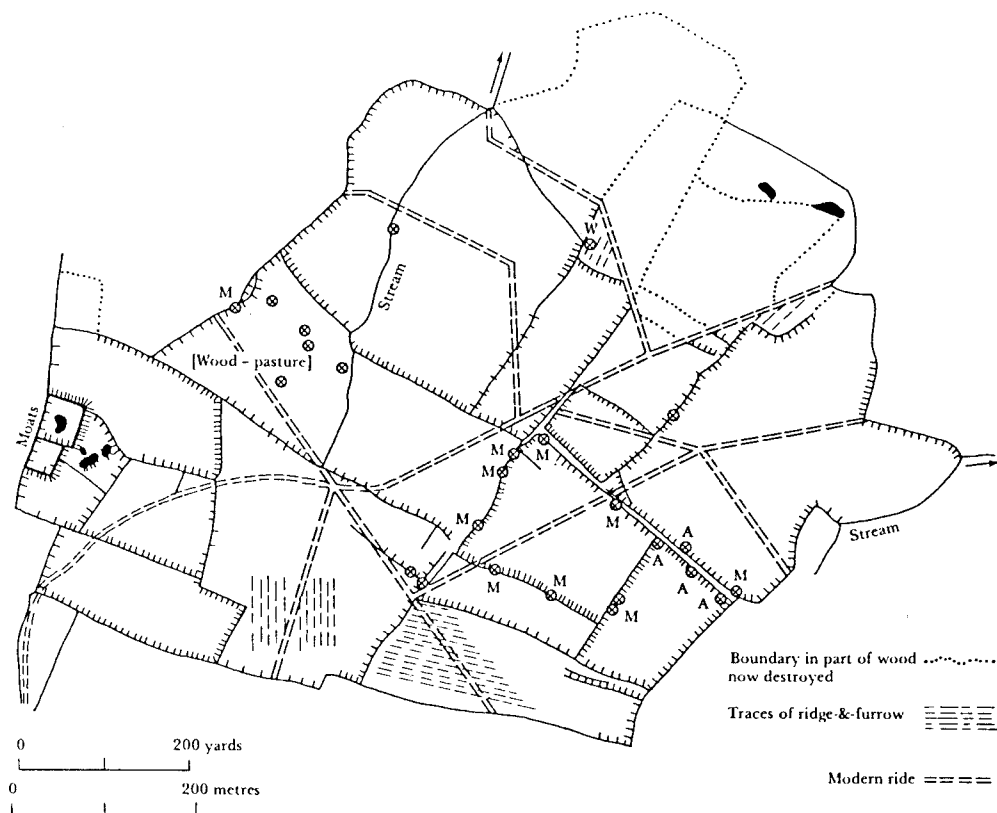


Figure 2. Eversden Wood, earthworks and other surface features. Note the pollard trees on banks, defining property boundaries; the scattered pollards indicating a small area of former wood-pasture; the faint ridge-and-furrow indicating that at least four of the parcels have been ploughed; the pair of lanes forming a T-junction; and the double moat with associated 'fish-ponds' representing a deserted and undocumented settlement.

The species composition may give an indication of the age of a wood. When a new wood is formed it does not suddenly acquire a complete woodland flora. The plants previously on the site decline, though some may persist for years in glades or gaps and it takes time for these to be replaced by woodland plants which have to travel from existing woods or other sources. The rate at which they arrive depends on the distance of the new wood from existing woods, on the ability of different species to colonize new sites, and on the effects which the previous land-use may have had on the soil.

The use of the flora of a wood as a guide to its history is complicated by the ability of a species to grow in different habitats and this may vary in different parts of the country. Dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) is strongly associated with ancient woods in Huntingdonshire whereas in Suffolk it is common in ancient hedges and is thus less informative for woods. Plants typical of ancient woods, eg oxlip (*Primula elatior*), are mostly those woodland species which do not normally grow in hedges. A suite of plants is a more reliable guide than a single species.

It might be expected that pollen analysis could provide information on woodland history but though widely used as a technique of vegetational history, including the wildwood and the earlier stages of its destruction, it has been less useful for the historical period or for the history of individual woods still in existence. However, more recent work has involved taking cores from woodland ponds and small basins rather than from lakes which average the pollen fall-out over a wide catchment.

Medieval buildings are a source of timber (mostly oak) for study. Each timber frame tends to be made from the smallest trees suitable, so that lengthwise

sawing was avoided, and thus it is often possible to calculate the the numbers of trees which have gone to make up a building, their age at felling and such details as the height of trunk to which branching was suppressed by underwood. Similar evidence for underwood comes from wattle-and-daub. Evidence for woodland management and use in earlier periods is coming from the trackways of the Somerset Levels - for instance, in the neolithic Walton Heath track, which is made of hurdles of underwood rods of selected sizes, there are clear examples of the actual coppicing technique achieved with a stone axe.

Many woods were still managed in the same way in 1900 as in 1250 but in the last hundred years the landscape has changed much more quickly. There have been a number of periods of major destruction of woodland between 1250 and the present, the greatest of which came after 1945 at a period of very high land prices, economic pressures to grub out woods, and political pressures to turn them into plantations. Yet is obvious that many woods have survived and there is less pressure now to convert them to arable or plantations but a need for correct management and conservation. In his lecture Dr Rackham gave us some insight into how our woodland has fared in the past - and destroyed a few myths on the way.

(In this lecture summary I have drawn heavily on Oliver Rackham's Ancient Woodland, published in 1980 by Edward Arnold. Both figures are reproduced from this book by kind permission of the author.)

14 Dec: HISTORIC FOOD IN YORKSHIRE - Peter Brears

Peter Brears started his lecture by considering the fuel used for cooking, explaining that the fuel determined the type of food which could be cooked, and

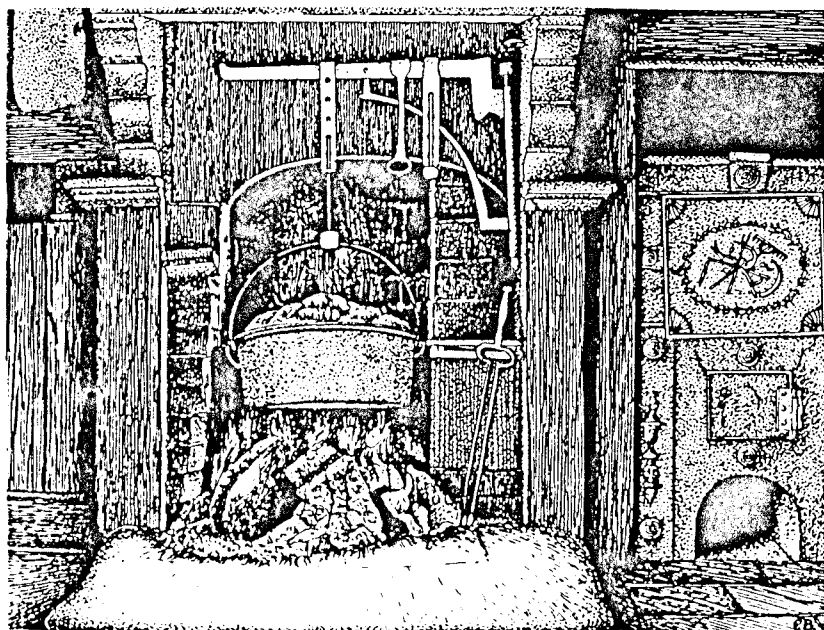
the fuel available varied over the county. In moorland regions the major fuel was peat, cut in spring and early summer. Many of the cottages enjoyed common rights of turbary, the right to cut peat on the moors. Peat, however, cannot be used in a conventional oven and so the roasting method of cooking meat cannot be employed.

The other major fuel burned in the county was coal, which had been mined for domestic use in Yorkshire from the fourteenth century at least. Many hundreds of donkeys, mules and pack-ponies were employed in carrying small bags of coal to towns and villages, usually in sacks placed over the donkeys' backs but also in panniers. With coal it is possible to roast and boil food, but not to use the traditional oven which operated on wood; however, in most parts of the county wood was too sparse or expensive for use as the major fuel. In some areas, such as East Yorkshire, neither peat, coal nor wood was available as fuel, and dung had to be used.

Originally the fire would burn on a hearth which stood well out in the room. In wattle and daub houses the chimney took the form of a large open-topped pyramid of wattle and dab carried on a strong bressumer beam running across the house at head height. In the masonry houses and cottages built in the county during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, the smoke hood was replaced by a rectangular masonry chimney stack.

During the eighteenth century the hob grate, with its wrought -iron firebasket mounted between two low masonry hobs, came into almost universal use throughout Yorkshire, except in the peat-burning areas and in homes of the very poor. With the hob grate kettles and pots could be hung over the fire from reckon-hooks, and bakstones could be mounted on iron brigs across the firebars enabling a variety of

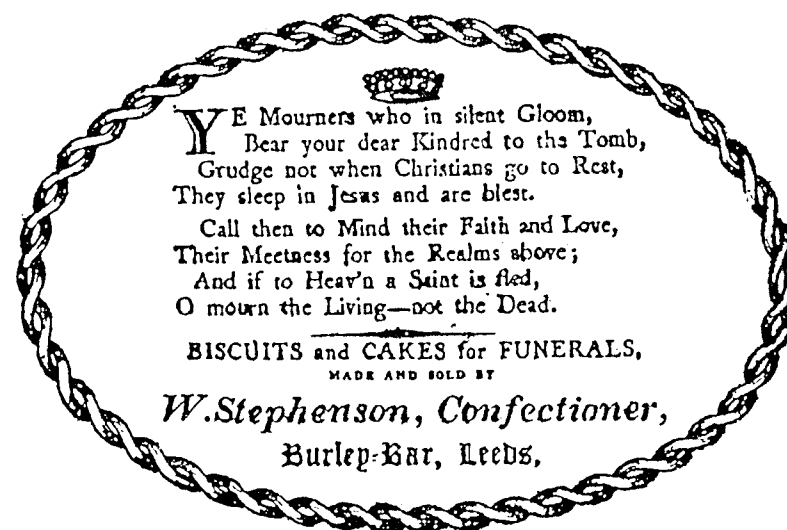
oatcakes, pikelets, oven cakes, and so on to be made. Bakstones were made from thin slabs of stone which could withstand the heat of the fire and gave such names as Backstone Beck (see page 5) to areas from which they were obtained. In the turf-burning areas baking was also undertaken in a yetling, a cylindrical cast-iron vessel perhaps a foot in diameter and five inches in height which hung over the fire from a reckon-hook. It was heated from below by the fire and from above by further smouldering peats heaped on its lid, and acted as a small temporary oven.



From the seventeenth and early eighteenth century ovens were being used. These consisted of a beehive-shaped dome of brick or stone two or three feet across built within the masonry of a chimney stack or bakehouse wall. Their doorways were small and rectangular with a simple slab door. They were fuelled

with fast-burning wood which was lit within the chamber; the fire was allowed to die down and stirred with a pole to reduce it to glowing ashes before inserting the food using a long-handled peel and sealing the door with mud. This type of oven is the source of the term 'upper crust', this being the clean part of the bread served to the top table whereas the bottom of the bread would be dirty from the ash in the oven. The first iron ovens, heated by their own fireplaces, began to be built in the prosperous kitchens of the gentry in the mid-eighteenth century and in the houses of ordinary working families in the 1820s and '30s.

Food was an important part of various ceremonies and rituals, and funerals were no exception. The funeral tea was an important indicator of status and prosperity. Additionally, funeral cakes or biscuits might be served to the mourners before leaving the house for the graveyard or distributed after the funeral; in other parts of the county the funeral biscuits were delivered by a bidder as a form of invitation to the funeral. The biscuits were often wrapped in papers printed with appropriate verses and advertisements for the baker or funeral parlour.



Another sort of wrapped biscuit was the gingerbread, made from a stiff paste pressed into a mould and when cooked wrapped in foil. These were sold at fairs and since the foil wrapper could conceal an inferior biscuit were the origin of the expression 'gilt on the gingerbread'.

The type of meat eaten was an indication of status. The wealthy had deer parks around their houses both to provide hunting for their friends and as a source of meat. Slightly lower down the social scale were those who had shooting rights.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries tennants would arrive at the landlord's house for meals during the twelve days of Christmas. In continuance of the medieval practice of paying rent in kind they would bring produce for the Christmas feast.

From the seventeenth century trade in meat was influenced by drovers bringing cattle down from Scotland. Those who could afford it would buy a whole beast at the spring or autumn cattle fairs and drive it home for slaughter. Some meat would be eaten fresh but the major part was salted and smoked for later use. Further down the social scale the meat eaten would be pork from the family pig and when one was killed at intervals by different families the offal would be distributed to other households in the village.

In many parts of Yorkshire, particularly in the early eighteenth century, large rabbit warrens were established which produced a good return for the landlords, but during the first half of the nineteenth century the warrens went into decline, though rabbits remained a welcome supplementary source of meat. Another popular food was wild birds, particularly sparrows which were caught with nets. Many bird species were sold for meat in Leeds market

The North Sea off the Yorkshire coast was a productive fishing ground, visited from at least the sixteenth century by local fishermen in their 'five-men boats' or 'farms'.

Food was not formerly eaten in a diningroom but in the hall. Then, from the early seventeenth century, and in particular after the Civil War, the hall became first the parlour and then the diningroom when the beds were moved upstairs. Early tableware, for the wealthy, was made of gold or silver, partly as a form of stored wealth. A cheaper form of tableware was pewter, but it was soft enough to be damaged with a knife. Later, pottery became the usual fabric of tableware. Food was first eaten with the fingers and a knife until in 1608 forks were introduced from Italy, though they did not become commonplace until later.

The meals taken have also changed with time. After breakfast there would be a midday meal of a mixture of savoury and sweet courses, and later in the day a supper of one course, but when it became fashionable to have the main meal later than everyone else this meal gradually moved towards evening and so a new meal of lunch was introduced.

Peter Brears is still collecting information from people who can remember some of the traditional aspects of food in Yorkshire.

(Illustrations from: Peter Brears, Traditional Food in Yorkshire, publ. John Donald, Edinburgh. This book also includes a number of recipes for traditional foods.)

DIARY OF EVENTS

Time and Venue

Wednesday 5 April	7.30pm
Field Study Group	Hull Museum's Castle Warehouse, Chapel Lane Staith, High St, Hull

Friday 7 April

Annual Dinner	Thwaite Hall, Cottingham
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Wednesday 12 April	7.30pm
A.G.M. followed by ERAS Lecture: Environmental Archaeology in East Yorkshire	Ferens Art Gallery, Hull

Friday 14 April	University of York
Recording and Interpreting Bricks and tiles from Excavation	Dept Archaeology details from: S Garside-Neville Dept Archaeology University of York Micklegate House Micklegate, York YO1 1JZ

Friday 14 April	7.30 pm
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EYLHS Lecture: The Maisters	Beverley Friary
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Saturday 29 April	Afternoon visit to Kirby Underdale and Bishop Wilton
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Saturday 13 May	Flag Fen
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ERAS excursion	8.30am depart Ferensway
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For East Yorkshire Local History Society events please
contact the Programme Secretary, Miss P Aldabella,
187 Greenwood Avenue, Hull. Tel: Hull 854840