ERAS news

No 24 February 1987

Morning Glory
Main St.
Foston-on-the-Wold.
A BRIEF WORD Nr Driffield.

It hasn't been the fault of the much-maligned postal service, nor of contributors late with copy. It's the fault of the Editor. Circumstances largely under his control, like moving house amongst others, have conspired to delay the compilation of the newsletter, with the result that ERAS NEWS 24 has slipped more than just a little and arrives with you three months behind schedule! Many apologies for this, but we have tried to make up for it by packing it full and making this, if not the best, certainly the biggest yet. Still a bit short on illustration, but that is perhaps made up for by the attractive Annual Dinner booklet. And so to business ...

AN ERAS PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

The quest for colour slides and prints to use in the display at the December meeting demonstrated two things. One is that there seems to be an acute shortage of photographs available which record ERAS events, and the other is that it takes the tenacity of a Special Branch detective to track down what does exist to borrow them for such events. The opportunity to make copies of a number of slides was wisely siezed upon on this occasion before they were

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

returned to their owners, and therefore the Society now possesses the modest core of a photographic collection. The value of holding duplicates of such material is self-evident to anyone who has had the job of gathering originals together in the first place, and in addition a photographic archive of the Society's history would be a great asset to hold in its own right. In the far future, members will faint in disbelief to discover that no visual record of ERAS was compiled in a period when just about everyone with a full complement of functioning digits was able to operate a camera and when Society members themselves made a point of gathering together regularly to view something in the region of 500 slides a year presented at lectures!

There are two ways in which you can help to build up our embryonic collection. First, if you have any photographs (slides or prints, it doesn't matter which) pertaining to the archaeology of the region or to specific ERAS events or excavations and which are surplus to your needs, would you consider donating them to the Society? Identifications and dates when they were taken, written lightly on the back with a soft pencil, would be a great help. And secondly, if you are out and about yourself taking photographs of archaeological interest, for instance when visiting excavations or participating in ERAS excursions, how about shooting an extra frame for the Society's photographic collection? These would be particularly good if they included members (at work or at play) rather than just static views of monuments or uncovered remains. It occurs to me as I write that I bet there isn't a single photograph in existence of one of the Society's ordinary lecture meetings. Not the easiest of subjects to photograph admittedly, particularly if you are self-conscious behind a camera, but it is an example of the sort of record whose omission will, I am sure, be a source of great regret in the future. Amateur Societies like our own are what we make of them. As grand or overstated as it may sound at the moment, in our activities we are actually making history as well as studying it. It is well within our means and capabilities to chronicle and illustrate our progress, and we ought to do so.

Lesley Overton has volunteered to look after the collection and she will be very happy to talk to you about it and of course receive any material that you would like to donate. She can be contacted at 194D Little High Street, Hull, HU1A 1HA, (telephone 214326) or at most meetings.

Dont't forget too, while we are on the subject, that Peter Didsbury still anxiously awaits any old documentation concerning the Society that members may wish to hand over for incorporation into an ERAS Archive destined ultimately for the Local History library in Hull (see ERAS NEWS 23).

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF THE EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

On December 10th the Society concluded its Silver Jubilee year with a public meeting in the Ferens Art Gallery. Two of the founding fathers of the Society officiated. Mr J.E. Bartlett, the original secretary of the Society, then Director of Hull Museumns, returned to take the chair for the occasion and introduced the speaker, Dr Ian Stead, himself a founder member. The subject was Lindow Man - better known to TV addicts as "Pete Marsh", the Iron Age man recovered from a peat bog in Cheshire - and the very excellent lecture that was presented is summarised elsewhere in these pages. A small but intimate selection of the records of twenty-five years of the Society's activities was also on display at the meeting thanks to the combined efforts of our present Hon Secretary, Valerie Fairhurst, and Kate Dennett.

In 1961 when the Society came into existence, Dr Stead, now of the British Museum, was beginning his career in archaeology and he has maintained his links with the area ever since. His many seasons of excavation at the Roman villa at Winterton have made it one of the most authoritative pieces of work in this field in the country and his study of the Iron Age in East Yorkshire laid the foundations for the remarkable series of chariot burials which have been excavated at Garton and Wetwang in recent years.

John Bartlett needs little introduction to Hull. As Director of the local museums he revived and rescued them from the charrs left by the war, brought them to the schools by instituting the Schools Museum Service, and introduced urban archaeology through the study of medieval Hull, excavating the town defences at North Walls Road and fourteenth-century tenements in High Street. He pioneered the technique of removal en masse of Roman mosaic pavements so that Hull has one of the best regional displays from the villas at Rudston and Brantingham - both sites excavated by Ian Stead.

The East Riding Archaeological Society was jointly conceived by John Bartlett and the late Dr Fred Brooks of Hull University, a local historian who knew Lincolnshire and the Riding like the back of his hand, together with the relevant supporting documents, ancient and modern. Together with E.V. Wright, the discoverer of the Ferriby boats, and Ken MacMahon, another expert in local history, among others, the Society was launched with an impressive series of lectures by the leading archaeologists of the day, a tradition which has been maintained with every annual programme in which Society members have been addressed by expert speakers on regional, national, and international subjects.

No less important has been the Society's fieldwork and the publication of its results, which continues to the present time. A field system at Welton produced a very idiosynchratic Roman villa; twenty years after Brantingham yielded a pavement that has become a national treasure, Society members returned to rescue more of the site's Iron Age and Roman archaeology in the face of quarrying; prehistoric boats were extracted from the Humber mud at Ferriby; a routine round barrow excavation at Walkington produced a spectacular Romano-British charnel house within six feet of the main road with a litter of decapitated skeletons - something that has defied interpretation; the Society too has worked with the Museum and the County Archaeology Unit in probing the origins of Hull and Beverley and is publishing the important Hull Old Town series of archaeological reports.

In all these activities, and more besides, members have dug and sweated, or revelled in the mud. Today a busy Field Group section maintains the tradition of practical involvement for newcomers to archaeology which is such an important feature of the Society, as it was from the very beginning. The discovery of the Hasholme Boat recently emerged through the Society's involvement in the archaeology of the wet-lands around Holme on Spalding Moor. One consequence of this is that citizens of Hull have had an unusual privilege - the spectacle of a prehistoric boat swinging on a sixty-foot crane prior to conservation by immersion in the Beverley Road Swimming Baths, a fitting epilogue to the first twenty-five years of the Society's service to the community.

Frank Norman

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

In the last issue of ERAS NEWS I expressed my growing concern at the current threat to the archaeology of Hedon. Since writing that piece I'm sorry to say things have not improved during my absence at the Dorset Institute of Higher Education. I am especially concerned at present with the inadequate reporting of important finds to the proper authorities, ie the Humberside Archaeology Unit and Hull Museums. In July 1986, for example, the skeleton of a male leper victim, disturbed in the vicinity of St Sepulchre's leper hospital, went unreported, as far as I am aware, to either the Unit or the Museum. The skeleton was thankfully photographed by the police, however, before they themselves exhumed the remains. Unfortunately though, no drawing of the skeleton *in situ* was made.

More recently, at a depth of c.3m a wattle and stake alignment was disturbed by builders at the northern end of Baxter Gate - the street of the bakers - and completely removed before any record whatsoever could be made. This particular find only came to light when I discovered the scattered remains of wattling

on their spoil heap. Fortunately, I was able to salvage some details of its depth and location from the builders. Had I not visited this site, however, it is highly likely that this important find would have gone completely unrecorded. This only goes to underline the importance of local vigilance and monitoring in these matters.

Phil Hampel

DINNER CALL

You've read the Diary, now eat the dinner! The Society's Annual Dinner will be held this year on 3rd April at Thwaite Hall when we are invited to a seventeenth century feast with authentic recipes as quoted in Pepys' Diary. The appetizing details are included separately with this newsletter. Make a party of it and get your bookings in soon for the latest of our tasty period pieces!

As in previous years a flutter of excitement will be provided by the raffle draw. This year Peter Jackson is looking after this end of the event. Donations of prizes for the raffle would be most gratefully received. In fact without them it won't be much of a raffle! So please contact Peter if you can provide something for it. His address is 14 St Mary's Avenue, Hull, tel 842036.

JUNE EXCURSION

An excursion is currently being organised for Saturday 8th June to some of the lesser known monastic sites of North Yorkshire. Always an attraction, it is some time now since the Society has had a day out amongst the "Bare Ruined Choirs", so this promises to be a very popular event. We are hoping to secure the services of an expert guide for the excursion, but failing that you might have to make do with the Vice-Chairman! A provisional programme and booking form is included with this

mailing, so if you would like to take part please return this as soon as possible, and when the details are finalised you will receive a further communication in May.

Suggestions for excursions are always welcome. The Committee would be pleased to have ideas, particularly from new members, to help in the planning of future events.

ARCHAEOLOGY DAY SCHOOL

On Saturday 21st March in Lecture Theatre A in the Arts Building at Hull University there will be a day school entitled *ARCHAEOLOGY IN HUMBERSIDE; SOME RECENT DISCOVERIES*. The meeting is a collaboration between ERAS and the Department of Adult and Continuing Education, and repeats the format and theme of the very successful event which was in the Society's 1985/86 calendar. Speakers are Ben Whitwell, David Crowther, Peter Armstrong, Dominic Powlesland, John Dent, Peter Halkon, John Wood and Kevin Leahy. As well as the lectures there will also be an exhibition and sale of publications. For Society members the fee for the day school is only £6 and this includes coffee, tea and lunch. Non-members will have to pay £8.50. The day begins at 10am and finishes at 5pm. Further details (if not included with this mailing) are available from the Adult Education office at 49 Salmon Grove, Hull, to whom bookings should be forwarded. Cheques payable to "The University of Hull" please.

AN EXTRA MEETING IN MAY

Regular Society meetings have traditionally been held in Hull for the no bad reason that the majority of our members reside in Hull and its immediate environs. The Committee is not, however, unaware of the other groupings of Society members in further flung parts of our area, who cannot get to meetings quite so readily as they might like. So this year an extra meeting has been arranged

for May 13th which will be held in Goole, where we know there exists an enthusiastic cell of ERAS members. All members are of course welcome to the meeting at which Professor Maurice Beresford will be talking about *INCLESMOOR AND BEYOND, 1407*. The venue is Goole Library at 7.30pm. We look forward to a good turn-out from the western East Riding, augmented by something of a convoy from Hull too!

LECTURE SUMMARIES

17th September: REPORTS MEETING

Four speakers reported on recent archaeological work in the area.

HULL MUSEUMS' FIELDWORK, David Crowther

Hull Museums had been working closely with the ERAS Field Group, acting as a springboard for the work of others.

1. At the site of the proposed new Transport Museum in High Street a wooden capstan was recovered from an area just to the east of the medieval waterfront excavated in 1978. No structures were found in association with the find.

2. At 158/159 High Street (Sharp's Warehouse), with planning permission to demolish for redevelopment, the five-bay medieval timber framed structure identified was recorded by students of the Hull College of Architecture under Peter Burridge. On a zero budget, Peter Didsbury supervised a limited excavation inside the building in an attempt to correlate archaeological levels with the standing structure. This project was an example of a less than happy liaison between the Museum and the owner and planning department.

3. On Beverley High Road the proposed expansion of the Tesco Stores complex alerted the Museum to the possibilities of further information retrieval in an area which had already seen valuable archaeological results emerge at Grey Lees Avenue. Here a Romano-British field system in an area of managed woodland has been identified from ditch deposits sealed below one metre of

overburden. The drainage works in the development scheme will provide a series of transects allowing archaeological prospecting for more pieces of this buried landscape. The situation in this instance has been one of good cooperation with the owners and developers.

4. At North Ferriby Redcliff (actually in the parish of Welton), a modest excavation was organised to interpret the cliff-edge features on the Humber shore. Redcliff is the terminal moraine of an ice sheet and is a local high point standing 10m above Ordnance Datum. E.V. Wright identified the site in the eroded face of Redcliff which produced Gallo-Belgic pottery. The period of occupation is an important one, being just before the time of Rome's advance northward across the Humber in AD71. Five weeks of excavation were undertaken with the Field Group and students from Manchester University. First century AD pottery and two fibulae were recovered from rubbish pits, and a large field ditch produced waterlogged wood. Other ditches, gullies and a cobbled surface were identified. Although embraced by only a limited timescale the site produced a sequence of deposits overlying this level in the form of a land surface and dispersed soil horizon from the ditch upcast, followed by further soil formation, and then by hillwash, sealed finally by the modern topsoil. An interim statement on the work is to be circulated in December in an attempt to secure further funding for a second season of excavation in 1987.

HOLME ON SPALDING MOOR PROJECT, Peter Halkon

The systematic fieldwalking programme has continued with the support of Field Group members and students from York University. Work has concentrated on the dendritic creek system within which the Hasholme boat was found. Sites identified have been found to cluster on sand hills and near the creek at Bursea. Medieval as well as Romano-British material has been recovered. RB pottery wasters were found during drainage works in November 1985, and at Easter 1986 at Fir Tree Farm a ditch containing RB material was

exposed. Further geophysical work was conducted by Jim Pocock of Bradford University, assisted by sixth form students.

An irrigation pond at Stray Farm led to the discovery of an old stream bed with a wooden structure across it, either a causeway or a bridge. Twelfth/thirteenth century pottery and the trigger mechanism in antler of a crossbow were recovered. Air photos show a trackway and a former branch of the River Foulness here, and the pattern of silting under the structure may be evidence for a fish weir or the butt end of a drain. Much animal bone (sheep, horse, pig) was found in association indicating rubbish disposal. The timbers were lifted after the excavation was completed.

At Bursea Grange a ditch system produced iron but only a single sherd of Iron Age pottery. The wall trench and drip gully of a house were identified but plough damage proved to be great here. An enigmatic post structure was also found. Aerial photographic work has produced good cropmark sites showing trackways and field systems at Arglam, Holme on Spalding Moor, and North Cliffe.

NORTH CAVE SAND PIT, John Dent

Stripping of topsoil in May by Tarmac Roadstone for sand extraction produced an extensive Iron Age settlement and field system, some four acres of which was revealed. The North Cave area is exceptional in geological terms since within a compass of about three to four miles the complete mesozoic series of deposits can be recognised across the landscape, which further to the south in Britain is far less readily appreciated covering some eighty miles in extent. The North Cave area therefore provides a rare, compact transect of variable land types whose patterns of exploitation in the past make it a valuable location for productive archaeological investigation.

The stripped area revealed ditches, round houses, stone areas, iron slag and pottery wasters, which together combine to suggest a farming community engaged also in seasonal industrial work. The relationship of the site to water systems is an

important aspect of the settlement. Structural remains of round houses were difficult to detect, only the surrounding drainage gullies surviving. Pottery and bone occurred at the entrance terminals. Eight or nine oval trenches which were recognised are paralleled in the Fenland and may be platform drains for hay ricks. Of the industrial residues both furnace and smithing slag were present. Organic preservation on the site was also good, exemplified by the wicker lining of a multi-period pit preserved in its waterlogged fill. The feature was probably a shallow well. Work was continuing.

THE BEVERLEY GATE, HULL, Peter Armstrong

Seventeen years after John Bartlett's excavation at North Walls Road, another opportunity presented itself to investigate part of Hull's medieval town defences. As part of the City Centre Pedestrianisation Scheme the Archaeology Unit was contracted by the City Engineers Department to locate and expose the Beverley Gate which stood at the west end of Whitefriargate. The Gate's position was identified with some difficulty but once encountered it was possible to excavate its northern side within the seven weeks available for the work. Built of brick the fourteenth century Gate stood to a height of eight feet in parts, although disturbance caused by nineteenth and twentieth century drainage trenches had done considerable damage to it. The Gate and guard house attached to it were built separately from the adjoining wall, using different brick types and executed with varying degrees of skill and competence. The Gate and wall were set into the front of a pre-existing clay rampart, and part of the stone setting and the timber post of an earlier gate structure were discovered at the foundation level of the brickwork. The southern side of the Gate lay temporarily out of archaeological reach under the pavement in front of H. Samuels, but it was expected that further work would follow to explore the remainder of this historic site where Charles I was refused admittance to the town at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. Enthusiasm for the work from the public at large and on the part of leading councillors in

particular had made it possible to leave the excavation open with a view to undertaking the necessary work of consolidation so that the monument can remain on permanent display within the new pedestrian scheme.

15th October: MONASTIC SITES IN YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE. Glyn Coppack

The speaker confined himself to the examination of three out of the twenty or more monastic sites in the county. These were Thornholme, where his own work on monasteries began, Fountains Abbey, and Mount Grace Priory. Most information on monastic sites is derived from the historical approach, rarely from the evidence of archaeology. Mr Coppack's own experience of excavation on these three sites provides a significant counterbalance to the traditional interpretations made in this way.

Thornholme Priory: Thornholme was a house of Augustinian Canons in the Ancholme Valley about five miles from Scunthorpe. The site occupied an island surrounded by marine peat, and today nothing of the house survives above ground; only substantial earthworks mark the buildings. The outer court was first excavated. Plough damage had affected later stratigraphy but late fourteenth century occupation of a building containing a kiln-like structure in its middle survived. The kiln, which proved to be one of two, was a grain drier, and it became apparent that the three-room building was multi-period and had developed from an original first-floor hall house of the 1170s. Evidence for the staircase survived. In the thirteenth century this quite normal example of domestic accommodation was used as a brewhouse. As built in the late twelfth century in the corner of a farmyard and with a dovecote adjacent, it seems probable that the hall was the house of the Priory steward. The replacement for the steward's house was an aisled hall with a chamber block at one end. A timber barn with a granary was associated.

The Priory was established c1154 and the original boundary ditch was soon built over, indicating a rapid expansion of the complex. A massive ditch, c3m deep and 3m wide cut to the natural clay, had 2m of post-Dissolution filling in it and had already gone out of use by the late fourteenth century. It was the principal boundary and given the size its purpose appears to have been defensive. The precinct wall in stone was found to be on line with post pits which provided the layout scheme, and a stone gatehouse was contemporary with the ditch and wall in the later fourteenth century. An attached garderobe tower indicated an upper chamber to the gatehouse. The almonry was located and had four phases of development. In origin the gatehouse was associated with a twelfth century road and it was rebuilt at least twice over a period of 250 years.

Other buildings were also identified. An old rhomboidal building of unknown use had a keyhole-shaped grain drier added into it at a later date. A bakery was established by converting a late twelfth century guest house sited in the customary position next to the gatehouse and built over the original precinct ditch.

In every respect the archaeology of Thornholme repeats the story of complex development marked by building changes, and this was only a very minor religious house for which conventional wisdom would deny such an active history of change. It was a deliberate policy in the archaeological programme to investigate the periphery of the site in order to establish a truer picture its history than the traditional one painted by nineteenth century historians, and the reults have proved remarkably illuminating and may be extended by inference to other lesser houses.

Fountains Abbey: Fountains was founded in 1132 by a group of Benedictines who chose to adopt the Cistercian way after a disagreement with their parent house. As the fabric of Fountains is traditionally interpreted, it is held that building in stone was in progress within five years of the foundation; destruction by fire occurred in 1156; and the work of reconstruction began immediately. Excavations were undertaken to check this

architectural history. The south transept and crossing of the conventual church were examined. A floor dated to 1461-70 with side chapels and stairs to the dormitory were found, and evidence for an earlier church construction was found below. In a chapel of this earlier church was a burnt mortar floor and a stone altar set upon the charred stumps of an earlier wooden altar. The fire evidence did not extend beyond the south transept and is reasonably interpreted as evidence for the documented disaster of 1156. Beneath this first stone church which was damaged in this way were found post pits, evidence for temporary wooden buildings which belonged to the first few years of the site's occupation before building first began in stone, probably in about 1135.

In the outer court some work had been done by Sir William Hope on a supposed bakehouse. This was reexcavated by Mr Coppack. Six phases of construction were identified, the earliest belonging to the mid-twelfth century. It was rebuilt in the thirteenth century and extended repeatedly until it was pulled down in the 1480s. It was possible to reconstruct the appearance of a window which had fallen. Within the building were waterways asociated with two circular tanks and furnaces of stone with pipe runs to them. It is perhaps more likely that the building was used as a dyehouse rather than a bakery. In the late 1470s however there was a change of use and it became a smithy.

The watermill at Fountains is a structure surviving to full height and is the best preserved Cistercian mill in Northern Europe. It is today used as a store, its sixteenth century roof replaced in 1936. There are plans to refurbish. It contains some original twelfth century work, which was only retained to serve as a dam when it was later extended, and it is buried to a depth of eight to ten feet below its original associated ground level.

Mount Grace Priory

Mount Grace is a Carthusian house founded in 1382. It had a small church and individual cells around the cloister for the monks who lived separate hermit-like lives. Cell 8, one of twenty-three, was rebuilt in c1905 as a summer house by the then

owner. To help interpret this guardianship monument and to provide information for layout purposes, Mr Coppack excavated the garden of the cell.

The work provided evidence for the construction of terraces when the site was first laid out and presented a complicated archaeological sequence. The builders clearly encountered constant difficulties with water and found it necessary to divert springs by means of stone-lined drains. The latest of the gardens revealed a plan which contained a private cloister in the form of a lean-to against the cell giving a covered walk which extended to a privy at the back with a flushing drain. Much glass was found. Other artefactual evidence suggested that the latest occupant was engaged in bookbinding work. He was certainly not a gardener from the evidence of the simple path, slots and considerable amounts of scattered rubbish of early sixteenth century date. But beneath in fifteenth century deposits there were drains and neat paths edged with stone retaining raised beds. The drains discharged into soakaways set neatly in the corners of the garden. Planting holes were also identified. A ditch was found which goes with an earlier phase of cell construction, presumably of timber, lost beneath the stone building which stands today.

In conclusion it was emphasised that far from the traditional guide book picture, monastic sites are wide open for reevaluation through archaeological investigation. The surviving remains and the architectural history of the church fabric is by no means the whole story. It is even possible to suggest that the concept of a monastery as the peaceful haven of quiet reflection should be exchanged for another more worldly one in which the establishment was more or less a permanent building site!

19th November: THE SUTTON HOO PROJECT. Martin Carver

Martin Carver, director of the Sutton Hoo Project, explained the background and approaches to the current work, explaining that it is an exercise in archaeological thrift which aims to gather

the maximum information with the minimum attrition of this famous site.

The archaeological history of Sutton Hoo was sketched. A group of burial mounds lie near the River Deben in Suffolk, and in 1938 the landowner, Mrs Edith Pretty, arranged for the cemetery to be investigated. Ipswich Museum engaged Basil Brown to undertake the excavations. Brown trenched through three mounds. All were found to be Anglo-Saxon an all had been robbed. In 1939 the largest of the mounds was tackled, Mound 1. This contained the remains of a ship ninety feet long. Within the ship was a large, grey rectangular patch of soil. Scholars and archaeologists from Cambridge and the British Museum took over at this point. 263 objects of all types were recovered from this burial chamber. The treasure in the burial was remarkably intact and it captured the imagination of academics and lay public alike. The craftmanship of the objects is superb and they had been gathered together in this one place from a vast geographical area. Also there is great symbolism in the material. A highly ornate whetstone is interpreted as a sceptre, but its obvious symbolism in its form and decoration is actually very difficult to understand because of the differing sources bearing upon it. However, the symbolism generally appears to denote kingship. Two silver spoons, one with the legent Saulos, the other Paulos, are suggested to be symbolic of conversion to Christianity of the royal person. Such an interpretation should only be applied cautiously since all the silverware present was from Constantinople and therefore the spoons need not be taken to have special significance in the context of the burial here. Current opinion identifies the king Rædwald with this elaborate grave, although it is perhaps not important that we know exactly in whose honour the burial was.

Archaeologically there are tremendous problems involved in attempting to capture the slight traces of structure within graves at Sutton Hoo because of the disintegration of wood in the acidic sandy soil. Within the burial chamber as originally laid out and as found there was a three-dimensional pattern. A simple two-dimensional plan of the finds does not therefore convey the right

picture. Part of the Sutton Hoo Project is to develop techniques that will help to recreate the three-dimensional layouts.

A problem that remains in the ship burial is that no body was actually recovered from the burial chamber. There are basically three theories put forward on this matter. The first is that the archaeologists did not look for it. This should be dismissed as a fatuous suggestion. The second is that the body was removed later for reburial in a Christian cemetery. The third is that the body was consumed by the acidic soil. It is an essential requirement of the current programme, and for future work too, that archaeologists have the means to decide whether or not burials were present in any given instance.

Bruce-Mitford's report on Sutton Hoo was published in 1983. The speaker commended to his audience the section of the report on the textiles by Elizabeth Crowfoot as a model of archaeological reporting.

In spite of the mystique that surrounds the site, the approach to the new project has to be a simple archaeological exercise. Initially it is necessary to establish what the cemetery is and of what type before going on to design a sampling strategy for our day as thriftily as possible, whilst allowing further strategies to be implemented in the future. Parallels for the site need to be considered. At Jelling in Denmark there are two large burial mounds with a church between them. Excavations have shown that there is evidence for prehistoric use of the site onwards. The church was rebuilt twice. The earliest church had a burial in the chancel and an inscription suggests that a pagan burial was translated into the church, thus extending a Christian line from son back to father. This would suggest a political decision. Spong Hill in Norfolk is a large burial site of the Anglo-Saxon period. At Yeavering there are barrows with a church and temple within 200m. Groups are recognisable; small groupings of large mounds and large groupings of small mounds. Because of the ship burial, Sutton Hoo must link to Sweden. There ship burials are found on the outskirts of settled areas.

The Sutton Hoo Project began with a three-year site evaluation. The barrow cemetery is thought to be much larger than the obvious group. The work is research and development. Night photography has been used to bring out contour detail of the site; bracken was cut back and the plant growth was planned on the premise that disturbed soils favour certain soils; metal detecting for ferrous and non-ferrous metals has been undertaken; various geophysical instruments were used and their effectiveness checked by test digging, which established that resistivity surveys are the best for this soil type; trials of a remote sensing ground radar machine were carried out; phosphate surveys were done; and fieldwalking, which produced mostly prehistoric material. A valuable and fruitful cooperation with the Suffolk Archaeological Unit placed the site in its correct perspective, since it became clear from their records that the prehistoric finds show Sutton Hoo to be one of the largest prehistoric sites in Suffolk. A part of the site was found to have 80cm of stratified prehistoric material in it. Consequently the site of the Saxon barrows has a claim to great antiquity and it is probable that ancient earthworks were visible, possibly prompting the Saxons to use this site as a focus for burials.

In the project about one quarter of the cemetery area is to be sampled. Two transects, north/south and east/west, will be excavated to provide evidence for the whole chronological development of Sutton Hoo. To place the site in its context, six areas of East Anglia will be intensively field-walked and thus characterised. To the present time the edge of the cemetery has been established and a number of graves have been excavated. Coffins have been identified and the shape of bodies as stains, sometimes with some substance beyond the bone, have been defined. Radio-carbon determinations place these in the seventh century AD. Research into the decay products has begun in order to assist in identifying the presence of bodies in those instances when, or if, none appear in excavated graves. The traces of the bodies in the graves were held together upon excavation with applications of polyvinyl acetate, and latex moulds were also taken with some

success. Ultra-violet light was used to enhance the visual identification of any surviving bone. Nine out of fifteen graves contained what can best be described as victims. The graves were cut to shape to accommodate the attitudes of the dead, all of which were different. One was kneeling, another sitting. One was possibly buried as a ploughman guiding a plough. Reference was made to a gruesome pagan ritual in Sweden, recently recreated for television, which survived into the medieval period and in which a tree was hung with bodies of men and animals. Whether or not there is some connection here, we can only guess at the meaning and purpose behind these Sutton Hoo burials.

10th December; LINDOW MAN. Dr Ian Stead

120 people attended Dr Stead's lecture, an open meeting in celebration of the first twenty-five years of ERAS. John Bartlett took the chair for the evening, and the audience had the opportunity of viewing display panels, compiled by Valerie Fairhurst and Kate Dennett, illustrating archaeological events that have marked the Society's progress.

Lindow Moss in Cheshire is an area of some 150 acres which is exploited today for peat extraction. In antiquity the extent of the bog was in the region of 1000 acres. The extraction process involves the use of a mill to sort and clean the peat, and in 1983 workmen found what they thought was a deflated football. It proved to be a human head. The police were duly notified. They were already conducting a murder hunt and on the strength of this confronted the chief suspect who promptly confessed to the murder of his wife! The head was certainly not, however, that of his victim, returning a radiocarbon date of ad210 +/-100 years obtained from the Oxford Laboratory. In 1984 a human leg was next discovered at the processing plant, and on this occasion the county archaeologist as well as the police was called in. Examination of the face that was being worked revealed further human remains, and the total absence of any intrusion through the peat clearly showed that the body was ancient. The body was

lifted in a block of peat and transferred to the mortuary at the local Macclesfield Hospital where it could be stored at the optimum temperature of 4°C. The body was under the jurisdiction of the coroner at this time and he called for a C14 determination. The Harwell Laboratory turned in a result indicating that the remains were more than 1000 years old, and the bog body was duly released into the care of the British Museum for archaeological study.

The body was transferred to the Middlesex Hospital where it was X-radiographed, still encased in its block of peat, to produce the first pictures of the full extent of the body. The skull was apparent and therefore any tentative association with the discovery of 1983 was dismissed. The body was excavated at an out-station of the British Museum at Hackney, where an air-cooling plant was installed to keep down the temperature, although only allowing excavation work to proceed in short spells of two hours at a time. The body was found to have been chopped off at the waist and it is likely that the leg found earlier belonged to it. The head was found to be lying at an awkward angle over the right shoulder. A photogrammetrical record was made from which a contour survey of the body was compiled to aid the excavation process. Only plastic and wooden tools and water sprays were used to remove the peat from around the well preserved skin.

Once fully exposed the bog man was examined in great detail using X-rays, zero-radiography (ie selenium impregnated radiographs for greater clarity), nuclear magnetic resonance (=body scanning), the last of which provided cross-sections through the remains. Several specialists were also enlisted to study the body. A rheumatologist found the vertebrae to be that of a healthy young person. An ear, nose and throat specialist and a dentist also made examinations. An endoscope view into the mouth, which was tightly closed, showed the condition of the teeth to be eroded but this was a post-mortem phenomenon; they were good in life, and thirty of the full complement of thirty-two were present. The moustache hairs had a distinctive stepped pattern at their ends commensurate with trimming using shears, not a razor.

The eyes did not survive and the brain was only in a very decayed state.

Disappointingly too no heart, lungs or liver had survived, but a length of gut had from which a mere 20g of the digested remains of a meal was recovered. This was studied at the Institute of Archaeology. 90% of the pollen present was cereal pollen, but mistletoe pollen was also identified. Both roundworm and whipworm eggs were found. Macroscopic study of the gut contents showed cereal grain and chaff with charcoal attached. Spelt and emmer wheat were identified together with barley. The cereals were pure and finely ground, and the study concluded that Lindow Man had eaten bread. This is in contrast to the evidence recovered from the Danish bog bodies, where coarse, weedy cereal remains from the intestine indicate meals of gruel. From the charcoal traces a baking temperature of the bread of 200-250°C can be demonstrated, and this would be in keeping with the preparation of an unleavened bread such as griddle cakes. Burnt heather was also in evidence which was probably the fuel for the fire on which the cakes were cooked and which would also suggest a cooking place close to the bog where the body was found.

Death was caused in the following way. Two blows of a narrow-bladed axe-like implement, struck from behind, stunned him. This was shown by the X-rays of the head on which bone splinters driven into the skull were apparent, together with the swelling around the wounds. He was then garrotted with a cord made of two pieces of animal sinew. The front and sides, but not the back, of the neck were cut by the force of the cord indicating a tightening of the noose by twisting with a stick. The cord was also curled in a way which suggested this. Three knots were used to tie the cord, all simple thumb-knots. The force of the garrotting was such that the neck was broken, and it was this which killed him. The throat was then cut, severing the jugular vein. The victim's end was therefore an elaborate ritual murder, culminating with the flow of blood from the head.

Lindow Moss is a raised bog which was created under climatic changes when conditions were becoming wetter. The bog was acidic

because its moisture was obtained from the atmosphere and the build-up rate would have been about 1cm per year. Pollen samples from the bog show that Lindow Man was deposited in a pool at a time when the area round about was being cleared and agriculture was beginning, but before charcoal in any quantity was present. On this evidence it is probable that the time in question was shortly before the Roman period.

The acidic environment in which the body lay had in effect pickled it. Although the skin was therefore well preserved, this was not so with the bone which was only differentially preserved. There was poor preservation of the hands, but the fingernails survived. A comparison between them with the nails of a modern-day agricultural labourer and a university lecturer showed greater affinity with the latter than the former, from which it is inferred that Lindow Man was from the non-labouring upper class of the Late Iron Age.

In order to display the body, its conservation was a matter of great importance. The problem was not an entirely new one since other bodies have been recovered from the British Isles and Europe. A bog body found at Castle Blakeney, Co Galway, is on show in Dublin. The body was found in 1821, reburied and then reexcavated in 1829. It was passed to the museum unconserved in the 1850s. A bog body from Northern Germany was smoked to preserve it. In the 1950s came the famous discovery in Denmark of Tollund Man. Only the head was preserved, for which a toluene/alcohol/paraffin wax treatment was used. Another Danish example was found to be part tanned *in situ*, and consequently the process was continued with an oak bark tanning agent after excavation. The British Museum conservators atempted a method never used before for human remains. This was freeze-drying. The body was soaked for ten weeks in polyethylene-glycol, placed in a freeze-drying chamber to -30°C, and freeze-dried for a period of three weeks. The result involved slight shrinkage and colour change, but the body texture was unaffected.

The dating evidence for Lindow Man has not been straightforward. There were no associated artefacts and so

reliance on radiocarbon samples was necessary. Serious discrepancies emerged, and a summary of the results from the human remains is as follows:

Oxford Lab	First skull found	ad 210 =/-100
Harwell Lab	Lindow Man	470BC (Aberrant; rejected)
Harwell Lab	Lindow Man	AD410 (centred group date)
Oxford Lab	Lindow Man	0 (centred group date)

Between the two laboratories used these two sets of dates are nearly 500 years apart, and this remains the unresolved position. Samples from the peat came out at c300BC, and this is currently taken as the one reliable radiocarbon date.

In archaeological terms, the interpretation of the find is one of a ritual killing. In Denmark and North Germany bog bodies are dated to the first millenium BC, and in the nature of death they are comparable to Lindow Man. Common Iron Age traditions, true for Britain and Europe alike, are human sacrifice and votive deposition. The presence of mistletoe pollen ingested by Lindow Man is intriguing, since the writer Pliny reports that the Druids held nothing more sacred than mistletoe. Artefacts of the first century BC are often recovered from rivers and interpreted from this as ritual deposits. From the same find spot where the Battersea shield was found, there are reports of hundreds of human crania.

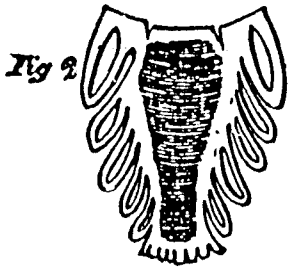
The published report entitled *LINDOW MAN: THE BODY IN THE BOG* was compiled from the contributions of no fewer than fifty-three specialists. It has already sold over 10,000 copies!

SOUTH BANK LETTER

One thing that is guaranteed to pull people into museums is morbid curiosity; skeletons and mummies have always been the most popular exhibits. A striking example of this is the Lindow Man who is currently starring in the British Museum's *Archaeology in*

Britain exhibition and was the subject of Dr Stead's lecture to the Society on December 10th last. People's responses to this extremely ill-used individual are varied. I was struck by the close resemblance between him (at least as reconstructed) and the British Museum's own Stuart Needham. I spoke to Stuart last week and can confirm that he has not made the ultimate sacrifice for archaeology!

This also brings me to Scunthorpe Museum's own great loss. A bog body was found in our area but alas, did not survive for the delectation of connoisseurs. In 1747 a workman digging peat at Amcotts on the Isle of Axholme found the body of a woman standing upright in the bog. It appears that only the lower part of the



body was well preserved together with an arm and a hand. The contemporary account of the find revoltingly describes how the bones were shaken out of the arm leaving the skin empty "like the top of a muff". There was some discussion at the time of the date of the body. A search was made of the surrounding area for a coin to provide a date. They were of course looking in the wrong

place: coins are usually only found on the spoil heap! A sensible attempt was then made to date the shoe she was wearing by comparing them with those shown on statues. This was not successful but eventually it was decided that the body was probably medieval. With the benefit of 240 years of archaeological research we can do a little better than our forebears in dating the find. The shoe shown in the drawing is a characteristically Roman type, which explains why no parallel could be found on medieval statues.

How did the Amcotts woman meet her end? We have no remains left for the pathologists to work on, as the body was consigned with due respect to Amcotts churchyard. However, the position of the body upright in the peat is important. If someone is thrown into a bog either dead or alive, their body would be in an horizontal position. As this poor soul was found standing up, I think it likely that she wandered into the bog and drowned while struggling to walk out. Foul play is not suspected.

Kevin Leahy

LETTERS

12 Main Street
Elloughton

Dear Sir,

Undermining the Redcliff and Public Relations

I had intended allowing Mr Crowther to have the last word on the subject until he took his crusade against metal detecting to Humberside Weekly News (5th September 1986) and there claimed that metal detector users are responsible for damaging the Redcliff, hence going further than his original statement in ERAS NEWS to the effect that artefacts were falling into their hands. This would be all very well were he able to substantiate the claim, but I have spoken with Mr Crowther and I know that he cannot.

My continued concern is that this attitude does not serve archaeology well, and whereas defamatory remarks re. metal detecting in ERAS do little harm, the same does not apply when such are broadcast by the press and are read by already antagonised metal detector users.

Incidentally, since Mr Crowther expressed reservations re. the museum's identification service I have reached an agreement with him that henceforth I will, for the sake of expediency, select only certain items for recording. In fact I don't see this as a service/receive but one I give in order that finds are recorded. Imagine the pressure the "service" would be under should the number of metal detector users cooperating with the museum rise to two or more.

Yours faithfully
David Haldenby

WEATHER-BEATEN MEETING

Apologies are extended to anyone who braved the atrocious conditions on January 14th to get to the Ferens Art Gallery for the scheduled lecture by Dr Keith Manchester only to find that the meeting had been cancelled. Given the difficulties with travelling it was impossible to go ahead and the decision to call off the meeting was taken the day before, and a notice to that effect was put out by Radio Humberside. The advertised lecture on the Archaeology of Disease has been reprogrammed and Dr Manchester will make a second attempt to deliver his talk in the 1987/88 session.

SOME EVENINGS OUT

There are plans afoot for a few evening mini-excursions during the summer months to places of interest within the East Riding. Nothing elaborate and no special transport laid on, but

an evening out to look at some of the county's sites and monuments, or to be shown around some of the lesser, as well as the better known, churches is the sort of idea, always keeping in mind local hostelry closing times! Some arrangements will inevitably have to be made at quite short notice and therefore it will be impractical, and indeed too expensive, to circularise the whole membership of details on each occasion. Announcements will be made at lecture meetings and through the grapevine of the Field Study Group, but if you are unable to get to these meetings and yet would like to be kept informed of forthcoming outings of this sort, please get in touch with Peter Jackson, 14 St Mary's Avenue, Hull, who will be able to keep you posted of events.

THE KEYS TO THE TREASURY

Members who have kept a studied eye on the Society's annual balance sheet over the last five years will recognise what a treasure we have in our Hon Treasurer. Sadly for us, Robert Edwards, who has husbanded and guided ERAS funds since 1982, is moving to Norfolk in the near future. Robert is already spending half of every week on business there, which is of course putting something of a strain on his ERAS commitments, and therefore he is having to relinquish the treasurership now. The experience of money matters that he has brought to the office has strengthened the Society's position considerably, and his hard work on the Society's behalf, not only as Hon Treasurer but also serving in his capacity as Membership Secretary, will be greatly missed. We are sorry indeed to lose him but wish him and Alison all the best in their new home and circumstances.

All sad stories need an element of optimism for the future, and we are happy to report that this one has just that from the Society's point of view. Nicola Hope, who already has some experience of this line of work, has agreed to take on the office of Hon Treasurer to keep the firm in business. We are very

grateful indeed to Nicola for stepping in and allowing matters to carry on smoothly in this way.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM this year is on Wednesday 15th April, and the papers for it should be included with this mailing. The business meeting will be followed, quite seasonably, by a lecture given by the palaeobotanist, Dr John Flenley of the University of Hull's Geography Department, on his work at Easter Island. This should be a rare treat and we look forward to this with some eagerness. Hope to see as many of you there as can make it.

Letters and contributions for inclusion in the newsletter
should be addressed to:
ERAS NEWS, "Morning Glory", Main Street, Foston on the Wolds, YO25 8BJ