ERAS news

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FOREWORD

Welcome to yet another slightly new-look ERAS NEWS. We hope the new format is easier on the eye than the old - it is certainly easier to write! It would be truer to say *compile* rather than *write*, of course: warm thanks are extended once again to the several contributors to this issue. But please don't forget that these pages are open to all members and you can help to make your newsletter livlier, more informative and colourful (...well, the technology in this Editor's office hasn't quite stretched that far yet!). News, views and reviews, letters and comment are always gratefully received. Copy deadline for ERAS NEWS 23 is July 18th.

BRINGING THE PAST UP TO DATE

The Society is very happy to announce the publication of a 36 page booklet which bears this title. You will recall from our last issue that work was in hand to publish the proceedings of the successful day school held at the University of Hull in October last year. On that occasion archaeologists engaged in fieldwork throughout Humberside, and a little further afield too, came together to present the results of their current programmes. The illustrated booklet is a compilation of eight short papers specially prepared by the excavators themselves. The contributors are Tim Schadla-Hall, Dominic Powlesland, David Crowther, John

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Dent, Peter Halkon and Martin Millett, Peter Didsbury, Kevin Leahy and Freda Berisford, and Ben Whitwell.

The essays have been brought together in a most attractive format and are available now at the bargain price of 80p to ERAS members, or £1.00 if you are misguided enough not to belong to the Society! Valerie Fairhurst has been the driving force behind the publication, with able assistance from Nicola Hope and Kate Dennett; together they have done the Society a great service in putting the booklet together so promptly and so well. *Bringing the Past up to Date* will be on sale at Society meetings, and can also be obtained from Hull Museums and the Local History Libraries in Hull and Beverley.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM is on 16th April and concludes the 1985/86 programme of meetings. All the papers are included with this mailing. The business meeting will be followed by an illustrated lecture given by John Dent on Roman Towns in North Africa. John will be reawakening some fond memories, I suspect, since his experience of excavations in Africa are first-hand ones, having supervised archaeological work on Roman sites in Libya in earlier foot-loose days before succumbing to the call of the East Riding! It promises to be a colourful end to yet another programme of really excellent lectures.

THE ANNUAL DINNER: A MOVABLE FEAST

Later than usual this year to celebrate the arrival of Spring rather than to brighten up the dark days of Winter. But worth waiting for we hope. The appetising details of *AN ELIZABETHAN FANFARE* are included separately. The great popularity of the similarly styled *MIDDLE AGE SPREAD* last year reminds me to remind you to get your bookings in early to avoid disappointment.

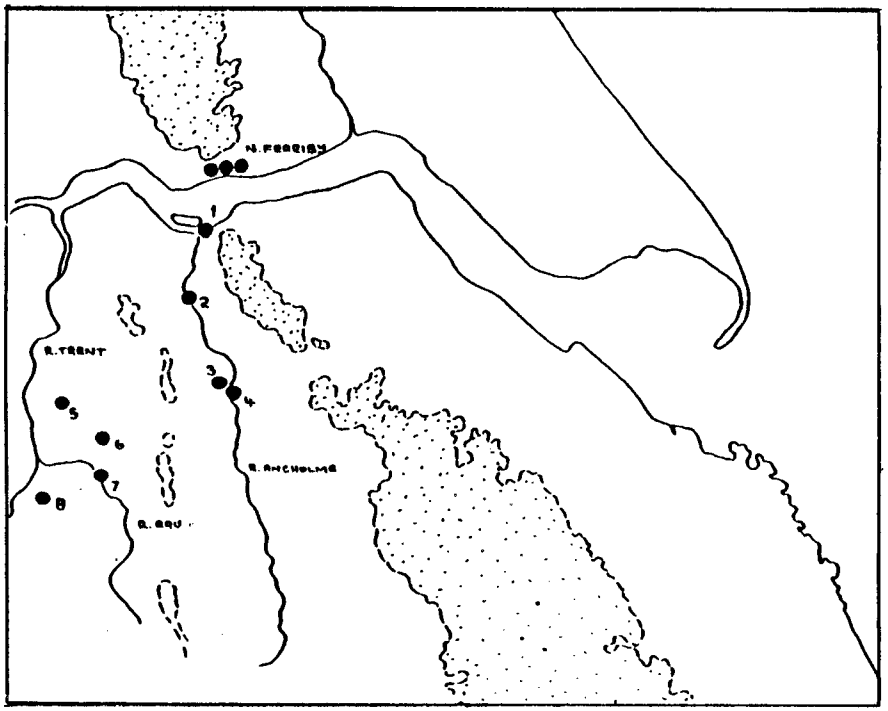
The one contribution to the evening still awaiting your support (apart from being there, of course!) is the raffle. It's all in a good cause - ERAS!! - and like last year we are inviting the true philanthropists of the Society to donate the prizes, which will be drawn toward the end of the evening. The more the merrier, whether big or small, generous or jokey, wet or dry, (I'm talking about the prizes now!) we shall be delighted to accept your offerings. Alison Edwards and John Knowles have kindly agreed to be the contacts/collecting points for your gifts. Alison is at 12 Davis's Close, Kirkella, (tel. 654166); John is at 18 Eastgate, Beverley, (tel. 862938). Please help us out on this to complete the preparations for this super social event

SOUTH BANK LETTER

1985 was a good year for you lucky sods on the north bank with discovery of a further crop of chariot burials and of the Hasholme boat leaving me a seething mass of jealousy and hatred! By way of sour grapes I must point out that our Appleby logboat is, at c1100BC, far older than the Hasholme boat (c450BC), but unfortunately even with the amount of prejudice that I can muster I have to admit that the Appleby boat has perhaps seen better days. If any of you think for a moment that the conservation programme being carried out on the Hasholme boat is unnecessary, you must come and have alook at the Appleby boat. It was allowed to dry out naturally, and the results do little to add to its appeal as a thing of great beauty.

South Humberside has had, as you can see from the map on page 4, more than its fair share of boat finds but, alas, only two of them survive: our Appleby boat and the Brigg "raft", now in theNational Maritime Museum. And what of the others? We are left with a sorry saga of bad luck, neglect and pure oafishness.

Of our eight boats, the "coracle" from South Ferriby (1) was seen by Tom Sheppard of Hull Museums who managed to save a piece of it, which does not, I believe, survive. The 1886 Brigg boat



Legend

1. South Ferriby "coracle". Wickerwork "vessel" containing a human skeleton found before 1926; fragment in Hull Museums?
2. Appleby boat. Remains of a logboat recovered from the Old River Ancholme in 1943, full length not known, radio-carbon date of 1100BC; now in Scunthorpe Museum.
3. Brigg "raft". Plank-built boat resembling the ones from North Ferriby, found in 1888 and reexcavated by National Maritime Museum in 1973; radio-carbon date of c900BC; now in National Maritime Museum.
4. Brigg boat. Logboat found in 1886, 48ft 6ins long, radio-carbon date of c900BC; destroyed during Second World War.
5. Yaddlethorpe. Boat of North Ferriby type(?), found 1815; destroyed.
6. Messingham logboat(?). Found in 1954, said to have been 10ft long; destroyed.
7. Scotter logboat. Found in 1814, said to have been 50ft long; destroyed.
8. East Ferry logboat. Found in 1811, 40ft long, said to have contained human bones; destroyed.

(4) had an eventful history. Following its discovery during the building of Brigg Gasworks, it was the subject of a legal battle between the Gas Company and the Lord of the Manor. When the latter won he put the boat on show in a special building in Brigg where it remained until 1909 when it was taken to Hull Museums. It was fire-bombed along with the rest of the contents of the Albion Street Museum in 1943. We know nothing of the Messingham boat (6), other than its existence (it could have been a steeping trough). The boat from Scotter (7) was found upside down, and as the labourers who found it had dug a trench through it, it was decided that it was not worth keeping. The boats from East Ferry (8) and Yaddlethorpe (5) were both chopped up, one to make pales and the other to build a barn. From what we know of ancient water-logged wood one wonders how long the barn stood!

The most interesting South Bank boats, so far as the Hasholme find is concerned, are those from Brigg and Appleby, both of which have fitted transoms at their sterns, like Hasholme. This feature does, however, occur elsewhere in the country and so is not a local invention.

Sometimes in my darker moments I wonder what I would do if we had another Scotter boat turn up, 50ft long! Perhaps I am not so jealous of Hull Museums after all.

Kevin Leahy

"LUCK, GENIUS AND GENEROSITY"

... the words of Cllr Alice Tulley, Chairman of Hull City Council Cultural Services Committee, in reference to the story of the Hasholme boat, as she introduced the special evening on this outstanding archaeological find held at the Ferens Art Gallery on 7th March. So before leaving Kevin Leahy's watery theme, it might be appropriate to bring you the edited highlights of this event, which attracted about two hundred people!

The work of conservation on the Hasholme logboat will soon be underway thanks largely to the generous pump-priming sponsorship

of Mansfield Brewery, who also provided wine to toast the evening's event. One can only assume the beer comes later. The credits, all justly deserved, poured thick and fast (Note how the subject draws out liquid metaphors and the water-based turn of phrase! But to continue my flow ....) Getting the boat to where it is now - wait for it - the Beverley Road Swimming Baths, has taxed the skill and ingenuity, not to mention the generosity, of many people outside of the archaeological world, but no doubt becoming absorbed in it by now. The engineering expertise of firms like Sangwins and OMEC Engineering took over where the archaeologists left off; without them and without the good will of Gordon Morris, the farmer on whose land the discovery was made and who has generously donated the logboat to Hull Museums, there would have been little to celebrate and considerably less for Mansfield Brewery to sponsor.

Martin Millett described the discovery of the boat and the operation to remove it from the ground, most of this known already to ERAS NEWS readers, and so not summarised again here. But Sean McGrail of the National Maritime Museum, who has been researching the boat under a make-shift shelter at Greenwich, had much to say about it that has not been heard before ...

All the loose bits of the boat were catalogued, and the list to starboard, in which attitude it lay when found and as lifted, was corrected successfully. An *oculus*, or eye, was carved on the bow; originally there would have been one on either side. The broken bow was reconstructed from the smaller pieces that were recovered, using lighter and more manageable casts to reestablish the correct slope to the bow.

The logboat is important for three main reasons:

1. All plank boats of the pre-Christian era except one have come from a 20 mile radius of Hull. This is yet another.

2. The boat was excavated under controlled conditions, so can be placed accurately in its context.

3. The size; 41ft long, 4ft 6ins deep, and 4ft 6ins wide at the stern, indicating a natural oak that stood 33ft from the ground to

its first branch, about 7ft in diameter and 21ft circumference at the base of the trunk.

The techniques of construction have been examined. The oak probably had heart rot as a tree, making the hollowing process easier. The ends were made watertight by the use of a transom at the stern and a composite bow. There is only one other parallel for this, but of later date c.200AD and from Belgium. The bow was held together with rebate joints and trenails. In the reconstruction research, plywood copies of the transoms were made to help locate their positions. One lay at c1.5m from the stern. Repairs in antiquity were identified; rotten wood cut out and replaced, and replacement side pieces.

A one tenth scale model of the boat is to be made; no tree of the appropriate size exists to be able to build a full-scale replica! Full publication of the boat will appear in about 18 months time.

David Crowther completed the trio of speakers, chronicling the logboats latest movements by land, sea and air (yes, honestly) to its penultimate resting place at the Beverley Road Baths, reminding us that it was still early days in this final stage of the work and that the boat will need its friends for the next ten years to ensure its safe and successful conservation.

It was to the Baths then that the audience was invited, and without a second asking a convoy of cars sped off to view the logboat as the last celebratory act of the evening. Some of us went for a pint of Mansfield's instead!

LECTURE SUMMARIES

20th November: CALLIS WOLD AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN THE PREHISTORY OF EAST YORKSHIRE. Dr David Coombs

In the mesolithic period burials are rare although some are known from Denmark dating to c6000BC, and there are burials from Fengate, Peterborough, belonging to the very end of the period, c4000-3500BC. From then the long barrow of the neolithic period enters the record. These are essentially funerary monuments with

few articulated burials but containing jumbled groups of human remains. The common form of disposal of the dead in the earliest period of prehistory, therefore, may have been by exposure. This is still practised in the world today, for example in Tibet where the bodies are actually dismembered. In the study of early burial rites few places in England can compare with the Yorkshire Wolds, an area which contains all types of prehistoric monuments. Callis Wold, on the east edge of the Wolds near Garrowby Hill, contains a group of barrows mainly of the Early Bronze Age. One large mound is M.275 excavated by John Mortimer in the 19th century and the subject of David Coombs's own reexcavation.

Mortimer's work: Mortimer dug a trench 40ft x 28ft in the centre of the mound. A cremation urn was found near the top and skeleton fragments lower down. The primary burial consisted of a deep pit with a human cremation. Red Deer bone was also identified. Next to it was a platform of Lias blocks measuring 12ft x 3ft overall, and on it were ten crouched inhumations. Three flint arrowheads of neolithic type were found in association, and a mass of human bone lay beneath the ten articulated bodies. An eleventh skeleton was found next to the primary pit, apparently so placed because there was no room to accommodate it on the platform.

The reexcavation: The reexcavation was deemed necessary because of a threat to the mound from the extension of farm barns. The plan began with an analysis of the finds of pottery and arrowheads which were held at Hull Museums. Mortimer had retained the human bones and these have never been available for study. The mound stood to 12ft and was 60ft in diameter. In Mortimer's day a ditch surrounding the mound was recorded at 120ft in diameter. The top of the mound had become overgrown by a copse which had to be cleared but the site of Mortimer's trench was identifiable. On reopening the shaft it was found that the stone platform had been taken up but that pieces of it survived in the backfill. The cremation pit was located and so too was another unrecorded D-shaped pit at the opposite end of the platform, together with a number of other features not reported on by

Mortimer. These were a crescentic slot at one end (the back) and two straight slots in a broken alignment at the other (the front), forming the two ends of a structure enclosing the stone platform which was also flanked by the two pits.

A skull and the bones of a child were found in the "new" pit, together with one of the platform slabs, showing that these had all slipped from the platform area and into the open pit. Post positions were recognisable in the slots from chalk rubble packing. Towthorpe ware pottery was recovered from this front post trench, and from nowhere else. It is a type of pottery commonly found in round mounds. Charcoal in the trench gave radio-carbon determinations of 2985bc +/-60, and 2850bc +/-70. The crescentic trench was clean. In all, the excavation produced about eight pottery vessels, all round-bottomed with occasionally a decoration of striations on the inside rim. The pots may have been votive and placed at the front of the tomb.

The mound developed in four distinguishable stages. In stage 1 a mound made up of natural soil was raised to a height of c3ft to cover the platform and structure. Pollen analysis shows that the turf had been removed. In about 2000BC, in stage 2 there was activity in one part of the mound only where c200 pieces of beaker pottery were recovered with flint artefacts and charcoal. In stage 3, c1800-1700BC, the mound was enlarged with turf blocks and a ditch was dug around it, the upcast chalk forming a ring around the inside. Stage 4 was the digging of the outer ditch and the enlargement of the mound with more soil and turf.

The monument in its context: Throughout the country there are pockets within which neolithic round mounds occur, and the Yorkshire Wolds area constitutes the most important. Willy Howe is an example of the same type of monument and there have been two unsuccessful attempts to excavate it. Duggleby Howe once stood 30ft high when Mortimer investigated it, and recently through aerial photography it has become known that it is a mound centrally placed within a segmental encircling ditch of huge diameter. Round mounds produce important grave goods; a particular type of arrowhead possibly specially made for inclusion

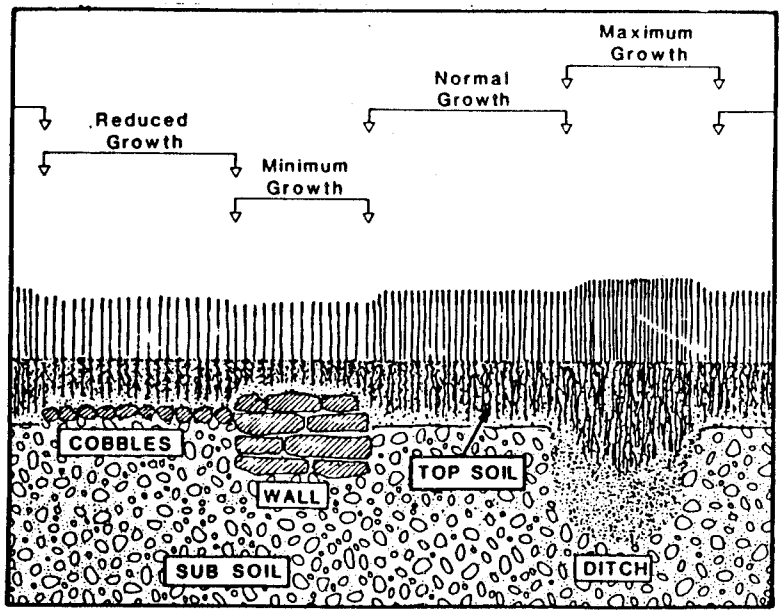
with the burials is a characteristic find. The platforms are a feature too. Aldro and Towthorpe have also produced tight groups of inhumations as at Callis Wold. Burial areas with post settings at either end are known at Aldwincle and Wayland's Smithy (Berks), Street House (Cleveland) [see ERAS NEWS 16, pp 10-11, ed], New Winkley Farm, and Lockhill Cairn (Kirkudbrightshire). They occur too in Scandinavia and NW Germany. Reconstruction proposals for the structure are either a kind of timber tent or as an embanked log-sided structure planked over, with split trunks, accounting for the D-shaped holes, blocking the two ends.

In their earliest phase, round mounds cover several burials but later ones enclose single rich graves. The quality of the grave goods is high; axes, mace heads of antler, boars' tusks, and quality flint arrowheads, sometimes with their tips deliberately broken. The Towthorpe ware pottery is now coming from settlement sites and providing an important link between the people and their funerary monuments. At New Grange (Co Meath) there is extensive occupation material in the immediate area of the monument, and occupational debris is a feature of all of these mortuary structures. In spite of the amount of archaeological attention already bestowed on burial mounds of the prehistoric period in the 19th century, therefore, it is clear that a very great deal of information is still to be gathered from these sites.

11th December: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY: ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF NORTH YORKSHIRE. Mike Griffiths

A little known fact is that the first aerial photographs (APs) were taken from a balloon in 1858. In 1913 the Italians used APs in Libya for geological surveying purposes. In 1920 the application of APs to archaeology was pointed out for the first time. Three years later O.G.S. Crawford undertook aerial photographic work in North Yorkshire. Ian Richmond's excavations at Cawthorne Camps were covered by Aerofilms Ltd, the photographs of which incidentally show more trenches than Richmond actually reported on. By 1960 J.K. StJoseph had developed systematic recording procedures for his aerial photographic sorties for the

National Monuments Record and Cambridge University. Flying continued with many archaeologists taking part, and in 1976, the year of the drought when conditions were at the optimum for revealing buried features, there was a tremendous leap forward in the number of sites recorded from the air.



How cropmarks develop

Local Government reorganisation in 1974 produced the present shape of North Yorkshire - an area of 25000 square miles with a great diversity of land types, much of it agricultural and in permanent pasture, a contrast to the intensive arable of the Yorkshire Wolds. The county's varied geology, soils and climate affect land use today, and they have always been factors of significance in the past too. A great deal of archaeological information which demonstrates this, however, remains invisible except under the right conditions viewed from the air. There are examples of pasture containing good remains juxtaposed with arable

land where the damage from ploughing is starkly highlighted. APs, therefore, can and do fulfil a valuable monitoring function in indicating the extent to which undisturbed archaeology is under threat from changing farming practices and land use today. The Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors are areas containing upstanding features in good condition, which allow this type of comparison with less well-preserved sites. Because of the number of APs for North Yorkshire, which were estimated at about 20,000, of which 75% were taken since 1976, there was an obvious need in the context of the developing Sites and Monuments Record for the county to devote resources to the collation of the information contained within this unsorted archive. Without some order and evaluation, the record would remain wholly inaccessible. The individuals who had flown may often have had the details of their own photographs but these were not readily understandable to others who could benefit from them. In the majority of cases the photographs were actually undocumented. In the field of aerial photography, therefore, it became a matter of policy for the North Yorkshire Archaeological Unit to place the emphasis on cataloguing what existed rather than to undertake more flying. The scheme of work was financially supported by DoE, and a programme of work began on the photographs. The operation was not fashionable or glamorous in archaeological terms but it was one of great and lasting value. A catalogue was compiled on computer from the assembled photographs and their detail was plotted onto maps. In so doing, the true figure for the total number of photographs requiring processing emerged to be 35,000!

The result of this effort is that a rapid call-up of data is now possible and the facility now exists to identify those areas requiring further detail for the plotting of sites. Hitherto apparently blank areas of archaeology are now being filled in from the record and this suggests that the concentration of sites that are known in the Wolds, for example, may not be exceptional after all but merely a well-researched norm. The development of the record into this form also allows for cooperation between flyers helping to avoid duplication (and maybe even mid-air collision!!)

and ensuring as comprehensive a cover as possible, as economically as possible.

The process of cataloguing the record itself led to a need to standardise terminology for internal consistency and to aid data retrieval. The commonest feature description found already in use was the term enclosure, which has little meaning in the context of the great variety of types actually in evidence. Planform terms were therfore introduced with a heirarchical set of descriptions in an attempt to define the archaeological evidence revealed by the photographs.

Earthworks. Light snow cover **Richmondshire. NYCC**

Once the record was created and provision made for its maintenance, the obvious question to ask is to what use is the information put. APs provide a means to appreciate landscapes and land uses over millennia of occupation and exploitation by man, and this makes it possible to evolve archaeological strategies for their study. However, it has to be recognised that the best APs

do not necessarily point to the best archaeology. This is because good aerial views often only appear when a site is being destroyed by agriculture and is consequently in a poor state of preservation. An unfortunate trend has been the pursuit by archaeologists of information on the ground based upon the attractions offered by particularly good APs. This has been rather in the same manner that some metal detector users employ their equipment to home in on objects for their own sake. Archaeologists must avoid the temptation to go for the obvious and must beware of fixing their attentions upon the highlights of a region as revealed by APs, much as once was the case with the more prominent monuments in the British landscape like the Iron Age hillforts. APs, in short, must be used with discretion and in the knowledge of what they are actually indicating.

A final comment: Far too little money is going into the organisation of the material at our disposal in British archaeology today. As a measure of the approach that was needed to do justice to the wealth of aerial photographic evidence for North Yorkshire, it is estimated that for every hour spent in the air taking the pictures, one full day is needed spent on the ground to process that information to make it usable.

15th January: ICE AGE ART IN THE PYRENEES. Dr Paul Bahn

Dr Bahn treated his audience to one of the most visually stimulating presentations of archaeology that ERAS members have had the privilege to enjoy. As a literal eye-opener into the world of Ice Age art in its various forms, the lecture is untranslatable in the conventional summary form. So hard luck if you missed it! However, a few points may be made.

There are three areas of Europe where evidence of Ice Age cave art is to be found in quantity; the north coast of Spain, the Dordogne, and the Pyrenees. It may be divided into two categories; portable art in the form of carvings and objects in the round, and wall art in the form of painting or tooling on surfaces of rock.

Portable art

The earliest recorded discovery of an item of portable art was made in 1834. It was an engraved bone, but was not identified to its correct period at the time. Since then there have been many thousands of pieces found fashioned in both bone and stone.

The zenith of palaeolithic art output lies in the period 15,000-10,000BC.

One cave recently examined has produced hundreds of plaquettes - slabs of sandstone bearing primitive scratched motifs of animal and human forms. Many require piecing together like jigsaws, and they indicate the possibility that these items may have been overlooked in the past.

By contrast, realistic depictions of animals carved on bone with flint implements are extremely skilfully executed.

A development from this is deep engraving on antler. Remarkable examples of this relief technique show animal scenes carved around the curving face of the antler maintaining perfect proportion. The occurrence of particularly beautifully ornamented spear-throwers of near-identical form and decoration lead to suggestions of organised production, and not simply casual art.

Wall art

Wall paintings are well known but new examples are regularly being discovered and painstakingly recorded. Often they are near-invisible and only become recognisable when the right angle of illumination reveals them.

Their interpretation is a matter for speculation and each age brings its own preconceptions, conditioned thinking and attitudes to their study. There can be no certainty to our understanding of the meaning of what is shown.

In art terms, regional differences of style are recognisable.

Hand art, the stencilling of the human hand, gives indications of apparent mutilations.

There is evidence of cave art occurring on floor surfaces, which obviously demands great care when a new chamber is discovered to avoid destruction by the investigators themselves, something that has probably happened unwittingly in the past.

There are examples of perfectly preserved, bare footprints in soft mud - not art, of course, but a measure of the conditions within the cave when it was in use and an indication of the kind of preservation that can be expected in some instances.

Wall art is no longer held to be confined to caves. A new discovery of a carved rock on a mountain side in the Pyrenees points the way to the possible survival of other examples of outdoor art.

19th February: NEW LIGHT ON SAXON YORK. Richard Kemp

The lack of occupational activity in the archaeological record for pre-Viking York is in marked contrast to the richness of the evidence from Coppergate. But York, or *Eoforwic*, is known from historical sources to have been an important Anglo-Saxon centre. Edwin, king of Northumbria, was converted and baptised in AD627 at York and built a new church there; in AD767 the scholar Alcuin became master of a famous school of learning at York; and it was a place peopled by men from many lands. The Coppergate helmet found in a box points to aristocratic connections and there is other evidence too in the structural record that suggests York was a royal centre. One is the maintenance of the cross-hall of the Roman *principia* until the 9th century AD. The other is the so-called Anglian tower in the defensive circuit. Whilst this may actually be late Roman in date and not Anglian at all, there is evidence that the defences were being maintained during the Anglian period. Both form of works are suggestive of royal influence and control. However, excavations at Bedern and Blake Street, which each produced evidence of late Roman occupation, failed to show anything of the Anglo-Saxon period. At Coppergate, well known for its Viking finds, the Saxon levels were represented by a sterile black earth. The presence of the bones of shrew which were recovered from this indicates the undisturbed environment which this retiring creature favours.

The Redfearn National Glass Factory site lies at the confluence of the Foss and the Ouse and is well beyond the area of Roman York. The site coincides with a former Gilbertine Priory,

and when the company vacated the five acre site and it became available for redevelopment, the York Archaeological Trust negotiated to excavate. Within the time scale available a series of trenches were planned and the Priory Church was located. But the site held out more promise of earlier occupation. It was known that the Gilbertines took over an older religious site before 1202; a church on the site dedicated to St Andrew is recorded in Domesday; and an Anglo-Saxon gold ring was found here in the 1920s, reputedly coming from the finger of a skeleton. These several aspects pointed to the possiblity of Saxon period archaeology below the Priory levels.

The excavations were expanded and the refectory floor of the Gilbertine House was examined. In spite of an initial failure to locate Anglo-Saxon deposits, an enamelled bronze strap end, a facetted silver ring, and a spoon found in one of the trenches were all consistent with medieval disturbances of Anglian burials. The first Saxon feature to appear was a cess pit 2m wide containing hand-made pottery, glass beads, knives, slag, and loom weights. A ditch and a large number of stake holes were also encountered cutting into the natural subsoil at the base of the stratification which was 2m deep overall. The stakes cannot be seen to form any stuctural pattern but seem random. Other pits suggested industrial processes from the finds recovered - an ingot mould for metal working, and a dog coprolite possibly indicative of tanning activity. A major building could be indicated by a c70cm deep palisade slot with post holes set in it. A pebble surface with a ditch filled with animal bone marking one edge may be evidence of a roadway. In summary, wherever the natural brickearth subsoil was exposed in the area there were found to be Anglo-Saxon period features cutting into it.

Earlier excavations at the site now occupied by the Barbican swimming baths produced 8th century AD material and is the only other area of York to produce evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity. The inference must be that the Anglo-Saxon settlement of York occupies a separate area from both the earlier Roman and later Viking and medieval centres. In this latter respect, York may be

compared with Southampton. Taken together all the evidence gathered so far might be seen to indicate a royal and/or ecclesiastical centre established in part of the old Roman area, whilst the rank and file of *Eoforwic* resided outside at the junction of the rivers occupying a new, green site.

Excavations are proceeding with a view to expanding the picture further at the Redfearn site. The cuurent state of work is that the Trust is operating under the protection of a canopy cover, paid for by the developers, Costain Homes, and an estimated 1000 medieval period burials relating to the Priory are being tackled. A thorough programme of environmental sampling of the soils is in process and constitutes an essential part of the site analysis.

CORRESPONDENCE COLUMN

12 Main Street
Elloughton

Sir,

ERAS NEWS 21 contained the following comment by David Crowther in connection to artefacts from the Red Cliff:

> "... falling into the sea; or, and this is deeply worrying, into the hands of 'treasure hunters' who search that part of the beach with their metal detectors ..."

Several points spring to mind. Firstly, may I ask Mr Crowther whether he would be so certain of the "enormous potential" of this site were it not for the large number of artefacts that I and one or two other metal detector users have over the past five or six years brought to the attention of Hull Museum. Nothing to compare was discovered during the dig in the thirties. Would Mr Crowther have preferred that these remarkable objects had washed into the sea as once was the case, and as most continue to do, despite the efforts of metal detector users.

Let me place the metal detecting activity there into a litle perspective. To begin with, as with the decline in the popularity of metal detecting generally, few now visit the foreshore. Most who did found nothing, and even the lucky ones soon appreciated the stamina that is required to overcome the poor conditions and tedium to win back these objects from the brink. I have estimated that a significant find is made each half dozen trips to the foreshore, ie each fifteen to twenty hours of searching, and so Mr Crowther's notion of artefacts falling into the hand really is nonsense. All of my foreshore finds have been recorded at the Hull Museum, from Celtic, through Roman and Saxon, to medieval.

Despite Mr Crowther's offensive disdain for metal detecting (and he makes no distinction between treasure hunting and metal detecting), I will continue to report finds from the foreshore as

I for one regret the incredible price that the archaeological world has paid in terms of lost information through its refusal to work with, and educate, metal detector users. But what of the material reported? Is full use made of this? As regards details of Celtic coin finds from the foreshore, for instance, these are not always passed on to those in Oxford who undertake the very necessary collation of all Celtic coins found in the country.

Archaeologists slam treasure hunters for distorting the archaeological record by taking objects out of context. The Ferriby foreshore finds, as Mr Crowther accepts, have already fallen from context and if distortion is involved here at all it is in one man's rather narrow view of the worth of metal detecting. And this *I* find "deeply worrying".

Yours faithfully
David Haldenby

EXCURSION

A closely guarded secret this at the moment, or put another way not quite prepared! A separate notice may accompany this issue giving all the details of a summer outing. If not, do not despair. An announcement will be made at the AGM and a special mailing will be arranged to notify all members. Sorry to be so mysterious ...

Letters and contributions for inclusion in the newsletter should be addressed to :
The Editor, ERAS News, 37 West End, Swanland, HU14 3PE