

Prologue The current issue of ERAS News is something of a belated and rushed affair for which apologies are duly extended. The difficulty arises paradoxically from a surfeit of archaeology which has left precious little time for the translation of action into words - a novel somersault of the more general malaise of the world at large! Sorry therefore for the lateness of the mailing which has kept you longer from your splendid new membership cards than you should have been.

Finalists in the E.Riding Come Digging Heats

Team A: The Beverley Reunion Action Men setting the pace. The magnificent six (well, times are hard) have piloted an excavation project on the Dominican Friary site identifying two phases of church building and demonstrating the extent of the Friary precinct, as well as working in the massive Eastgate Development area proving the potential of pre and post Conquest occupation. Versatility with style, well worth watching.

Team B: The all weather, inflatable (sorry, that should be indefatigable), go-anywhere task force of our very own ERAS Field Group has been sampling the concrete-clays of Arnold. In mid-search for an elusive medieval occupation on the moated platform this adaptable, not to say elastic, band have temporarily time-warped to Brantingham Cockle Pits where renewed quarrying has laid bare much of the outlying network of enclosures and buildings of the Romano-British villa complex. Lovely movers and a colourful mosaic of sunny personalities.

Team C: In with an outside chance the Durham Department of Digging's Formation Trowelling

Troupe proving that you can have your kiln and heat it in the scorching sands of time at Bursea. Will the V.C. take the lid off Roman pottery? Quietly confident and the press pundits' choice.

The winners will be derided by the volume of your snores at the ERAS Reports Meeting on September 21st. But seriously though .....

1983/84 Lecture programme The discerning lecture listener will recognise the strength of authority in our speakers for this years programme who have been secured by Tim Schadla-Hall. A few notes follow by way of introduction:

- Professor Philip Rahtz is Professor of Archaeology at the new department at York University. His work in early medieval archaeology is well known, particularly his work at Cheddar; he continues to lead training excavations at Wharram Percy every year; his range of public work is extremely wide and he is recently working on burial practice and interpretation and has been making a number of contributions to "new archaeology".
- Professor John Coles is Professor of Archaeology at the University of Cambridge and one of Britain's leading prehistorians; for over a decade he has concentrated on reconstructing prehistoric landscape in the Somerset Levels, an area unparalleled in Britain for its rich organic finds; his work on the Level has provided a new understanding of how prehistoric man exploited the landscape and built his communications; few people will not have heard of the famous wooden trackways and their associated settlements which have been uncovered by this major research project.
- Dominic Powlesland has been responsible for a number of years for the West Heslerton Parish Survey Project in which he has investigated changes in the landscape of this Vale to Wold area and has made a number of remarkable discoveries of continuous occupation on the edge of the Vale of Pickering from the mesolithic to the

early medieval period.

- Dr. Martin Jones is a recently appointed lecturer in the Department of Archaeology at Durham University and has worked widely in the field of analysis of seeds and crops, especially in later prehistory; Dr. Jones is the man who excavated (in a laboratory) one of the largest caches of prehistoric grain ever recovered from Danebury in Hampshire; his work has opened up a new understanding of how prehistoric man in Britain lived and farmed!
- Peter Brears who will be our guest speaker at the Annual Dinner in February is currently Director of Leeds City Museums and one of the foremost authorities in Britain today on post-medieval society and also post-medieval pottery and has made a number of major contributions in this field which until recently had been one of the most neglected in the country; he was formerly Curator of the Castle Museum, York.
- John Hurst is the Principal Inspector for Ancient Monuments at the Department of the Environment and has been associated with one of the most significant archaeological projects to come out of Britain in the twentieth century in the excavations and interpretations of the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy (all the finds will be coming to Hull Museums); our understanding of medieval society on the Yorkshire Wolds has been revolutionised by this project which has been running for three decades now; he will provide us with a major over-view of the work which has gone on on this site which tells us so much of the history of early Yorkshire.
- Harvey Sheldon is well known for his long-term investigations especially in Southwark (where he is currently involved in the search for the original Globe Theatre), on Roman London, and especially on the original crossing points of the River Thames; he is currently one of the senior officers of the archaeological unit attached to the London Museum.

Shaken but not stirred The so-called reorganisation of the Humberside Archaeological Unit is an episode that beggars description, a grubby tale of politics with a twist in the tail. For colleagues and the public alike it is now a question of hunt the archaeologist or guess the job as Unit staff now find themselves divided between the County Council's Leisure Services Department (County Heritage Unit) and the County Architects Department (Field Archaeology Unit). A happy ending of sorts, although one is left with the slightly uneasy feeling that the story is still in its first draft, is that none of the old Unit staff has actually ended up out of work. But it was a near run thing. There are however some bizarre job titles, and one of the number has made it over the wall -- Susan Jackson is now a member of the Cleveland Archaeology Unit and left Humberside in June. So farewell to the Suzie Small Finds Spot. As for Humberside and its archaeology it remains to be seen whether the dual key control will work.

A message from the other side ... or as it will come to be known and loved South Bank Letter. I leave it to our Scunthorpe Museum correspondent, Kevin Leahey (Keeper of Archaeology and the thinking man's Les Dawson) to explain!

When I spoke to the Editor of your august organ the other week he suggested that I might write a sort of "letter from the South Bank" to give members of the E.R.A.S. some idea of what is going on archaeologically across the Humber. This seemed like a good idea as the East Riding and North Lincolnshire are now integrated together and we should perhaps be taking more interest in each other's archaeology, whatever one's feelings about "Humberside".

I shall begin this brave new venture by giving a brief resumé of some of the work that has been

going on in South Humberside during the last few months, and if this letter finds acceptance I can go into more detail in future letters and try to keep you up to date with what is going on in the "Deep South".

Excavations started this year in February when Scunthorpe Museum lent support to an excavation carried out at West Halton by Jane Grenville. This site was discovered following the levelling of some earthworks to make a playing field when large quantities of Anglo-Saxon pottery were found. The range of pot types pointed to a long occupation during the Saxon period which led us to hope for a stratified sequence. Jane Grenville's documentary research had already suggested that West Halton was the centre of the original "mother parish" from which all the other parishes in the area were carved and that it had links with the early Saxon saint, Etheldreda.

This all looked quite promising and so with the aid of a grant from Riley's Crisps, who sponsored the project, we went ahead and dug for a month on part of the site that had not been levelled. Although it is wrong to complain, it could be said that we found rather too much! On top of the Anglo-Saxon levels were the remains of a substantial medieval building which although it was not what we were after had to be carefully dug. We did not uncover enough of it to find out what it was, but it could have been a manor house. In the final week we got down to the Anglo-Saxon layers but had insufficient time to excavate them. However, what we did find was most encouraging. The future of this excavation depends on whether or not more money can be found. Send your contributions, however large, to .....

As well as giving us money Riley's also gave us a large box of their EXCELLENT crisps (\* Advert \*). While munching through my fourth packet one morning, the idea came to me that we could promote the excavation by publishing our report in instalments on the backs of crisp packets. Anyone who thinks that this idea is ridiculous has never

seen or tried to use the microfiche that the archaeological powers are trying to promote as the way to publish excavations.

Work has just started on the 25th year of excavations at Winterton Roman villa. The main buildings were dug by Ian Stead and were published by him in 1976. Since 1968 Roger Goodburn has been digging the villa field system and outlying farm buildings. This is most important; we know a fair amount about villa buildings, but very little about how a villa functioned as a farm. The information from Winterton can be used to interpret (or misinterpret) villa economies elsewhere in the country.

The mosaics at Winterton were the cause of William Fowler embarking on his famous series of engravings. William Fowler (1761-1832) was a builder and architect in Winterton. In 1798 he published an engraving of some of the Winterton mosaics which he based on a print published by Mitley and Vertue in 1752. Before he published his drawings Fowler uncovered the mosaics to check the colouring and found that Mitley's work was incorrect in some details. Correcting these errors increased Fowler's confidence and led him to publish other mosaics, some of which no longer survive or have been badly damaged since his time. Ian Stead found that the centre of one of the Winterton mosaics had been hacked out and replaced by an 18th century chamber-pot! We are afforded some consolation by the fact that this particular thunder-jar is an important piece of pottery in its own right and which we have on display at the museum.

All this is leading up to telling you that myself and Rosalind Watson of Hull Museum have arranged a joint exhibition of the work of William Fowler and his son, Joseph. This includes many of his coloured prints of mosaics, stained glass and tiles. It opens at the Town Docks Museum in Hull on 21st September and is on until 30th October. Try to see it; it should be quite good!

Lecture summaries Two lectures, the last of last year's programme, have slipped the net so far but are now landed to complete the series. The Editor would be pleased to have members' comments on this aspect of the newsletter (pleased? the shock might prove fatal! Is there anybody out there?). Are the lecture summaries useful, too detailed, unintelligible and space-consuming, the cause of poor attendance at meetings, likely to cause delinquency in young adult males, etc., etc., and so forth. Demand your rights as card-carrying members of the Society!

16th March - Recent work in the Bronze Age of  
.....  
East Yorkshire. Terry Manby  
.....

The North Wolds was the area selected for discussion. A modern landscape of large arable fields has replaced a traditional landscape of pasture in small fields and nearly all of the monuments of the Bronze Age have been levelled. Regular flying by Derrick Riley, Tony Pacitto and Jim Pickering has produced aerial photographic evidence of prehistoric features. The ring ditches of Early Bronze Age round barrows are regularly encountered, but not all barrows were ditched when the mound was raised and therefore not all will show. On the North Yorkshire Moors upstanding barrows, which were erected in a forest landscape, survive to a great height. Ring cairns are also in evidence here, such as at Great Ayton Moor, having cremations in the centre. This type of monument has disappeared completely from the Wolds, the loss of an entire chapter of E.B.A. archaeology in this area.

The grouping of barrows or ring ditches in great numbers where only one or two are actually recognisable on the ground has been established by aerial photographs (A.P.s). It seems that even Mortimer and Greenwell were digging the major barrows whose smaller neighbours had already gone as a result of medieval farming methods.

Discrimination in A.P. assessment is required since not all ditch circles can be barrows. Diameters of 100ft. which are recorded are too big to be so identified. Barrows and ring ditches are not restricted to Wold locations; they have now been recognised occupying valley floor sites, such as along the Gypsey Race in the Great Wold Valley.

Mr. Manby examined the socio-economic aspects of the E.B.A. using the evidence of excavated material. Food vessels can be divided into types and finer quality wares with elaboration in decoration are discernible. An analysis of the clays used in the manufacture of these vessels is proposed to study this aspect further.

Ring ditch cemeteries characteristic of the Middle Bronze Age are beginning to be identified in new areas by flying. This period has crude urns and simple cremation burials in contrast to the earlier forms and style. The most famous site is at Catfoss where burials with and without urns were enclosed by a ring ditch with an entrance to the east. Metalwork of the period is found only in the lowlands of Holderness but this may be misleading since bronzes (palstaves, wing-flanged axes, spear heads, rapiers, short blades and chisels) which were deposited in the intensively farmed uplands are more likely to have been found in later years and recycled, leaving no evidence surviving to the present day.

The multi-period site at Paddock Hill, Thwing, Mr. Manby's own excavation, was described. A class II henge monument with opposing entrances of late neolithic date is the nucleus of the site. The recut ditches have Bronze Age pottery. A ring building in the centre possibly belongs to the Hotham Carr phase, 1200-1000BC. Occupation ceased after this period, but Anglo-Saxon houses were sited within the enclosure and a medieval post mill was also erected within the monument. The south-east gateway has been examined recently and in spite of later intrusions evidence of the construction is well defined. A double or triple

post arrangement at the back of the chalk rubble rampart suggests a timber tie-back system to support the front revetment built around uprights and sleeper beams and punctuated by a monumental gateway with massive timber posts and sills. Important evidence of bronze working has been recognised in the latest season's work. Burnt sandstone, basalt and quartzite by the cwt., together with charcoal and antler rakes formed a mound with more of the same material beneath the chalk rubble rampart. Crucibles and bronze fragments were in association. A furnace and casting pit filled with soft sandy clay to a depth of c.40cm. containing charcoal and specks of bronze is the focus of the installation. Timber slots forming edges to the pit survived as charcoal tracks. Analysis reveals 0.16% copper in the soil. The bronze working probably belongs to the Hotham Carr phase - an Urnfield Culture bronze pin was associated with the feature. Other finds from the site include loom weights, bone pins, some copying Urnfield types, turned lignite or jet bracelets, and in all seven Urnfield pins, the largest assemblage in Britain. It remains uncertain whether these are continental imports or indigenous products.

Thwing is comparable to Grimthorpe but is much larger, and other large rings are being sought from the air. A double ring ditch at Barmston could be a similar site to Thwing, and another has been found at Kilham indicating the emergence of hitherto unknown Middle Bronze Age settlement sites. An enigma in the current assemblage is a complex of rings, grooves and hollows at Butterwick on the bottom of the Great Wold Valley, but it could be like Itford Hill, Sussex, excavated in 1953, which comprised small enclosures containing hut circles. Earthworks on the Wolds are very difficult to date. Some are later than the Early Bronze Age since barrows are incorporated into them; others can be seen to be earlier than the Anglo-Saxon period as burials of this date are cut into them. Glaisdale Moor has features of

this type intact.

The Late Bronze Age is characterised by extensive development of metalwork exemplified by hoards such as that from Castle Hill, Scarborough. Gold bracelets from Cottingham are indicators of affluence. Settlements are represented by Staple Howe and Devil's Hill overlooking the Vale of Pickering where the two environments of upland and lowland could be exploited. Ewart Park type bronzework was found at Staple Howe. Burials of the Late Bronze Age include a reversion to inhumation practice and for the first time we can catch a glimpse of Bronze Age man in the Roos Carr images.

20th April - Archaeological forgeries. Kevin Leahy  
.....

Kevin Leahy, guest speaker at the Society's A.G.M., entertained members with a kaleidoscope of fakes and forgeries which have beset the archaeological and museum professions over the years.

Forgeries are nothing particularly new. The Roman writer Pliny records how good forgeries were greatly admired and could fetch high prices although this approbation was not extended to the perpetrators who suffered stiff penalties. Roman greyware pottery moulds are known which were used for casting fake silver coins.

A canard which continues to deceive is the name Abontrus for the Roman settlement at Winteringham. The antiquarian, William Stukely, gave it credibility having himself been taken in by a man called Bertram who convinced him that a medieval manuscript copy of an original in the Vatican proved the Latin appellation. A pure act of deception, even today the spurious name is misapplied.

A celebrated forger working in our own area was Edward Simpson, alias Flint Jack. He was born near Whitby in 1815. He worked for a geologist from which source his inspiration must have sprung. He had the ability and skill to

produce remarkable flint objects. He is also known to have manufactured other artefact fakes including a pottery vessel from a 'tumulu' (this was Flint Jack's singular of his plural tumulus!) In 1867 he served twelve months in Bedford Gaol for petty theft; the time and place of his death is not known.

In a similar vein are the "Billy and Charlies", lead alloy moulded objects made by William Smith and Charles Eaton, dockworkers, who found that medieval ampullae which they had found were marketable but recognised that it was easier to satisfy the market by making them than retrieving the genuine article! Today these things are collectors' pieces in their own right having been exposed as fakes as long ago as 1858.

The exploitation of the collectors' market by forgers is a common starting point for archaeological fakes, but there are also examples of deception perpetrated by workmen or individuals against the "experts", such as Wolff whose digging labourers planted fake cremations. In the same vein, a gypsum statue of giant proportion made in his own image and buried was a fraud of Charles Hull to fool scientists. Charles Dawson, the man who "found" the Piltdown skull, was no stranger to wrong 'uns. He also found a cast iron statuette purporting to be Roman at Beauport Park, Hastings, in 1877 and brick tiles with a Roman stamp at Pevensey which proved to be datable to 1900AD by thermoluminescence.

There are also genuine mistakes such as natural flint mistaken for eoliths and even the corollary of all this -- the apparent fake like the Fuller brooch passed on by the Ashmolean to the British Museum which was subsequently verified as authentic.

East Riding Archaeologist 7 The society's journal, long awaited, is now in the final stages of preparation at the printers being steered through the labyrinth by Dr. Ben Whitwell. The volume which runs to a hundred pages and is a compendium of articles and archaeo-

logical reports is expected to be ready for the first meeting of the Society's 1983/4 programme which begins on 21st September and will be available for distribution -- free of course -- to fully paid-up members on that occasion. Don't miss the opportunity to collect yours -- a good way to start the Society year.

\* \* \* \* \*

---

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