

The Society and treasure hunting On November 10th the Committee met to discuss treasure hunting. More particularly, since there has been no shortage of exchanged views on the subject over the past months, it met to consider the need to clarify the Society's position and to formulate a corporate policy in regard to treasure hunting for the benefit of everyone, both inside and outside the membership.

The subject is one of serious concern to archaeology. The orthodoxy of archaeological research does not and cannot accept the exploitation of the material evidence of man's past for personal gain, and the Committee feels that members would have no hesitation in supporting this view. Regrettably treasure hunters appear to show little concern for archaeological orthodoxy, and the rise of the metal detector has been directly proportional to the lure of the treasure. If the two were unconnected, archaeology might not be suffering so much as it is from the capricious whims or, worse, the organised assaults of the metal detector users in search of their treasure. So long as they remain inseparable, archaeology will continue to suffer and archaeologists, professional and amateur alike, are bound to take a dim view of the union. Our archaeological heritage is too fragile and vulnerable at the best of times to be able to bear without irreparable damage the attrition of treasure hunting. The tragedy is that we remain powerless to curb this irresponsibility, except perhaps in the longer term through reasoned argument and education which may bring about a change of attitude making the cavalier search for archaeological material as socially unacceptable.

able as collecting birds' eggs or uprooting wild flowers. In the meantime, if the markets continue to flourish and this so-called innocent hobby is indulged in without restraint, then we shall be presiding over yet another sad chapter in the ceaseless mutilation of our country's archaeology.

E.R.A.S. has no more ready solutions to the problem than anyone else, but the Committee feels that the Society needs to have an opinion about which members should not be in doubt. This may well not be an end to the matter, and the Committee remains responsible to the Society as a whole and ready to consider and act upon views and comments submitted by members. The Committee, however, as it is entitled to do under the terms of Section 8 of the Society's constitution, has agreed the following two-part resolution enlarging upon that constitution, to which all members subscribe:

1. "that this Committee believes that the concept and practices of treasure hunting for private gain, including the use of metal detecting equipment for this purpose, are contrary to the express aims and objects of the constitution of the East Riding Archaeological Society, Section 2c; and
2. that any member who, for personal profit and without adequate record of provenance made freely available, engages in the search for, removal of, collection or sale of objects of archaeological or historical interest from sites, previously known or unknown, shall be deemed to be acting against the interests of the Society and in contravention of its constitution."

Copies of the constitution and the text of the resolution are included with the newsletter.

Annual Dinner The Society is fortunate indeed this year to turn its annual dinner into an occasion above and beyond the enjoyable social gathering that it always proves to be. Because on January 26th at Hull University

Staff House we are delighted to have as our guest an archaeologist of remarkable and exceptional character who has offered more than anyone else in terms of personal dedication to the archaeology of our region, Mr.T.C.M.Brewster.

Best known for his Bronze Age and Iron Age excavations on the Yorkshire Wolds, most particularly at Staple Howe and Garton Slack, he is a man of far wider experience than this. For, whilst these two landmarks in East Yorkshire's archaeology may stand out, for well over 30 years now the contribution made by Tony Brewster to the archaeology of the East Riding has been consistently outstanding, at times spectacular - like the discovery of the Garton Slack chariot burial - and never anything but colourful. Setting standards of site recording regardless of the rigours of the season or the hour (alone in the county his digging season was year round, day and night if necessary!), Mr.Brewster is one of those rare figures in many ways larger than life. A man of mature years - I shrink from even the merest hint that he is in retirement! - he is now largely engaged in writing up reports of his field work which a relentless preoccupation with the rescue of threatened sites has hitherto precluded. In looking back, he has a store of tales and reminiscences to draw upon from his many experiences of life, and some of these I am sure we shall have a chance to share and enjoy.

And, in celebration, the dinner is designed to complement and indeed, we hope, compliment our guest. By special arrangement with the University's catering department we are presenting an Iron Age Feast, which not only has a ring of authenticity but which has never been bettered for variety and appetizing promise, even by the standards of recent years. All the details are enclosed as usual, and we look forward to seeing as many members as possible at Staff House not only to honour our guest but for a memorable evening's enjoyment for all.

(Additional note: The Britons, we understand

from Caesar, went into battle naked and painted with woad. Whether they did the same when attacking food placed before them is unclear! Dress, therefore, is left to the discretion of diners in the knowledge that ample chariot parking is available within a spear's throw of Staff House. But remember, January tends to be cold, so wear socks at the very least!)

Lecture summaries

20th October - Seven years next to a rubbish dump -
.....
the Mesolithic viewed from Seamer Carr. Tim
.....
Schadla-Hall
.....

The Mesolithic, 7500-5000BC, is a little understood period because of the paucity of the archaeological evidence. Archaeological remains of the Mesolithic are not only slight of themselves, but what little there is has been to a very large extent destroyed through ploughing. But on the north side of the Yorkshire Wolds on the edge of the Vale of Pickering there is a remarkable time capsule of Mesolithic archaeology preserved in peat.

This is the area which includes Star Carr, excavated by J.G.D.Clark, the richest site of its period in Europe, for artefacts dated to c.7500BC were found in great quantity - 17,000 flint fragments, 100 bone points and preserved organic material in abundance. Clark interpreted Star Carr as a habitation site on the fringe of Lake Pickering, and views of the Mesolithic life-style are conditioned by this excavation report which was published in 1954. Mr.Schadla-Hall sees Star Carr rather as a specialist bone working site that was occupied seasonally. The site must have been too wet at certain times of the year, most particularly so in the winter season when it was assumed a nomadic people were in occupation. Lake Pickering too should be viewed not so much as a lake as a series of waterholes each perhaps supporting separate activities.

Opportunities for extensive excavation have presented themselves over recent years within the land-take - some 130 acres - of badly drained peat at Seamer Carr allocated for waste disposal use. It is an area of complicated geology, comprising gravel and sand, boulder clay and peat in a 25/25/50 proportion. The first season of archaeological work provided evidence of late Neolithic occupation on the boulder clay, represented by narrow gullies with pottery of the period in association. A D.o.E. survey at Sweetbeck pig farm turned up a La Tène sword, which encouraged the digging of 500 metres of trench in search of Iron Age occupation - all to no avail. But a well-preserved Mesolithic occupation site was identified instead, and subsequent seasons have seen an enlargement of the picture.

The Mesolithic land surface survives intact beneath a mantle of up to 3 metres of compressed peat, sloping down to the water's edge. The date range of the peat from bottom to top is 7500BC to 4000BC. On the sand and clay beneath, and to a depth of c.25cm. within it, lies undisturbed a distribution pattern of flint; each fragment is recorded during excavation with exactitude. The evidence is indicative of flint knappers working on the edge of the lake, the waste lying where it fell. Careful work through the peat has demonstrated that so-called brushwood platforms, such as are recorded at Star Carr, are rather mats of tree roots and are entirely natural.

In order to establish the extent of Mesolithic activity on the lakeshore, a sampling technique has been adopted excavating 2 metre square holes at 15 metre intervals round the contour. A palaeobotanist is in attendance and other specialist support staff are on hand to provide a rapid assessment of the environmental conditions from area to area and to establish the pollen zones. Entomologist Maureen Girling, for example, has suggested through her analysis of the evidence

that one of Seamer Carr's islands was deforested between 7500 and 7000BC. Water sieving of excavated soils gives a 98% retrieval rate. Animal bone preservation is better than at Star Carr, although there is little of it, giving rise to the reinterpretation of Star Carr as a specialist camp, rather than a winter quarter of more general occupation. Seamer produced bone of bos primigenius in Mesolithic contexts, but 24 sets of horse teeth may rather be Upper Palaeolithic in date. Hazelnuts abound. Of great value is the microwear analysis of flint artefacts, made possible and reliable because of the wholly undisturbed lie of the flints on the Mesolithic land surface.

Mesolithic occupation is likely to be extensive. At Rabbit Island late Mesolithic activity has been identified, c.5500BC, but further work has not yet been undertaken here. Already, however, it is possible to ask and answer questions about man and his environment and how he is organising himself in this little understood period. It seems clear from the evidence so far at Seamer Carr that Mesolithic man was splitting up his specialities spatially, and by so identifying these divided activities it may soon be proven that man was a permanent and organised occupier of the landscape during the Mesolithic period.

17th November - The Ritual Complex at Rudston,

 East Yorkshire. Dr.Ian Kinness

In a stimulating and thought-provoking way Dr.Kinness surveyed the prehistoric setting in which we must examine the ritual complex at Rudston. The period 6000BC to 2000BC witnessed an unprecedented development in the history of man, the like of which has not been equalled since. Farming and the settled way of life took hold in Europe. It was this development that laid the foundation for modern civilisation. Dr.Kinness believes East Yorkshire to be one of

the primary areas of colonisation by the first farmers in Britain. Early pottery here, such as Grimston Ware of c.3500BC, is a good quality product and has affinities with pottery of the Low Countries and Paris basin, providing an indication of the settlers' area of origin. The Towthorpe style of pottery which came after marks a deterioration in the potters' craft, but the resurgence of quality is demonstrated in late Neolithic grooved ware styles.

Insufficient research excavation in East Yorkshire is the reason why the significance of the area in the Neolithic period is not fully appreciated. Rescue archaeology is only a chance affair for research purposes, and excavations in this area setting out to answer specific questions about British prehistory are needed. Evidence of this need is provided by distribution maps. For example, flint mines and axe factories are to be found in the south and west of the country, but there is nothing similar recorded for East Yorkshire, even though there are more flint axes from here than anywhere else. Something very significant is indicated but not truly reflected in the national picture, and until the East Riding is studied in the right way the distribution maps will remain incomplete and misleading in certain important aspects.

The changing burial customs of the prehistoric farming community offer insights into the developing society. Long barrows (best examples in our area are at Willerby Wold and Kilham) were mortuary houses for communal burial, in which the remains of the dead are found in a highly disorganised state, suggesting that the bones of the ancestors were carried to and fro, the community continuing to involve them in everyday life. The chambers were approached by a palisaded passage enclosed by parallel ditches whilst they were open, but finally they were sealed forever beneath a mound of earth.

In the Neolithic period the Yorkshire Wolds

were clothed in fertile black earth, and it is possible to imagine a nucleus of immigrant colonists growing to a population of c.100,000 people. The Early Bronze Age witnessed the heyday of farming. The average farmer was better off in 2500BC than his counterpart today! The change to single burials in round barrows is an indication of a new social system of high prestige. The Bronze Age was the age of the highly stratified chieftain society with everything in the landscape under control. Regrettably, little of that landscape remains visible today, although the loss is to a large extent a recent one. Until the Second World War, the Wiltshire and Dorset landscape was largely undisturbed from its prehistoric condition. Modern agriculture has been the instrument of destruction, and in East Yorkshire 90% of the evidence has been eradicated by the plough. Only where the land has been exhausted by ancient farming do upstanding remains survive, and these are on the periphery of our area. Although Canon Greenwell was an atrocious recorder of excavations, he amongst others in the 19th century gathered together material which would otherwise have been lost, and it is from this that we have been able to make an assessment of prehistoric society.

And so to the Rudston cursus. Cursus is a Latin word (plural cursūs) and a misnomer for the feature it describes, meaning a running track. A cursus in archaeological terms is a monument which comprises two parallel ditches and banks set close together and closed at each end. Often there is a bend in their alignment. The largest in Britain is in Dorset and is six miles long. But they can be as short as 600 feet. Cursus are mainly found in river valleys, such as the Trent, Severn and Thames. Few are on chalk, and the most northerly examples include Thornborough and Rudston. The Dorset cursus comprises over 12 miles of ditch dug up and down dale with long barrows incorporated into its alignment.

The Dorchester cursus, one of the few tested by excavation, incorporates a Neolithic mortuary enclosure into its line. The Stonehenge cursus has only a single round barrow within its ditches, all others are clearly excluded and respect the pre-existing monument. These and other examples demonstrate that cursūs fit into the chronological scheme of prehistory after long barrows, mortuary enclosures, causewayed camps and pit circles, but before round barrows, and the suggested date for them is 2500-2000BC.

But what purpose did they serve? Their function has been assumed to be ritual. Most cursūs are known from aerial photography, but the distribution of them on river gravels, a subsoil well-known to be sensitive to cropmarks may be reflecting an aerial photographic bias. In the same way, the association of cursus with other ritual monuments, such as henges, and burials, well demonstrated at Stonehenge may again be misleading, since aerial reconnaissance gives good results where the conditions are right, and gives nothing where the conditions are wrong. If the ditches of a cursus are revealed from the air therefore so too will those of other features, which need not in fact be associated in any way beyond their common response to aerial photography. In landscape terms cursus tend to run parallel to rivers and there are examples, such as Dorchester, where they cut off natural promontories. In the construction of cursus late third millennium farmers seem to be declaring their control of the landscape and in so doing using a form of monument sanctioned by 2000 years of authenticity. For cursus can be seen as enlarged long barrow forms.

The Rudston cursūs have been the object of archaeological research conducted by Dr. Kinness. Here in the Great Wold Valley the Gypsy Race, now canalised but formerly winding on a course no longer known for any specific period in the past, is the stream to which no less than four cursus relate. Rudston is unique in this respect.

Nowhere else in the country is there more than one, another example of the remarkable character of East Yorkshire in this period. Twelve miles of ditch in all were cut and the four intersect respecting each other's alignments. They centre upon the village at Rudston, but more pertinently box in the monolith which stands in the churchyard today, the tallest standing stone in England. The cursus are contemporary and all their ends stop at contour points in such a way as to render them intervisible, another clue to their relationship as elements of a single planned complex. This intervisibility also suggests a tree-less landscape in the Early Bronze Age. The fertility of the Great Wold Valley supported a society at this time who had grown to exercise a control over their landscape, and the cursus seem to demonstrate this influence forcibly, creating infield and outfield areas.

But also the focus of the cursus is clearly of great significance. The monolith stands in the churchyard which itself is on a knoll. Traces of a bank and ditch can be discerned around the church, and it is possible that there may have been a henge here. Halfway up one of the cursus there is a henge too. A huge ditch was partially exposed this summer during the preparation of a grave in the churchyard, but there was no opportunity for further investigation. This may, however, be a henge ditch.

The excavation of the cursus system was limited to examining the cross over of ditches and part of cursus C. A relic bed of the Gypsy Race was discovered. The stream had changed course and eradicated the cursus ditches. At the cross-over a gully for post settings enclosing a cobbled floor - a round house - was found intact under a metre of topsoil, itself erected over the cursus ditch. No date could be attributed to the house in the absence of pottery and flint, but large quantities of animal bone were present. The contemporaneity of the two cursus

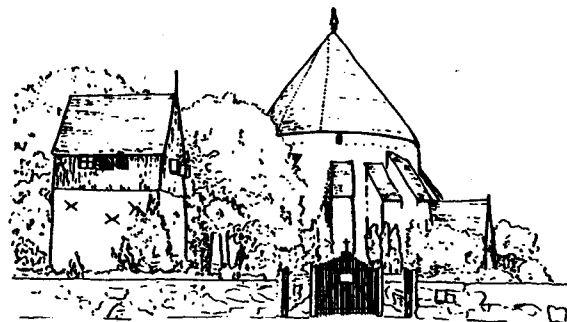
examined was proved by the ditches, one of which had a break in its line where the other went directly through. The ditches were not large, but where the going was tougher through the chalk they were remarkably dug deeper. The banks in all cases were on the inside.

In summary, Dr. Kinness felt that excavation was unlikely to be of great value in our understanding of cursus monuments, but that fieldwork undertaken systematically could enlarge the picture considerably. He exhorted Society members to become involved and to approach the subject this way in order to further research into the unique and enigmatic cursus complex at Rudston.

Suzie Small Finds dallies in Denmark On this

grey, wet October morning (writes our Finds Correspondent desperately wishing to become full-time Travel Editor and ignoring her public's anxiety at the loss of another "Finds Spot"), when even my medieval boots look as though they were never made for walking, my thoughts drift to finds in a sunnier clime. Bornholm the place, and August

the time - a sun-drenched island in the Baltic ninety-five miles south-east of Copenhagen with dazzling blue sea, golden corn and beautiful, bare, bronzed inhabitants. A place where topographical details take



Østerlars Rundkirke, Bornholm

on a new perspective!

However, being a fully paid-up member of E.R.A.S., features of an archaeological nature

soon caught my attention. Bornholm has four medieval round churches and a fine collection of Bronze Age rock carvings. The round church at Østerlars originally had a flat roof and battlements, and its massive walls serve as a grim reminder of troubled times when trembling Bornholmers used the building as a place of refuge. The present roofs of the church and separate bell-tower are made of oak shingles. The Bronze Age rock carvings are located on prominent slabs of granite and consist of sun symbols, foot impressions, and matchstick men in U-shaped boats that are vaguely reminiscent of the RoosCarr boatmen here at home.

On to Copenhagen, home of porn, good design and the archaeological collection housed at the Nationalmuseet. Having a casual interest in medieval leather objects (!) I made a bee-line for the museum's medieval section. This proved rather disappointing, as it consisted largely of rows of objects in cases. However, there was a small collection of medieval shoes very similar in style to those excavated in Hull, although detailed examination proved difficult due to poor presentation. By contrast the prehistoric exhibition was excellent. The gloomy tomb-like interior of the room containing log coffins contrasted sharply with the brightly lit landscape photographs in the section on farming. I was particularly fascinated by the rare Bronze Age textiles and a Roman Iron Age (0-400AD) boot with the foot still inside! The combination of well-organised display, clearly presented text and labels, well-designed cases, superb photographic backgrounds, human figures that actually looked life-like, and rare exhibits contributed to an exhibition of outstanding quality. At least one visitor was very loath to close the door behind her.

And on to Germany It has obviously been a period of European sojourns, for while Suzie S.F. was luxuriating in Denmark,

Peter Halkon, also travelling abroad, took the wise precaution of being in Germany! Amongst many sites and museums visited, the Landesmuseum in Bonn took his fancy, and he offers us this review. (Between them, I cannot escape the feeling that Susan and Peter are trying to tell Hull Museums something!)

As the name suggests, the Landesmuseum covers the history and development of the landscape in the environs of Bonn from the Palaeolithic to the Middle Ages. Unlike many British museums where exhibits are crowded together in decaying, damp edifices, this museum was well-designed, modern and purpose-built, with plenty of space to show its fine collection to advantage. Interior decoration was tasteful, complementing the displays; many had subtle lighting and mirrors to aid appreciation. Toilet and restaurant facilities were excellent, as was access for the disabled.

As the museum was laid out chronologically, the first nine galleries were devoted to the Prehistoric, from the emergence of man in the area to the Iron Age. The earliest exhibit was the cranium of a Neanderthal Man, with a full-size, full body reconstruction next to it. There was an excellent array of tools from the Palaeolithic to Neolithic with diagrammatical explanations, using original artefacts where possible, concerning use and manufacture. Prehistoric pottery was well represented and displayed typologically. In all the galleries there was an accurately constructed diorama of a type-site of each period. Perhaps the most impressive of these was a Hallstatt hillfort, complete with scale model soay sheep, miniature upright looms, in fact a mini version of Butser.

The Urnfield culture was illustrated with a reconstruction of part of a cemetery. The Iron Age galleries were dominated by the magnificent display of Celtic art. The most striking of these were the grave goods from the Waldalges-

heim chariot burial. Funerary offerings included situlae (Italian-influenced, bronze wine jars) decorated with stylised faces of men and beasts, gold torcs and arm rings. A curious item was the stone pillar from Pfalzfeld sculptured in an almost "Mickey Mouse" style of Celtic art with heads, spirals and stylised phallic emblems. On show too were La Tène swords, Harness fittings, a remarkable bronze helmet and a series of pottery vessels, the latest showing the influence of the Romans on the Celtic tribes.

The Romanist would certainly not be disappointed with the fifteen areas devoted to this period. The Roman galleries were split into sections illustrating everyday life, the Army and the Limes (Rhine frontier). In the military section was a corpus of fine monumental sculpture, one of the best of these being a standard bearer complete with leopard skin. There was an exhibition of well-preserved weapons: a spatha, a pugio complete with scabbard, several helmets and some ornate horse armour. Roman military engineering was covered by a reconstruction of bridge building and a stone quarry. Accompanying these were actual examples of the appropriate tools. A woodworking plane of bronze and iron looked as though it could be used today. An amusing graffito from a stone quarry showed a legionary with a very large stone cutting tool! Many of the well-preserved objects in this section came from the fort at Xanten. Everyday life was illustrated by a fine array of bronze and stone sculpture, superb glass, jewellery and reconstructions of houses and streets. A miniature sculpture in bronze of Hercules holding a large club in one hand and nonchalantly plucking a bare-breasted Amazon from her horse with the other was perhaps the finest of a series of mythological pieces. The greater part of one room was taken up with a large mosaic showing the Sun god being drawn by four horses, and a reerected double archway (reaching to the roof) of a Roman building.

An altar depicted three Matrones of the Aufani with frizzed hair styles and torcs, betraying their Celtic origins. The fine bronze head of Emperor Gordian III bore a strong resemblance to Adolf Hitler, complete with moustache!

The Early Christian collection was particularly interesting. There were 4th and 5th century Christian tombstones with Chi-Rho symbols, peacocks and inscriptions beginning "In hoc tumulo". Those members who have been involved in or are following the recent excavations at Barton-on-Humber would have been especially interested in the Frankish section. The quality of the metalwork was exceptional, and much was laid out as originally found in full-sized reconstructions of graves excavated at Köln, Mungersdorf and Morksen. One of these contained a gilded helmet with cheek-pieces, bucket irons, spearheads, animal bones, pottery, swords and fine enamelled jewellery.

The Medieval galleries contained a floor to ceiling typology of Rhineland pottery from 11th to 16th centuries, including Siegburg and Pingsdorf wares. Two 12th century boats and a case devoted to the iron industry, together with a splendid motte and bailey castle, completed the displays.

Several of the medieval and Roman galleries were closed for reasons obscure; and it appeared from peeping through locked doorways that the museum management thought that because one case was incomplete, a whole gallery should be closed! Although the museum was spotlessly clean, pleasantly painted and well laid out, it was disappointing to find all labels were in German and no English guidebook. It must also be remembered that entry is not free, although two marks (about 50p) is by no means exorbitant. Many British museums could learn a great deal from their German counterparts.

A thank you From someone who does not take kindly to enforced absence from

Society activities and who is very much back with us, not only at meetings but out in the field too, comes the following note.

"I would like to convey my thanks to all members who wished me congratulations on my recovery from my accident. Also I wish to thank all my close friends in the Society who took the pleasurable trouble to visit me in hospital and at home afterwards. It is in troublous times like this that one realises the true friends one has. Thanks to all." Peter Cottingham.

Fieldwork and excavation The Society's field group has been busily preparing the ground, quite literally, for two excavation projects next year. Fieldwork, it is a pleasure to record, is a growth area in our activities. In the Bursea/Hasholme area, where amongst other things an important Romano-British industrial complex has been the centre of field-walking attention for some time now, an excavation is planned next summer jointly organised by Peter Halkon for E.R.A.S. and Martin Millett of Durham University. And at Arnold, Long Riston, the now completed field survey of a medieval moated site is but a prelude to excavation next Spring. Newcomers will be welcome, as well as the old(!) hands, for Arnold is to be as much a training excavation as a piece of rescue archaeology, since the site should be available for some time before road construction sweeps it away forever.

For more details of both projects watch out for announcements at lecture meetings or in the next newsletter. But better still, keep in touch by attending Field Study Group meetings on the first Wednesday of every month, 7.30pm, at Wilberforce House Museum, High Street, Hull. You know it makes sense!

A Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and see you at the Annual Dinner!