

A.G.M. date change! Please note that there is a change of date for the Annual General Meeting. This will now take place one week later than advertised on Wednesday April 28th. It is still scheduled for the Ferens Art Gallery and begins at 7.30pm. All the relevant papers are enclosed. After the business meeting we shall be transported to more exotic climes (not that the Ferens doesn't engage in the bizarre at times!!), when Rodney Mackey will present an illustrated lecture on his personal involvement in the archaeology of the Incas, which formed part of the Cusichaca Project in Peru.

Join us in Beverley The Humberside Archaeological Unit's excavation in Dyer Lane, Beverley, is now well advanced and an excellent sequence of medieval building development is now being exposed. A number of Society members are already involved in the work, which is being conducted at the weekends as well as throughout the week. The site is centrally located in the town, just off Saturday Market on the corner of Dyer Lane and Walkergate, and there is a tremendous amount of public interest being shown in the dig - particularly at the weekends. The site, therefore, is an excellent platform for the promotion of both the Unit and the East Riding Archaeological Society, and Society members are cordially invited to come along and lend a hand at the weekend, especially now that something approaching seasonable weather is upon us. We are particularly looking for assistance on Saturdays, so if you would like to come along to help (and don't worry too much about lack of experience - we will show you how to do it!), contact Peter Armstrong (evenings 632946) for further details.

Excursion Make a note of the date of the Society's summer excursion which promises to be yet

another fine example of the organising skill of Keith Simcock. It will be on 19th June 1982 to Grimdon Graven, the neolithic flint mines in Norfolk, and to King's Lynn. Details are enclosed, so please act quickly in making your bookings so that the final arrangements may be put in hand.

Metal detecting - again It is quite clear that this is not a matter that arouses the might of the pen amongst our members. Whatever your opinions are, they remain undisclosed. I am pleased nonetheless to have received the following letter from a new member.

22.12.81

Sirs,

I am a new member of E.R.A.S. and I have just received your newsletter. I am a metal detector user and I have been for eight years. I am one of the most successful in finding new sites and my finds are too numerous to mention. I have not put pen to paper to blow my own trumpet but to enlighten you on the subject of metal detecting and its uses.

Most of the sites I work on are ploughed land which is threatened by farming and not by the use of metal detectors. The land is worked by tractors and the topsoil is turned over at least once a year, and any artifacts in the soil are moved about the field. With the use of manures, fertilisers and numerous chemicals most of the artifacts are being destroyed forever, and as for the archaeological value after being moved about year after year in the topsoil, the context was lost with farming many years ago.

So I look on the artifacts that are found to be rescued and not to be lost forever. I spend hundreds of hours a year on research and many pounds on petrol, not to mention the cost of my metal detector, maps and books, etc.

I would also like to enlighten you on the depth that I can go down on ploughed land with my metal detector, which is the best for this area. On a Roman coin or brooch the depth is only about eight to ten inches, and it is very rare to find anything past twelve inches.

I have been in the past few years working the Wetwang area, and all the coins and artifacts from

this area have been to John Dent to help date one of his new sites. Most of the people that I know in the metal detecting circle are responsible people and not looters. Like in any group there is always a bad penny. I have been interested in archaeology for many years and personally there is no difference between our two groups, and it is about time that we worked together and helped each other to find as many new sites and artifacts before everything is destroyed.

I have joined your group so that if I am needed to help in any way with or without my metal detector, I am only too willing to help, so let us try to trust each other and bring a lot more into the open. I have in the past had many doubts about archaeologists and kept them at a distance until I met J.Dent and P.Armstrong. I now have trust and I hope that you can get to trust not only me, but others with the same interest.

I hope that this letter has not put you off asking me to help on sites, as the truth can sometimes spoil things, and I know that we can teach each other many things. I have not joined your group to claim your sites, as I have permission to search over sixty farms in this area alone.

John M. Chapman,  
"Monique",  
Old Road,  
Leconfield.

Footnote: Mr Chapman's letter of introduction, so to speak, is one that I am sure should be welcomed by the Society, bearing as it does the mark of concern for the destruction of archaeological sites and the retrieval of evidence about new ones. As long as we are all entirely clear in our minds about the difference between treasure hunting on the one hand and legitimate metal detecting on the other, two operations which we see to be mutually exclusive, then the trust of which Mr Chapman speaks between traditional archaeologists and detector users should naturally follow. To this end it might perhaps be useful for the Society to endorse formally the Council for British Archaeology's resolution of January 1979, which remains C.B.A. policy still and which runs as

follows: "In the view of the Council of British Archaeology, treasure hunting constitutes a great threat to the country's archaeological heritage, and is thus contrary to the national interest. The concept of treasure hunting is totally at variance with the objectives and practices of archaeology in studying and safeguarding our tangible past for the public good of present and future generations. The Council recognises that many users of metal detectors are motivated by a genuine interest in the past and its remains and that they would not knowingly damage these remains. Such people are welcome to join the active membership of British archaeology, but they must accept the methods and disciplines of archaeology."

Any new member of E.R.A.S. ought to find such a resolution entirely acceptable, and there might be some advantage in updating the Society's constitution to include a similar form of words. So far as becoming involved in archaeology is concerned then, as a member of the Society, Mr Chapman is as eligible to respond to the invitation on page one of this newsletter as is any other member who is so inclined. Similarly, to participate in the Field Study Group's activities is simply a matter of joining in. No special dispensation is necessary, because E.R.A.S. exists to promote the study of archaeology in general and to preserve, investigate, excavate and restore antiquities in the East Riding in particular; and the Society is a membership open to all responsible individuals in tune with these aims.

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 ● Suzie Small Finds Spot ●  
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..... or Suzie Small Finds winters at Winteringham! The heart-rending sight of a stripped and lonely finds shed at Lurk Lane, Beverley, was quickly forgotten as your favourite finds researcher sampled the heady delights of a Roman settlement site at Winteringham. Despite atrocious climatic conditions, excavations at Winteringham, under the direction of Dr Ben Whitwell, have produced an interesting assemblage of small finds. These include a total of



Fig. 1

24 coins and a bronze brooch recovered from unstratified contexts.

The coins consist mainly of small 4th century bronze types, including an AE 2 of Magnentius (350-53), illustrated as Fig. 1. A silver denarius of Hadrian (117-38), a sestertius of Antoninus Pius (138-61), two denarii (for an illustrated example see Fig. 2) of Septimius Severus (193-211), an antoninianus of Postumus (259-68), and an antoninianus of Claudius Gothicus (268-70) were also found.



Fig. 2

The slightly corroded bronze 'dolphin' brooch (Fig. 3) has an incomplete hinged pin pivoted on an iron bar. The humped bow tapers to a small incomplete catch-plate, and is ornamented with a longitudinal rib below two panels which were originally filled with enamel. The side wings have an incised line near each end. The brooch is a later example of Collingwood's group H (Collingwood and Richmond, 1969, 295), which was current from Neronian times until the middle of the second century. It is also similar to a smaller decorated brooch from a third century context at Old Winteringham (Stead, 1976, fig. 100, no. 18).

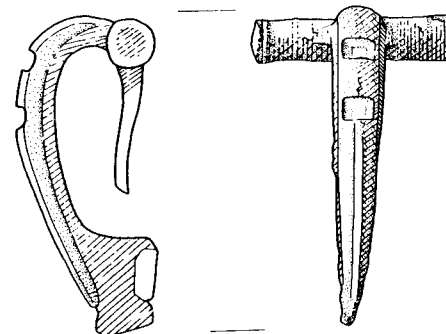


Fig. 3

Bibliography

Collingwood, R.G. and Richmond, I., 1969, The Archaeology of Roman Britain.

Stead, I.M., 1976, Excavations at Winterton Roman Villa and other Roman sites in North Lincolnshire 1958-1967.

Getting better Members may be aware from newspaper reports of the road accident which befell one of our committee members, Peter Cottingham, in February. Although seriously injured, Peter is

now, we are delighted to report, on the mend and will shortly be out of hospital. All our good wishes go out to him and to Marion, and we look forward to seeing him back amongst us soon.

Lecture summaries

18th November - The Odin's Raven Voyage. A.L.Binns  
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From the background of his experience with the Odin's Raven in both fitting out and sailing her, Alan Binns gave the Society a wide-ranging talk on the practical basis of the Vikings' sea power. Their technology had to a large extent caused their history. Several attempts had been made previously to make replicas of Viking ships, and slides of some of these were shown. With the Odin's Raven more stress had been put on the navigability and sea-worthiness of the craft than the former essays, and it was felt that if not adhering to the letter of historically provable fact, then the spirit had been accurately followed. Ancient carvings as well as literary sources were referred to and both guided the construction of this vessel and in turn were illuminated by the practical findings of working her.

The \$50,000 project to build, equip and sail the vessel from Norway to the Isle of Man showed that some of the projected times for sea voyages, mentioned in the sagas and previously thought to be poetic exaggeration were in fact possible. The hull shape was such that when lightly loaded the ship was virtually planing under sail and on May 12th 1979 a speed of 12½ knots was recorded for her in Oslo Fjord. Thus a summer month journey with favourable winds would give times of 3 days from Trondheim to Shetland, 36 hours from Denmark to the Humber. The boat also proved very efficient under oars for short stretches and manouvering in harbour. The mystery of why such efficient vessels were replaced in medieval times by the slow lumbering cogs, keels and hulks was perhaps due to the greater cargo carrying capacity and the better weatherproofing of the latter allowing a real extension of the months when voyages were practicable.

Solutions to some of the more enigmatic marks on contemporary depictions of Viking vessels were apparently tackled to enable sailing to windward and for trimming the sails. The evening was a feast of real practical maritime detail from the academic who then went out and did it.

J.D.

16th December - Coppergate: the Hole Story. Richard Hall  
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It was a return visit to the Society for Richard Hall, the Director of the Coppergate Excavations at York. The site work now completed, Mr. Hall summarised the results with particular reference to the Roman and Viking period discoveries. The stratification at Coppergate was up to 30 feet in depth, much of this enormous deposit being of a waterlogged peaty nature because of its proximity to the River Foss which ran behind the site. Conditions, therefore, favoured good biological survival, although on the debit side large pits cut in the Medieval period caused considerable damage to the underlying levels. Toward the river a six foot dump of soil deposited in the Norman period may be explicable as part of the dam constructed against the King's fishponds, for which documentary evidence survives. Not all of the site therefore was excavated to natural but c. ½ of the total area initially examined was bottomed to bedrock. Here at the lowest level, timber sill beam slots of a Romano-British building could be dated by Flavian period Samian ware. This part of York fell within the Canabae, or camp follower settlement outside the Roman fortress, and occupation was evident through to the 4th century AD represented by other structures in stone, although most of the walls had been thoroughly robbed subsequently. Floor levels too were absent, and the Roman buildings survived only in a ghost-like way against the natural. Two finds of note from this period were a baked tile bearing a cursive script legend scratched into it, as yet undeciphered, and an intaglio depicting Mars, the god of war in a two horse chariot. Six inhumations dated by late Roman coins proved the presence here also of a cemetery. Two pairs of hobnailed boots were included in the grave and traces of a wooden coffin were also found. A single cremation in a capped pottery

vessel indicated mixed burial rites.

Two feet of grey sterile soil separated the Roman levels from the Viking period occupation - a near-blank of four centuries in the sequence. Evidence of Saxon York has always remained elusive and so it has proved here at Coppergate. The presence of stycas and glass are representative of Saxon occupation of which virtually nothing can be said. In startling contrast is the sudden burst of activity in c. 850 AD when Viking settlers begin to stamp their presence on the area, verifying the belief that the Coppergate/Pavement quarter of York constituted the Viking heartland from the 9th century to the conquest in 1066. The Viking invasion of York in 866 AD may be represented by the single skeleton unearthed at this level. Paths of stone and stakes were laid, large rubbish pits cut, containing the pimply fabric, York ware pottery and pennies, and light industry centred on hearths made of re-used Roman tile appear, around which drips and trails of melted glass were noted. Associated with these were fragments of unparalleled pottery types - presumably crucibles, since onto their surface glass had fused. Analysis revealed that the glass was formed from raw materials, not remelted cullet. Hitherto only Glastonbury was known to be a centre for glass-making at this date. Remanent-magnetic dating of the Coppergate hearths gave a result of 880-90 AD.

From c. 900 AD the area was divided into plots within which excellently preserved houses of wattle woven around timber uprights were constructed. These structures were rebuilt regularly, mainly because of accidental destruction by fire, and in the second half of the 10th century plank wall construction replaces the wattle type. In the hundred years of the 10th century a remarkable 6 feet of stratification was laid down. The boundaries established at this time were maintained throughout the medieval period and even down to the present day. Originally the plots ran back from the houses as yards incorporating paths of tree trunks with pegged cross pieces holding them together. In the yards were wicker-lined cesspits and from these and the yard area a total of 12½ tons of soil has been bulk-sieved to reveal evidence, which would otherwise have been missed, of small mammal,

fish and bird bone, including in the latter category osprey, kite and sea eagle! The presence also of human parasite eggs recovered through the soil sampling process brings home the realities of Viking Age town life.

Artefact retrieval from the four house plots excavated has created a vivid picture of building use, proving the workshop nature of the dwellings. Crucibles containing traces of gold, silver, copper and lead indicate working in these metals, confirmed by the finds of uncompleted objects. Trial pieces for the finished art-work were also found carved on bone. An important aspect of the site was the presence of Viking moneyers who were striking silver pennies, betrayed by a number of remarkable and unique finds. One was a lead strip bearing test impressions of a coin die, one side of which proved to be retrograde and presumably therefore discarded. The discovery of not one (which itself would have been unparalleled in Britain!) but two iron dies leaves no room to doubt that Royal officials were at work minting coins at Coppergate. One of the dies was for the St. Peter's penny issue, the other was of King Athelstan. Two coins struck from this very die have been located elsewhere, traced by a flaw in the die. These coins are in the Liverpool Museum and in Copenhagen!

Amongst the vast array of finds, Mr Hall drew attention to double-ended iron spoons coated with tin; literally hundreds of antler combs, leather shoes, a knitted sock; a silk headscarf and other silk fragments which indicate Near Eastern contacts; jewellery in the shape of a dozen disc brooches of lead, one up to 4 inches in diameter washed with silver, types hitherto considered rare; 60 or 70 bone skates; a cowrie shell of a species indigenous to the Red Sea area; an Arabic coin of 903-07AD from Samarkand, which was in fact a contemporary forgery of tin-washed copper rather than silver; and a pan pipe of boxwood which is still playable with a five-note range from top A to E.

The extraordinary nature of the Coppergate site was summarised statistically: in 5½ years 35,000 layers and features were excavated, which produced one

million sherds of pottery, 15,000 objects of special interest, 5 tons of animal bone, and 2,000 samples of soil, much of which still awaits detailed examination. It is anticipated that the writing-up programme will span 5 years, the reports to be published in fascicule form, the first of which will deal with the coins. In the shorter term there is to be an exhibition of 500 of the finds together with a house reconstruction at the Yorkshire Museum between April and September 1982. The permanent displays, reconstructions and simulations, to be known as the Jorvik Viking Centre, is to be built in the basement of the Coppergate Development at a cost of £2.6 million, and is scheduled for opening in 1984.

20th January - Landscape Studies and the Field Archaeologist. Chris Dunn

Mr Dunn of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, York, gave the Society the benefit of his field experience in demonstrating aspects of landscape archaeology in South Humberside. The emphasis in archaeology to date has been laid on artefacts and excavation, upon which the archaeologist has based his understanding of the past. But since the last war, the enormous expansion that has taken place in aerial photographic reconnaissance has demonstrated the extent and variety of field monuments in the landscape - albeit normally surviving only in a very truncated form. Consequently, a branch of archaeology is now growing, basing its activities upon non-excavational fieldwork and attempting an analysis of landscapes in their entirety. Generally speaking, the best surviving earthwork landscapes occur on marginal land where the plough has not been the instrument of destruction that it has become in the intensively worked arable. Prehistoric and Roman landscapes are difficult to disentangle and understand in most instances, but in contrast the medieval landscape, which is much more complete, is more readily discernible in the countryside today.

The area for study which Mr Dunn had chosen was West Lindsey in the former North Lincolnshire, where

a variety of earthwork remains from domestic sites to villages to monastic complexes are to be encountered and which are representative of types vulnerable to modern agriculture. Efforts should be made to record such standing remains as survive in this area.

West Lindsey is an interesting area geologically and the changes of soil type here have had an effect on settlement patterns. Mud flows and slip are characteristic of the eastern scarp of the chalk wold, which contrasts with the limestone edge on the west, where settlements can be seen spaced evenly at c. one kilometre intervals. Mr Dunn presented several case studies from the area to illustrate the potential of landscape archaeology for the compilation of village and site histories:

Somerby, where an isolated church and earthworks attest to a lost village, with 17th century landscaping affording evidence of the date of desertion. Caistor, where the Roman town and its medieval counterpart occupy two separate locations for reasons which remain obscure.

Normanby, on the limestone, which is the latest in an extended pattern of occupation embracing Neolithic, Bronze Age and Anglo-Saxon elements.

Walesby, where the detached church may not simply be a pointer to a shrunken village, since earthworks rather suggest the former presence of two settlements, of which only one has survived.

Orby and Risby, two adjacent villages in an area of landslip, the kind of intractable arable normally assumed to have been settled late when the pressure for agricultural land drove peasant farmers into inhospitable areas. But such a case is not so here, since fieldwalking has produced Roman and Saxon period pottery, indicating much earlier occupation than anticipated, and causing us to review our assumptions and preconceptions about settlement patterns.

Village sites on the chalk such as Cadney, Swallow and Stanton le Vale occur at the broadening of valleys and all have intriguing earthworks bearing upon their development.

At Orford, where one of the smaller religious houses of the Premonstratensian Order survives in earthwork

form, the pattern of structures is difficult to define, not conforming to a standard plan like some of the larger monastic houses. A later 19th century mill leat can be identified here, further confusing the picture if not recognised for what it is.

Mr Dunn completed his survey with examples from the claylands of moated sites such as Kettleby and South Kelsey, villages such as Owersby, Goltho, Saxby and West Firsby, the monastic grange at Ingleby, and finally Thunnock Castle near Gainsborough, a motte with three baileys, about which remarkably little is known, but which yields up some of its secrets to the landscape archaeological surveyor.

17th February - Recent Work in Roman West Yorkshire.  
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Tony Sumpter  
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Tony Sumpter of the West Yorkshire Archaeological Unit outlined the results of two major programmes of work in the county at the Roman sites of Dalton Parlours and Castleford.

The villa at Dalton Parlours, close to the A1 near Collingham, has been known since the 1850s but deep ploughing in recent years where bedrock lies at a depth of only 10 inches has had a devastating effect upon the structural remains, leading to the excavation of 3½ acres of the site. Linked enclosures surviving as ditches attested to an Iron Age settlement predating the Roman villa. The excavation embraced a number of buildings of the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. A detached bath house set in a courtyard replaced two earlier round houses. The hypocaust pilae were of gritstone, and the basement within which they stood contained thousands of painted plaster fragments, which have since been reconstructed. A two-winged corridor house - one wing apsidal, the other square-ended - was 100 feet long. A Medusa mosaic from the house was removed in the 19th century. An aisled structure containing corn driers was clearly one of the functional farm buildings. Similarly, two sunken-floored buildings (grubenhauser), one with a corn drier (cf. examples at Welton Wold), the other with an apsidal end and beehive querns within it,

were also designed for agricultural purposes. The water supply for the farm was a six feet diameter well, cut 58 feet through the limestone into the shale bed below. A timber well head had formerly stood at the top. Much evidence of the villa's architectural character came to light in the excavation of the well, as a great quantity of building material was dumped into it, including column bases and capitals. Good organic preservation was demonstrated by the remains of eight wooden buckets and a child's leather sandal. Environmental evidence in the form of insect and seed remains was also very good. The bulk of the pottery finds from the well were Crambeck type grey wares, and Huntcliffe types were also present. The date range of coins from the site was 200-370 AD, with the majority being 4th century types. Of the many excellent finds illustrated, a bronze candelabrum with dolphin feet was exceptional.

On the Roman line of advance northward at the crossing of the River Aire, an auxiliary fort was established, probably during the governorship of Agricola in c. 80 AD. This was Lagentium, better known to us today as Castleford. The antiquarian, William Stukely, claimed that the fort stood on the site of the church. As was often the case in Roman Britain, a vicus grew up outside the fort on the south side, settlement being attracted by the customer potential of the salaried soldiers of the fort.

Archaeological work was stimulated by road development. Military ditches were immediately encountered, since Roman levels were found to lie at only two feet below the modern surface, and four phases of ditch alignment in all were revealed. The absence of buildings within them suggests that they represented the extent of the fort annexe. Excavations also revealed a bath building of two phases in its entirety. The baths were fed by a spring ducted in a stone channel. In the vicus, timber buildings of c. 80 AD to 150 AD were unearthed, together with a large courtyard building in stone, probably a mansio of the cursus publicus. Another stone structure of Hadrianic date with beam slot impressions in the floor and charred grain and hazel nuts was clearly a granary.

The period of flourishing activity at Castleford was the second and third quarter of the 2nd century AD, and features exposed included a statue base, a timber-lined well and an unusual pit complex, within which a ladder for access remained in situ. In all, 30,000 sherds of pottery were found, and include samian and amphorae. Thriving craft industries were evidenced by glass and worked bone, and bronze objects including many personal ornaments were also found. A ram's head, bronze patera handle has proved to be the most northerly example of this type yet revealed by excavation. Curiously, settlement at Castleford appears to have been so closely linked to the military establishment that occupation of the vicus failed to survive the removal of the garrison. It seems inexplicable that such an apparently thriving settlement failed to put down its own roots and maintain an independent existence in the later Roman period.

Vikings as museum pieces "Twelve hundred years after their first savage attacks on our shores, the Vikings return to England. They arrive not as pagan destroyers nor as Christian settlers, but as central figures in a record-breaking international exhibition in York ... The Vikings in England". Not my words, I'm pleased to say, but part of the advertising screed for the exhibition at the Yorkshire Museum, Museum Gardens, York, which opens on 3rd April and runs to 30th September. The exhibition includes the York Archaeological Trust's finds from Coppergate, along with a full size reconstruction of one of the Coppergate timber houses, and material brought together from national museums in Britain, Denmark and Sweden. Opening hours are 10am to 5pm Monday to Saturday; 1pm to 5pm Sunday. Admission charges are Adults £1.50; Children and Senior citizens 75p.