

A lot of it about It's all happening in Humberside just now, the winter notwithstanding. I speak of archaeology, of course, and it is all to a very large extent courtesy of the Manpower Services Commission. After an unplanned but unavoidable summer recess, work began again in the middle of August both at Lurk Lane Beverley and at Wetwang. A mobile archaeological team of 21 fieldworkers is being shared by Messrs Armstrong and Dent of the H.A.U. to excavate and field-walk. Half the team works at Beverley and the other half (the truly mobile!) travel to different areas on the Wolds to undertake fieldwork and small-scale excavation which includes return forays to Wetwang Slack, a site which the D.o.E. sadly is no longer prepared to support financially. An archaeological presence at the quarry can only be maintained now through M.S.C. schemes. Currently the Wolds team is digging at Blealands Nook (see Ramm, H., The Parisi, 1978, 18). Lurk Lane meanwhile presses on to a conclusion, probably at the end of January. There is some excitement at the moment because evidence of that elusive Middle Saxon period building has come to light, or at the very least something of a structural nature in situ is showing up. It doesn't all together make sense at present but it is a very significant archaeological advance. And good news for the future of archaeology in Beverley is that the Borough Council has given the Unit permission to excavate at Dyer Lane. Lobbying by E.R.A.S. amongst others obviously helped to reverse the initial unfavourable response to the application. The site promises to reveal medieval industrial splendours, we hope, being in the heart of the cloth-making quarter by the Walker Beck. Dyer Lane runs east off Saturday Market and site work should probably start late on in January. Weekend volunteer work for E.R.A.S. members will be on offer!

On the south bank two other M.S.C. schemes sponsored

by the Unit are in progress. The first which began last summer is involved with the completion of the Deepdale excavation (see Lecture summaries) and also field-walking surveys. The second is a major operation with a team of 22 at Winteringham on the scheduled area where digging is preceding sand extraction. Great possibilities exist here (look at a map and think of the Romans for starters!!), but it is early, blustery days there yet. We hope that progress reports will appear in future newsletters to keep you in the picture.

If you are a thoroughbred East Riding Arch. Soc. member you may well be chafing at the Lincolnshire (oops, South Humberside!) "intrusion". But the bridge is here to stay. How long will the E.R.A.S. officially maintain its north bank title? Any thoughts, Committee?

Excursion notes We have Susan Jackson to thank for the following report on September's Society outing:

The cold and windy weather did little to dampen the enthusiasm of the assembled E.R.A.S. members at the beginning of their excursion. Armed with wellington boots and waterproofs the participants took their places on the coach and were soon speeding along the motorway to their first destination, Laxton village. At Laxton, Nottinghamshire, is the only surviving example of the medieval system of open field farming, with three-field crop rotation, allocation of strips to tenant farmers, and common grazing rights. Mr P.W.Evans, Divisional Surveyor, Ministry of Agriculture, explained to us in his introductory talk that the medieval method of farming created many problems such as the amount of time wasted by the farmers in travelling to their strips. Other medieval customs are also still observed at Laxton such as the meeting of the Court Leet (a forerunner of the present criminal court) and the appointment of a Steward and Bailiff. The Steward, a local solicitor, ensures the correct function of the Court, and the Bailiff has responsibility for the day to day supervision of the open fields. The earthwork remains of a Motte and Bailey castle built by Robert de Caux was another point of interest in the village. Indeed the excite-

ment proved too much for one young man from the Town Docks Museum (who shall remain nameless!) whose quest to storm the Motte brought him to an untimely end!

Our next destination was Southwell Minster which for me was the highlight of the trip. The transepts, nave and western towers combine as one of the most perfect examples of Romanesque architecture in England. I was also very impressed by the 13th century Chapter House with its vaulted roof and beautiful decorated carvings of leaves. Alas, we could only stay an hour as we had to return to the coach in order to reach the next stop on our itinerary on time.

Newstead Abbey's main claim to fame lies in the fact that Lord Byron (the sixth Lord and poet) lived there. The converted abbey contains many relics such as Lord Byron's wooden shoe lasts and a number of manuscripts, pictures and photographs. The house also has extensive grounds, but owing to the wet weather they were not looking at their best and most members returned to the coach with thoughts of a less archaeological nature in mind.

A visit to the Wig and Mitre Inn, Lincoln, for refreshments provided a fitting end to the days proceedings. We had difficulty locating the Inn as the coachdriver was hopelessly lost, but the action of a friendly Lincolnshire policeman ensured that our teas did not spoil. The excursion was a very enjoyable and informative day out, and excellent value at £5. It was also good to see some new members among the group. Our thanks are due to Mr Keith Simcock, the organiser, and to Mr Ray Ketch for their hard work which made the day such a success.

Metal detecting The Chairman of the Society, Mrs Jean Dawes, addresses the following letter to E.R.A.S. members.

Sirs,

18/11/81

It is with great disquiet that the members of the East Riding Archaeological Society Committee have learnt of the increasing unauthorised use of metal detectors on known archaeological sites in this area. We would like to draw the attention of members to some of the

issues involved and hope that they will not only act responsibly themselves but encourage others to do likewise.

Firstly, the unauthorised removal of articles from scheduled sites is illegal. The landowner himself requires specific permission to tamper with such areas.

In more general terms, any object removed from the earth out of context, while possibly retaining some aesthetic or collecting interest, has lost all its archaeological value. Such tampering with the evidence may alter and invalidate any subsequent conclusions about the site, be it a current excavation or one in the future.

If any members of this Society are interested in the techniques and practice of such detection, it is strongly urged that they should indulge their hobby responsibly either by positively avoiding known sites and notifying the archaeologists of any concentrations of finds which may indicate the location of new sites of importance, or by going further and harnessing their skills to the service of archaeology. In this last pursuit they could make a real contribution to knowledge of our heritage by offering their services as part of survey teams under the direction of an archaeologist. Anyone interested in this work should contact either one of the staff of the Humberside Archaeological Unit or Mr Peter Halkon, our Field Study Group representative. We hope in this way that members' fascination with metal detectors should be a real asset to archaeological work and scholarship in this area and not the destructive vandalism it can so easily become.

Yours sincerely,
Jean D. Dawes, Chairman,
Hornsea.

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.... The vexed question of metal detector use is one which your ERAS News editor would dearly like to see aired openly by Society members. It is a year ago now that Martin Stothard gave us his opinions, but no one took up the theme. It is no secret that there are others too in the Society who own and presumably there-

fore use these devices, but how, when and where we never get to know. Why? Personally, I am not unaware of their advantages, but my own misgivings arise from doubts about the motivations of the users rather than the use per se. It seems to me that if personal collection is the sole or primary aim, then metal detecting is dangerously adrift from archaeology. Of course, if metal detectors are employed in the search for new sites as an extension to the traditional field-walking approach and any such new site is duly catalogued to enlarge our local and national archaeological records, rather than jealously guarded for the purposes of further unhindered artefact removal, then this is entirely acceptable and indeed a positive advance. Is this actually the case? Is archaeology advancing as a consequence of the introduction of metal detectors onto the market? The real advance surely has been in the collectors' and dealers' narrow interests and larger turn-overs respectively. There is money in the spurious metal detector archaeology. I have little doubt that that was the nature of the motivation behind two detector raids on the Lurk Lane excavation in Beverley. These were not innocent spoil heap searches, or cheeky, speculative scans of that part of the site which we are unable to complete. These were deliberate, night-time searches of critical Middle Saxon excavation levels for saleable rarities. It was theft, or perhaps I should say attempted theft since I don't know whether finds were actually made in each of the dozen or so holes which were left. This despoliation, which I am sad to have to say is by no means rare nowadays, is the most despicable form of the several possible abuses to which metal detecting lends itself, but it is really the fact that general archaeological abuse is so temptingly possible when the devices are in hands guided by frail minds that disturbs me about their use in what I think of as archaeology. Archaeology, I would dare to remind you (and anyone else listening!) is the study of the past through its material remains. O.K., plenty of material remains bleeping on the end of a metal detector! But what about the study part? We advance in archaeology through study and by sharing the results of our studies and researches. Profession-

al or amateur we promote archaeology by dissemination. We do not wilfully hide archaeological information, or simply keep it to ourselves. We certainly do not steal it. It doesn't belong to us; it belongs to everyone who wishes to learn along with us. This is such a basic canon that to feel the need to spell it out is a measure of the present unhappy state. But what are your opinions?

Lecture summaries

16th September - Reports meeting

There were three contributors to the Reports meeting who gave summaries of five projects in all: Peter Halkon on a field-walking project in the Bursea/Hasholme area near Holme-upon-Spalding Moor, and the Society excavation at Brough; Peter Armstrong on the Society's examination of the Humber foreshore site at Weighton Lock, Broomfleet, and the Unit excavation at Lurk Lane in Beverley; and Dr Ben Whitwell on excavations at Deepdale, near Barton on Humber.

Bursea/Hasholme In the vicinity of the River Foulness a range of occupational material from the Neolithic to the Roman period is known. The Roman potteries at Throlam and Hasholme Hall are the best-known, and the latter site has also produced evidence of iron smelting. Work by the Royal Commission has demonstrated the wealth of aerial photographic detail most particularly indicating the canalisation of the Foulness allied to enclosure ditches. Members of the Field Study Group are attempting to enlarge the understanding of the industrial complex by non-excavational fieldwork.

Welton Road, Brough A small excavation conducted by members of the Society at week-ends on a development site to the north of Welton Road, Brough, produced evidence of late 1st to early 2nd century AD occupation in the form of an oven and ill-defined post structures. A very substantial wall of limestone of later date may fit into the defensive sequence of the Roman town.

Weighton Lock, Broomfleet Iron Age and Roman period artefacts have been found on the Humber foreshore below high-water in the vicinity of Weighton Lock, and the Society excavated here in the late sixties. Near to the presumed outfall of the River Foulness a substantial Roman presence indicated by the 'Fax B' site is certain. More nebulous is the nature of the archaeology of the tide-swept foreshore which members made efforts to test in August and September. Sweeping back the overlying silt deposits as the tide receded proved an effective means of exposing the clay subsoil in large areas. Changes in coloration were plotted to reveal a series of circular and subcircular features, sometimes with stakes present. These proved to be silt-filled hollows and were related to apparent shore-lines of uncertain date, although probably post-medieval. Such features are perhaps to be seen in the context of fishing or eeling and are not evidence of Iron Age period hut circles, an interpretation tentatively made previously when circular forms were noted. The distribution of finds may also be misleading when bank erosion and tidal movement is taken into account.

Lurk Lane, Beverley The area of excavation had been reduced in order to examine the lower sequence of archaeology to the natural boulder clay subsoil. The earliest of three major construction phases was a building, probably of 11th century date, raised on earth-fast posts, whose ground-plan was basically reproduced by the late 13th century timber-framed aisled hall which replaced it. Pre-Conquest occupation on the site was related to land division marked by a north/south ditch and indications of light industrial activity involving lead were present. This development in the 9th or 10th centuries was in clear contrast to the earliest archaeological levels where two major ditches, the later of which was a realignment of the former, provided evidence of Middle Saxon occupation. As boundary ditches the features may well belong to the southern side of the monastery precinct believed to predate the Minster foundation and as such the ditch realignment could be seen to represent an

enlargement of the precinct in the south-east. The later ditch had been infilled with a large amount of timber, some of it structural in form, indicative of a destroyed building nearby. Further excavation to the east was in progress in the hope of recovering in situ structures which might have been introduced into the enlarged monastic precinct.

Deepdale Excavations at Deepdale on the Lincolnshire Wolds near Barton-on-Humber had followed in the wake of field-walking and the discovery of a hoard of 193 late Roman siliquae in 1979 by the farmer, Mr Charles Lawe. The site had also produced a buckle of a type often associated with the garrisons of late Roman forts and consequently thought of as a "para-military" dress fitting. However, such buckle types have also turned up on Romano-British town sites in recent years, and certainly the Deepdale occupation is non-military in character. The excavation revealed a rectangular farm building, partially ploughed out, which had been raised on chalk rubble foundations. Later channels had been cut through the chalk floors and outer walls at the south-east corner. Evidence of aisle post positions had recently been found as chalk-filled pits. The excavation of the interior of this barn-like building was continuing.

21st October - Roman and Early Christian Mosaics in Europe and North Africa. Terry Suthers

The visual delights of the lecture do not translate very well into a necessarily inadequate lecture summary. Terry Suthers was awarded a Churchill travelling scholarship to examine mosaics and the techniques of their conservation in Italy, Sicily and North Africa over a two month period in 1980. The principles and origins of mosaic decoration were explained. Floor and wall mosaics of the Roman world had antecedents in Greece where stone, marble, tile and glass raw materials were employed. Glass tesserae, "smolti", are considerably more common in wall mosaics, and the brilliant golden smolti are tesserae of glass-laminated gold leaf. The study of mosaics, particularly in

the context of conservation, has only recently been given international consideration, and there are differing schools of thought on restoration, for example. Backing materials for lifted mosaics vary, although fibre glass resin is the best for strength and lightness. Lifting methods too are not standardised. The Europeans have not adopted the rolling technique, which has been pioneered by Hull Museums, considering it too risky! But lifting by sections and reconstituting has been honed to a fine art and joins rarely are discernible in recent work compared with early lifts.

Mr Suthers' study tour began with the wall mosaics to be seen in Venice, Torcello and Ravenna. At Venice a 700 year evolution of wall mosaics are available in the Church of San Marco. These adorn both interior and exterior walls and have been subjected to endless replacements and restoration because of fires and earthquakes. On the island of Torcello, where a development from the work of Greek craftsmen is seen to grow into a truly Italian style, 11th century AD mosaics had suffered from water seepage, a recurring problem in many Italian churches. As whole sections were parting from their mortar base, retaining clips were used to pull back the bulging parts, a simple and reversible conservation technique. At Ravenna are the breathtakingly brilliant wall mosaics in the 5th century AD Mausoleum of Galopsidia and the apsidal wall mosaics of the Church of San Pollinare.

Roman floor mosaics developed from the 1st and 2nd century tradition of emblema panels. At Ostia, the port of Rome, where nearly all the mosaics are black and white, there are good examples in the Square of the Corporations. Here merchants' offices are decorated pictorially according to respective trading specialities. Here, as at many other sites, the damage caused to exposed in situ mosaics is self evident and continues largely unchecked. Excavations at Pompeii, buried in the eruption of Vesuvius in AD79, began in the 18th century and the best and most colourful were removed from the site for display in the Naples Museum. Today the emphasis is very much on conservation in situ, and work is proceeding along these lines in the House of the Vetii. The survivals at Herculaneum are in many

ways more remarkable than at Pompeii. Overwhelmed by molten mud, house structures here have survived in excellent detail, even the wood actually remaining and protected today by encasement in perspex. Mosaics occur on outside walls as well as those within. A full-time mosaic restorer works at Herculaneum where subsided pavements inevitably suffer further damage beneath the feet of tourists.

In Sicily at Monreale conservation through the ages is well displayed throughout the 68,000 sq.ft. of golden mosaic in the 12th century church, but the best of all mosaics are to be seen at Piazza Armerina, the 3rd century AD hunting lodge of the co-emperor Maximianus. Here 35,000sq.ft. of floor mosaics occupy forty rooms with scenes depicted in each appropriate to the function. Members of the public are not permitted to walk on the mosaics and the whole area is protected from the weather, the most sensible approach to display.

In North Africa the best mosaics are to be seen in the museums at Tunis, Sousse and El Djem. The mosaics left out on sites are in an appalling condition, and Carthage in particular is a bad example. Plant growth is as great a destroyer of these art works as erosion by visitors. Glass was used a great deal in the very realistic art of the mosaics of North Africa, and subject matter is very wide-ranging. The earliest examples seem to have been imports of the emblema types, but a distinctive North African style soon developed.

Having had the opportunity of examining the many different artistic styles of mosaic work, Mr Suthers is of the opinion that if one were looking for comparisons for the best of our East Riding mosaic pavements, the Rudstone Charioteer, then it is to be found in the developed style of North Africa.

Taxpayers! Join the Covenanters Did you know that you can give money to the Society without actually paying a penny more than your normal subscription? The way it is done is through a Deed of Covenant. You agree that for a period of four years you will pay out of your general taxed income an annual sum which, after deduction of Income Tax at the standard rate, will leave the net amount which you

subscribe to the Society. Did you follow that? Well, anyway this is how it is calculated:

<u>Net sum</u> (your sub.)		<u>Tax</u> (at 30% of gross income)		<u>Gross Annual Inc-</u> <u>ome for Society</u>
£5.00	plus	£2.15	equals	£7.15
£8.00	plus	£3.43	equals	£11.43

Apart from recognising the great benefit that the Society will gain, you really need not understand the weird and wonderful ways of the Inland Revenue since our Covenant Treasurer, Rosemary Major, will be doing the work in claiming the tax deduction. So by doing nothing other than agreeing to pay your subscription for four years, the Society collects an extra £2.15 if you are an Ordinary Member or £3.43 if you are a Family Member through a simple claims procedure. Your agreement entails the completion of a form each year, but there is little effort in that. No tricks! No unpleasant bending! Etc. So if you would like to do a good deed and become a covenanter (I'm afraid you don't get a badge!), then please fill in the Deed of Covenant form that is enclosed with this newsletter to convert your subscription, which is due in any case on 1st January 1982, and return it to Rosemary Major, 5 Mill Walk, Cottingham, North Humberside, HU16 4RP. Rosemary is also available to receive forms at Society meetings. The Banker's Order attached to the Deed of Covenant may prove useful, as this is the most reliable method of payment, but it is not essential to pay in this way if you do not wish to. The alternative is the usual one - pay direct to the Hon Treasurer, John Hicks, 26 Redland Drive, Kirk Ella, HU10 7UZ, or to Rosemary, by cash or cheque. In the case of the latter these should be made payable to the East Riding Archaeological Society.

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● Suzie Small Finds Spot ●
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Suzie Small Finds goes roaming with the Romans! You may well wonder at the reason for this Roman invasion of the Suzie Small Finds Spot. Concerned glances passed between Gareth Watkins and myself at the announce-

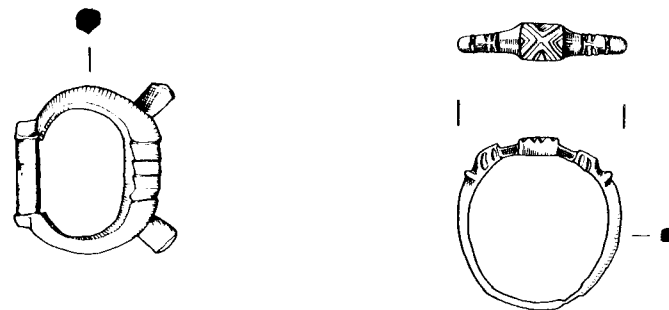
ment that the Humberside Archaeological Unit was to undertake an excavation at Winteringham. Romanisation of the post-excavation team is now taking place at an alarming rate, so watch this spot for the latest report. In the meantime let me pass on some notes about the Museum of London's conference in October on Romano-British Glass for the Archaeologist and the Historian.

The course began on Friday evening with a short introductory lecture entitled "Glass in the Roman Empire" by the doyen of the glass world, Dr Donald Harden. Jennifer Price then gave a very clear and concise lecture on 1st century glass in Britain. She described the various items that have been found such as cast vessels, gold-band glass and mould-blown glass. The subject of 1st century glass was to continue on the second day of the conference and I looked forward to the event with eager anticipation. The whole of the morning was concerned with a detailed study of glass excavated in London, and it was for me the most enjoyable part of the course. The morning began with a lecture by Jennifer Price and Dr Harden on glass from London. We were then ushered into another room to see an exhibition of some of the objects that had been illustrated in the previous lecture. A second room had also been set aside for laying out some of the previously illustrated items, and we were allowed to handle these objects. I have never handled Roman glass before, and I was thrilled at the thought of examining these priceless artefacts. Many of the specimens were in superb condition, and I was very impressed by the technical excellence of the items and their variety of form and decoration. The topics for the afternoon lectures included mould-blown square bottles, glass from the Bath House at Caerleon, a late 4th/early 5th century pit group from Burgh Castle, and 4th century glass. Dr Renate Pirling also gave a very interesting lecture on the subject of Roman glass from North-West Europe. The course provided a useful introduction to what, for me, is an entirely new subject. I greatly appreciated the opportunity to handle the glass, as so much more can be learned from handling an item

than seeing slides of it. I arrived back at Hull with hopeful expectations of future Romano-British glass finds from Winteringham.

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Last winter a number of finds were stolen from the Lurk Lane site in Beverley, which we honestly did not expect to see again. But six of the missing items appeared in a Beverley antique shop several months later! They were two iron arrowheads, a bone pin beater, a spherical-headed bone pin, a bronze buckle and a bronze finger ring, (the latter two are illustrated below by way of celebration for their recovery!) The shop proprietor had been led to believe that they had been found during the recent cleaning of the Beverley Beck. We would be very pleased to hear about any other such displays of medieval objects which members may have noticed amongst antique shop stock. There are still twenty missing!



Left: bronze buckle with corner knobs, length 2.15cm width 2.1cm, late 13th/early 14th century.

Right: bronze finger ring decorated with central setting between animal head supporters, diameter 2.2cm, late 12th/early 13th century.

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Medieval shoe technology was the subject of a day conference at Northampton on 21st September last. The air was heavily laden with the whiff of wet leather at the start of the meeting as the assembled participants cast eager glances at the contents of soggy polythene bags and bulging suitcases. The examination of footwear specimens quickly ceased as June Swann

began the proceedings with a lecture entitled "Dating shoes by their fashion". This was an informative lecture on the development of shoe fashions from the humblest pampootie to the Elizabethan welted shoe. Northampton Museum has the largest collection of historical footwear in Britain, and June illustrated her lecture with some slides of the shoes in the collection. Shoes depicted in brasses, paintings, tapestries (such as the Bayeux tapestry) and sculpture were drawn to our attention. John Thornton then gave a lecture on the Technical Examination of Excavated Shoes describing the development of shoe construction from the moccasin to the turnshoe (a method whereby the shoe was made inside out and then turned the right way round) and the modern welted shoe. After lunch Sue Thomas spoke on the Coventry Project. Sue was able to illustrate the different types of medieval shoes worn by the inhabitants of Coventry, such as side-laced boots and low-cut shoes. The Coventry collection of footwear was in a very poor condition when Sue first examined it, and she has contributed much valuable work in restoring and publishing the items. John Thornton then resumed the rostrum with a talk on An Experiment on the Shrinkage of Buried Shoes. The rate that leather shrinks after burial is unknown, and John's experiment involved burying strips of leather under controlled conditions. The proceedings were concluded by discussion and the examination of specimens. Not wishing Humberside to be left out in the cold, I produced an 'unidentified leather object' from Wilbert Lane, Beverley. The specimen was duly placed on a table and was the cause of much consternation and heated discussion. See the next volume of East Riding Archaeologist for details of this tantalising object! The conference provided a useful forum for gathering information and exchanging ideas. It is easy to feel that one is working in isolation when examining medieval footwear, as the preservation of leather finds on archaeological sites is generally the exception rather than the rule. However, I left the conference bubbling with enthusiasm and eager to examine my beloved leather in a new light.

Annual Dinner All the details are enclosed. The date is Wednesday 3rd February and the venue is the Jubilee Room in Staff House, Hull University, a quieter and all together more sumptuous location in which to enjoy excellent food and the equally excellent Peter Addyman, Director of the York Archaeological Trust, who is the Society's guest for the occasion. The Trust has learnt to live in the commercial and business world these days, even to the extent of issuing a catalogue of "Gifts from Viking York" from which you can buy anything from limited issue silver replica brooches to jigsaws and Christmas cards! Write to Y.A.T., 47 Aldwark, York, for yours so that you won't be without your 'Erik Bloodaxe Rules O.K.' tee-shirt on the night!! Reservations for the Dinner, which is very reasonably priced at £5.00, should be in by 27th January. The numbers have been steadily increasing over the last few years, ninety for the last dinner. Good food and entertaining guest speakers guarantee a most enjoyable evening for all, and this year will be no exception.

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