ERAS News

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Excavations at Brough 1980 The Society has been far from indolent these twelve months past in the province of outdoor pursuits, and what is most encouraging is that work in the field has been very largely member motivated. Splendid as this is, there is still a lot of ground to make up, (or is it earth to take out? - I'm not sure!) and more willing hands and feet (not necessarily on the same body!) are required if the Society is to become more than a speck on the landscape of the East Riding. Excavation work at Brough has done much to bring together a team of kindred spirits. But we're not there yet by any means and there is plenty to learn still - for all of us. But thought and effort has gone into the work this year, and it is a cheering sight! Real progress will be achieved if the interest remains and grows. But it will take more than the handful of members who have been responsible for this present burst of field activity; a constant ground-swell of support from the membership is the only way to ensure the continuing growth of this new life. Think on as you digest this resumé of the results of the work at Brough, supplied here by Peter Halkon. You might be writing such things next year!

Summary: Excavation on a building development site north of Welton Road, Brough, revealed traces of Romano-British buildings and associated features. Part of a minor road surface, an oven and a series of herring-bone pattern, stone wall fragments. Occupation spanned the 1st to the early 3rd centuries AD. Finds included coins of Vespasian, Domitian and Nerva, and several bronze objects such as an enamelled fibula. It is possible that the buildings represented formed part of the annexe of the fort, as suggested by Corder and Wacher for this area, although little of

a specifically military nature was found.

Introduction: Between June and December 1980 a small group of E.R.A.S. members was involved in the rescue excavation on a site to the rear of the houses occupying the north side of Welton Road. The group was only able to dig on Sundays, and consequently the excavation was limited in extent. The principal aim was to recover evidence of the nature of occupation in this area before the archaeological deposits were destroyed in the course of house construction.

Evidence of structures: The land on which the excavation took place slopes down north-westward to the small stream, Elloughton Beck, which may have been a much larger channel during the Roman period. Machine work had disturbed a stone scatter, 7.55m from the swimming pool, which is a feature of the site built in the 1930s. This scatter included some heavily burnt limestone and ran roughly north/south. An area for excavation was laid out immediately to the east, Area B, within which a spread of gravel was exposed below the topsoil which was later proved to be part of a minor street or roadway. Levelling with a dragline had destroyed part of the upper layers at this point, which in contrast survived intact further toward the beck owing to the slope. Little pottery was found on this gravel surface, although between it and the stone scatter to the west Romano-British occupation debris in the form of pottery, coarse wares and samian, animal bone and nails. This area showed signs of widespread burning, including several patches of burnt clay. The soils at the S.W. corner of Area B were heavily blackened and contained burnt pottery and large amounts of bone. Burnt stone was removed to reveal an oven constructed of clay-bonded stone on a base of stone slabs. A clay-filled pit adjacent provided a supply of daub for periodic patching and sealing. The oven was surrounded by a horse-shoe or circle of post holes, suggesting a wind-break or wall of a temporary(?) building in association. The oven itself strongly resembled military ovens at Exeter (P.T.Bidwell, Roman Exeter:Fortress and Town, 1980).

The houseowner living adjacent to the site reported the discovery of a similar structure in his garden! The presence of bones of cattle, sheep and pig, heavily blackened pottery and woody ash strongly suggest that the oven(s) were used for food cooking and were not industrial in nature. Around the oven was an ashy deposit filled with pottery sherds including plain and decorated samian ware. The coin of Domitian was also found in the vicinity but unstratified.
Underneath, ans supposedly pre-dating the oven, was a narrow ditch or gulley, showing as a dark fill against the natural yellow sand. This feature could be projected to run into a similar feature discovered earlier in the excavation running east/west across Trench B to form an L-shape. A series of possible post holes ran inside this gulley.
Owing to the pressure of time, trial trenches were cut to try to ascertain the alignment of the roadway feature. Large blocks of stone, a heavy scatter of medium sized pieces of limestone and a stone-lined drain were discovered between the swimming pool and the adjacent newly-constructed house. The large stones had a wear pattern appropriate to a threshold. Some associations with Area B seemed assured from alignments that were continuous, such as the drain. Extraction of gravel by the builder to the west of Area B towards the stream (Area G) revealed a wall footing whose lower courses were set in herring-bone pattern. A narrow trench filled with mortary soil ran along the eastern face of this wall and is presumed to have been the construction trench. The section face of this machine cut trench revealed post holes cutting into the natural gravel subsoil. The wall footing was investigated, but insufficient length and width was exposed to determine its true nature. The subsequent machine cut sewer trench between the excavated area and the swimming pool revealed more walling of the same type. Pottery too from this trench was identical in form and fabric to that found in large quantities in Area G along the wall footings. Exact alignments are difficult to define, but the walling appears to form a section of a major perimeter circuit or building.

P.H.

Introducing Suzie Small Finds Well may you wonder at the prospect! For your edification and delight ERAS News proudly(?) presents the pseudonymous Susan Jackson in the very first of a gripping new series of polythene bag revelations. Thrill to the promise of startling disclosures as the Humberside Archaeological Unit's Finds Researcher lifts the tissue paper veil from the margarine tub world of archaeological small finds. Soon you will have the answers to questions you never thought existed! -- Medieval glass - is it all it's cracked up to be? -- Ancient leatherwork - is it just kid's stuff? Know all this, and more, when you read the .....

Suzie Small Finds Spot

I am very grateful to John Rumsby of Hull Museums for drawing my attention to two medieval leather sheaths found during excavations for the construction of the new bridge over the River Hull on the west bank, which were handed into the museum by members of the public. The sight of two more sheaths brought a little glimmer of joy to my heart, as the Humberside Archaeological Unit boasts a fine collection of medieval sheaths found during excavations in the Old Town. Both the sheaths illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2 were drawn when they were wet. They are now deposited at the Transport and Archaeological Museum, and no. 2 bears the accession number KCHM 142.1980.1. Each of these items would have been worn in the Middle Ages by civilians to hold a general purpose knife.

Fig 1: This sheath is complete and in good condition with the exception of three tear marks on the front upper portion. It has an oblique point at the bottom, and there are four slits in the back near the top through which passed a thong to attach it to the belt of the owner. The decoration is divided into two sections corresponding to the knife handle and the blade. At the division the front area is slightly raised to allow for the thickness of the handle. The design on the front consists of six stamped lions passant sinister within an acanthus scroll motif

engraved with a blunt tool. The use of the acanthus scroll is found on early medieval leatherwork, but the use of metal stamps is more characteristic of the 14th and 15th centuries. The back of the sheath is decorated with six groups of oblique lines, each three lines wide and forming chevrons where they meet at the central seam. Length 19.0cm; maximum width 4.1cm. The decoration on the front of this example is similar to that shown on the front lower portion of a sheath from the Customs House site in London (Tatton-Brown 1975, 164 no.119), which was found in a context with a wide date range ending in the 14th century. A sheath which was recovered during mechanical excavations at Hungate, York, (Richardson 1959, 104 no.4), and is referred to as 15th century, also has a comparable stamped design.

Fig 2: This sheath is incomplete as the top portion is missing. It is in a reasonable condition and has a worn tip. It is similar to sheath 1 in that it is constructed by means of folding over and stitching up the back a single piece of leather, that it has a raised portion to accommodate the handle, that it is decorated by means of a blunt tool and metal stamp, and that it has the same conventional division of design. However the sheath tapers to a very narrow point and must have held a very small knife in comparison with sheath 1. The front upper part consists of four stamped griffins passant sinister,

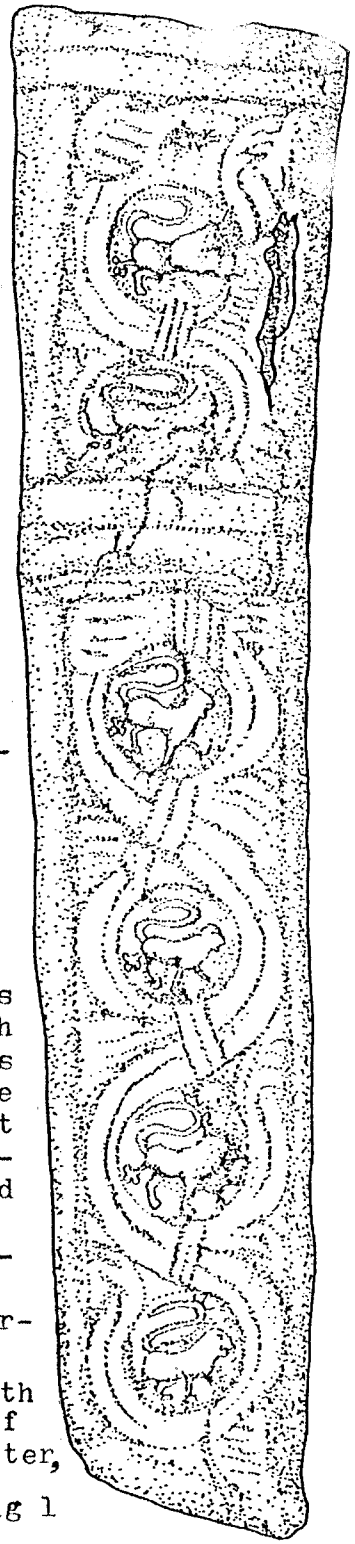

Fig 1

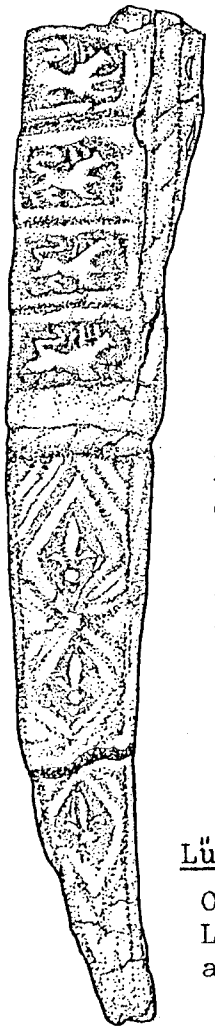

Fig 2

and the lower part has three stamped fleurs-de-lis within lozenge-shaped engraved frames. Stamped patterns bordered by lozenge-shaped frames are frequently found on 14th and 15th century leatherwork. The back of the sheath is engraved with linear and oblique lines. Length 13.0cm; maximum width 2.3cm. The stamped fleurs-de-lis motif on the sheath is similar to the motif on the front of another found at Thames Street, London (Ward-Perkins 1975, Pl.XLII no.1), which is dated to the 15th century.

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Tatton-Brown, T., 1975, "Excavations at the Custom House Site City of London 1973 Part 2", Trans. London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, 26, 103-70.

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Lübeck is a long way from the East Riding!

Or is it? Last November Brian Ayers went to Lübeck, near Hamburg in West Germany, to give a paper on archaeological work in Hull at the invitation of the Amt für Vor- und Frühgeschichte (see below). Here follows Brian's impressions of the archaeological work in its setting which he has very thoughtfully compiled for us less fortunate stay-at-home types!

The medieval city of Lubeck, the'Queen of the Hansa', sits on a hill between the Rivers Trave and Wakenitz at the base of the Baltic side of the Jutish peninsula. Its spectacular location is still evident today, despite encroaching modern redevelopment, with the spires of its churches and cathedral thrusting into the sky.

Until 1937 it was a Free City with total control of its own affairs, but it has now become part of the state of Schleswig Holstein. Bombing in 1942 destroyed much of the historic core, notably the merchants' quarter, but much still remains and many buildings have been, and are being, sensitively restored. The cathedral and the parish church, the Marienkirche, were both burnt with the loss of many precious art treasures , but the bare simplicity of the restored Marienkirche left this observer at least in awe at the beautiful building, in contrast to the undamaged Jakobkirche which is almost smothered by its Baroque interior, not least the three organs!

Valuable rescue excavations were carried out on bomb sites in the late 1940s and 1950s, but recently work has been put onto a more reliable footing by the creation of the Amt für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, which is a broadly-based project studying the documentation, buildings and archaeology of the city (and containing a staff of 43!). The documentary historian faces a formidable task as many documents were lost in the war; some are now in Potsdam in the D.D.R. and can - occasionally - be consulted; others are reported to be in Leningrad but have never been seen. The buildings' survey has much more material, notably the colossal brick warehouses, often seven storeys in height, many dating from the mid-13th century. Archaeological work goes hand in hand with the study and restoration of these buildings, and it was significant that all excavations currently being undertaken in Lübeck are within or adjacent to standing buildings. This does of course create considerable problems. Two recently completed excavations tested the technical expertise of the archaeologists to a considerable degree. An early 14th century brick warehouse of seven floors stood above a 3m deep cellar, below which were 8m of waterlogged archaeological deposits representing part of an infilled waterfront area. The only way that could be found to contain the water and excavate in safety within such a confined space was to dig inside concrete rings, pumps working 24 hours a day. A further excavation was undertakenin the Augustinian Monastery. Here a 13th century arcade had been filled

by non-structural walls between the piers. In the 19th century a second storey had been added, the weight of the new roof being carried by these foundationless medieval walls. Restoration demanded underpinning, but one of the walls was found to overlie the corner of a 12th century. 10m deep, timber-lined well. It was important to excavate the well, as its early date would provide useful data, not least for dendro-chronology, and, with the help of concrete and steel, the archaeologists managed it.

Current excavations are just as technically difficult. I went down a hole that measured 10m by 8m by 10m deep. Four days are spent shoring for every one digging, but the results are justifying the expenditure of time and cash. The origins of Lübeck rival Hull in complexity and antiquarian speculation, but archaeologists are now beginning to find material which suggests settlement before the traditional mid-12th century foundation. In addition they are locating spectacular features below the existing buildings. One 13th century merchant's house on Koberg, near the north gate, has an under-floor hypocaust central heating system of a type only normally found in monasteries.

From a personal point of view, one of the most interesting aspects of the city is its relevance to a study of medieval Hull. Lübeck was naturally much larger, wealthier and, in international terms, more important than Hull, but the two ports were trading partners - not always amicable ones - and the influence of the Baltic on Hull has long been recognised. A striking similarity between the two is the use of brick. Lübeck is a brick-built city, using material on a lavish scale. The merchants' houses, the warehouses, churches, town walls and cathedral were all built of brick from the late 12th century onwards. Furthermore, the bricks often carry a maker's stamp and are occasionally glazed. Decorative string courses survive in several buildings of bricks with a thick green glaze, very similar to material excavated in Hull. The growth of Lübeck can also be compared to that of Hull, their respective positions being influenced by predominant natural features, such as the haven in the River Hull or that in the River Trave

which is next to a defensible hill and ancient route system. Their dissimilarities are interesting as well. The Lübeck waterfront is a grandiose example of corporate initiative to reclaim land, whereas Hull was a much more individual and haphazard affair. I rapidly found that there is much to see and much to learn in Lübeck, not least that German sausage can provide a memorable breakfast, whilst German wine could make one forget the evening!
(I thought we would get to the real point of the visit eventually! ed.)

Lecture summaries

21st January - The Coritani. Dr Ben Whitwell

Dr Whitwell's subject was the Iron Age tribe, the Coritani, who broadly speaking occupied the area of the East Midlands up to the Humber estuary. As a community the Coritani have remained obscure, and for the Iron Age period major centres of settlement have been inferred - though not confirmed - from the important and well-known Romano-British administrative foci of Ratae and Lindum, Leicester and Lincoln respectively. Surprisingly, nothing is known about the Coritanian burial custom. There are no square-ditched burials, for instance, which is a form so characteristic of the Parisi, neighbours of the Coritani on the north bank of the Humber in the East Riding. However, chance discoveries, the evidence of aerial photography and fieldwork have been recently combined to fill in the picture considerably, and the settlement pattern of the Coritani is beginning to emerge. Coritanian settlement types can be divided into hillforts, smaller enclosures and open plan. Colsterworth, Burrough Hill and Honington are examples of hillforts although all are small in scale and are probably not to be seen as hillforts in the normally applied sense with warlike connotations, so much as protected settlement centres. More typical of Coritanian country are the smaller enclosures, such as Draughton (Northants.) which are in use early in the Iron Age and continue to be occupied into the Romano-British period. Several more sites of this type are now being found in

the Trent Valley. Of the open settlements, Dragonby (Lincs.) is a good example where ditches, hut circles and wells are features of the complex. Lying on the edge of the limestone escarpment, Dragonby may have been a site exploiting the iron ore.
Material evidence of Coritanian culture survives principally as pottery, weaponry and iron work, and coinage. Scored-ware pottery is characteristic of, although not exclusive to the area, for it occurs in S.E. England and E. Anglia also. The Dragonby site produced pottery vessels in a burnished, black or dark brown fabric bearing curvilinear and rouletted decoration, paralleled at an Iron Age Cemetery near Trier. Other continental parallels for Coritanian pottery have been established, but the sites are widely dispersed and cannot provide a European point of origin for the Coritani. There are many examples of weaponry and metalwork, but in all cases find spots are divorced from settlement sites. A well-known piece is the Witham shield with its curvilinear decoration and coral inlaid boss. In the 1st century BC, at the end of the Iron Age period, coinage makes its first appearance. Coin types of the Iron Age were identified by Allen, who proposed tribal groupings inferred from their distributions. Whilst some of these conclusions are in doubt today, the Coritanian boundaries may be grasped from the coin types, particularly at their point of junction with the Catuvellauni at the River Nene. Coritanian coins occur north of the Humber, but find spots are all coastal or riverine and may only serve as indicators of trade. The inscribed series of coins on which names occur in pairs begins in the first part of the 1st century AD and continues beyond the Roman conquest. The sequence is however unrefined in that the coins have not been found in stratified deposits. Coin groupings separated by some distances, a feature also of Icenian territory, may be an indication of population concentrations.
In the Romano-British period the road system plays an important role inevitably in piecing together the settlement pattern. New postulations for Roman fort sites have been put forward in the light of the fort now located at Kirmington (Lincs.) - Sleaford and

Horncastle would continue the chain. The major towns are Leicester and Lincoln, the former being the civitas capital of c.100acres. Here major buildings have been identified by excavation including the forum with shops, offices and basilica. The standing remains of the Jewry Wall are part of the municipal bath building. The legionary fortress at Lincoln and the civilian settlement which superseded it occupy a similar area of c.100acres. The northern gateway of the upper colonia stands today as Newport Arch. Dr Whitwell himself was responsible for the excavation of the East Gate at Lincoln, which by the 3rd century AD was the most important given the threat from the Saxon raiders along the east coast. Coastal erosion has eliminated the Saxon shore fort defence which must have protected the town. The stone-built wall of the colonia was a remarkable construction built over the fill of the ditch of the legionary fortress. Other towns in the tribal area are small by comparison, the discrepancy of scale being substantial, although some town settlements occupy larger areas than those defined by circuit walls, e.g. Ad Pontem (Thorpe in Northants.) Kirmington and Margidunum, on the Fosseway display the Iron Age/Romano-British continuity. Rural sites in the Romano-British period are only now being identified. The absence of villas amongst the Coritani, according to the distribution maps, must be a myth, for of 1500 sites where Romano-British pottery has been found, 500 have also produced building materials. Winterton is one major villa site which has been the subject of extensive excavations. Iron Age features predate the villa buildings whose maximum dimension is 600ft. Cotterstock is another villa complex of comparable size. Recently collated surveys and finds fill out the rural landscape for the Romano-British period, with many more occupation sites being identified, including industrial complexes such as tile kilns and lime-burning centres.

18th February - The medieval landscape. Stephen Moorhouse

Drawing largely on examples in West Yorkshire, Stephen Moorhouse attempted to unravel the intricacies of the medieval landscape and explain some of the terminology, often daunting to the layman. To understand the medieval landscape it was first necessary to grasp the social and economic administrative units within which the folk of medieval England operated and fulfilled their obligations. Basically these are three, the township, the parish and the manor. Most pertinent to the subject of the lecture was the township, (or tithing in the southern counties, and bourg in Kent), the unit within which the people organised themselves for agricultural and administrative purposes. A township topographically would comprise areas of woodland, arable, and settlements. The parish was a purely ecclesiastical unit, an area from which the Church gathered tithes for the sustenance of the rector. The manor was the organisation under the manor lord which exploited the labour of the townships. The manor would normally be made up of a number of townships, as would be the parish, although boundaries of all could be co-extensive. However, not all of the townships of a particular manor, would necessarily belong to the same parish, a situation which led to separate parochial and manorial foci for many townships for the discharge of the respective responsibilities. The practical organisation of township life and its interpretation today through the evidence of the landscape around us can be very complex. A good example of a township with all its constituent elements clearly defined is Cuxham. The density of settlement in the medieval period was determined by the quality of land. Near Halifax, for instance, settlements show up at the interface between the good and poorer land, the siting taking advantage of both arable and pasture. The depopulation of settlements in the later middle ages has been traditionally attributed to the Black Death, but it may be closer to the truth to see this as a consequence of changes in land use as stock raising began to supplant arable farming in many areas.
The elements of the landscape were now considered, and Laxton (Notts.) was used to demonstrate the classic

field system, modern farmland which is still being farmed today under a medieval form of management. The furlongs (furrow longs = plough furrow length) of the strip system are clearly visible here, as in many other places in the English countryside. They invariably run up and down the contours of the land, not across them, to take advantage of natural drainage. The pattern is normally seen as a reverse S, a consequence of the manoeuvre in turning the ox team pulling the plough. The illuminated borders to the pages of the Luttrell Psalter, compiled c.1335-40, provide a wealth of detail for the agricultural techniques of the period. Boundaries at Laxton are defined annually but with only marker posts at the outer ends or corners of land divisions. Other elements of the medieval field systems are easy to distinguish also, such as sikes - wetter ground where lush hay crops were taken - and selions - raised headlands at the end of the furlong strips where the plough was turned. Field patterns often indicate assarting, the systematic reclamation of woodland for arable use whose very nature of piecemeal acquisition contributed to irregularly-shaped land units. Similar patterns may be the result of pasture farming in which marginal land was often reclaimed piecemeal too.
The change of building materials from timber to stone which was a feature of house construction in the late 16th/early 17th centuries in England extends to field systems also. Stone walls enclosing fields which today can be seen to stand on raised banks are replacements, probably attributable to this period, of an earlier system of bank and fence enclosures indicating the greater antiquity of the enclosure pattern compared with that of stone-walled fields where no such underlying bank is in evidence.
Roads in the medieval landscape reflect both manorial and parochial requirements of the township communities. Complexities in the road system are often brought about by the introduction of chapelries. A fine example of a major medieval road subsequently disused, and in this sense "lost", is the King's Way from Bingley to Haworth, which is documented and which with care can be traced on the ground today. Changing

times determine changes in land routes, and footpaths which today run counter to more recent field systems can often be identified for what they are - medieval roads. Rights of way, once established, are rarely rescinded.
Townships had communal meeting places. Matters bearing upon the community could be decided in the Courts, but in the North communal meeting places were often in the open and sometimes these sites can be identified on place-name evidence. Tunstead (sometimes becoming Tunstall) lying on a medieval right of way is the stead, or site, of the tun, or community, i.e. the community's meeting place. Place names are a mine of such information since they are adopted as descriptive terms relating to land use or topographical associations. As a word of advice to fieldworkers, the starting point for any local research into the medieval landscape should be the six inch Ordnance Survey, first edition (surveyed in the 1840s) and not the first revision from which obsolete boundaries were deleted.

18th March - Rambles and thoughts on Roman East Yorkshire. Professor A.F.Norman

Owing to the illness of the scheduled speaker, Brian Hartley, Professor Norman gallantly stepped into the breach and shared with us his ideas on three topics pertaining to the archaeology of the East Riding in the Romano-British period: 1. The Antonine Itinerary Iter Primum. 2. The literacy of the Rudston Venus pavement. 3. The so-called Petuarian school of Mosaicists.
1. Outlining the Roman place-names which have come down to us from the sources - the Antonine Itinerary, Ravenna Cosmography, Notitia Dignitatum, Geographia of Ptolemy and the Brough-on-Humber theatre inscription - Professor Norman summarised the arguments already promulgated for the identification of Praetorio, the last point on the Iter I of the Antonine Itinerary, which gives the Roman mileage for the route from Eburacum to Derventio (7) to Delgovicia (13) to

Praetorio (25). There clearly are problems with the traditional interpretation of York-Malton-Millington-Brough since the mileages do not work. Professor Norman summarised the arguments of Wacher, Rodwell and Ramm, who had each published his own solutions to the problem, and then put forward his own suggestion - admittedly "trailing a coat" - inviting us to look elsewhere than Brough for Praetorio and to remember that Derventio , normally identified with Malton, is a river name that could have been applied to another Derwent-based fort, and to consider the nature of supply routes for the period concerned. If we were to take Iter I as an eastward route (although Ramm's "demolition" of the Roman road system east to the coast casts doubt on it at the present time) then the mileage would fit, if York, Stamford Bridge (the Derwent crossing where a fort exists) and Wetwang were the identifications for Eburacum, Derventio (7), and Delgovicia (13), respectively. 25 Roman miles on in the same direction would take us to Bridlington Bay, where Ptolemy's "Gabrantovices" lived. Coastal erosion will almost certainly have taken the site, but hereabouts Professor Norman would have us locate Praetorio, the end of Iter I.

2. The Rudston Venus pavement has been universally condemned as naieve, of crude workmanship, and bearing unmistakable signs of illiteracy. Professor Norman undertook to put the record right! In the lettering of the inscribed panels, TAVRVS OMICIDA (the man-slaying bull) and [LEO] F [R] AMEFER (the spear-bearing lion), the letters A, V and M are said to be confused, all being A-based. However, the R in TAVRVS has not been similarly singled out, even though it too as an A-based letter. Professor Norman argued that these are in fact embellishments, not illiteracies. An inscription of c.80BC from Republican Rome has AAARCELLVS for MARCELLVS, which is quite clearly acceptable and has never been interpreted by scholars as an illiteracy. OMICIDA has been dismissed by David Smith of the Newcastle Museum as the wrong gender for the masculine TAVRVS, but this is not so since the word is both masculine and feminine,

there being no such Latin word as the supposedly correct OMICIDVS. And finally the word FRAMEFER belongs to that group of -FER and -GER ending adjectival forms which in the Latin language have an exclusively poetic usage. Taken all together, the decorative application of lettering, correct grammar and poetic overtones indicate a high level of literacy, quite the opposite of the published and generally accepted opinion.

3. Professor Norman reviewed mosaic patterns which occur north and south of the Humber as well as from further afield, and drew atention to the similarity of border designs in particular. The subject matter of pavements were very much the choice of the house owner and the designs must have been executed in situ from pattern books by peripatetic craftsmen, and in no way stemming from a static workshop in Petuaria, which is an erroneous impression given by the attribution of East Riding mosaics to a Petuarian school of mosaicists.

The Archaeology of Medieval Crafts Sorry about this, but you've missed it! A day conference held at the University of Birmingham on Saturday 21 February last on the Archaeology of Medieval Urban Crafts had little or no advanced publicity with a touch of (almost) cabinet secrecy about it. But why worry when leaky Susan Jackson was in attendance?! Here's her report.

It was very early on a dark, frosty, February morning(when most sensible people are asleep in their beds) that your heroic Hon Secretary and Suzie S.F. hit the Urban Crafts trail for Birmingham. After several hours of stimulating motorway scenery (past local beauty spots such as Spaghetti Junction!), we finally arrived at our destination to join the merry throng purposefully striding towards the conference rooms.

Martin Carver provided the opening lecture entitled "Inter-relationships between medieval crafts" during which he discussed the possibility of assessing the inter-relationships of crafts from the archaeological

evidence. He suggested that evidence such as hearths and their associated material, pits and any stains surrounding them should be carefully examined in order to determine their function.

John Cherry gave what for me was a fascinating lecture on cast bronze vessels. The most typical vessel was a tripod pitcher and many excellent illustrated examples of continental parallels were shown. Metal vessels were often the work of contemporary bell-founders, and Peter Addyman followed on by giving information about mixed metalworking processes at the Bedern, York.

A lecture on spectacle-making by Michael Rhodes concluded the morning session. There is only one pair of medieval spectacles found from excavations in England, and I don't think I shall ever forget them as Michael Rhodes gave a very detailed account of how the bone, riveted spectacles were manufactured and worn in a variety of positions.

An account of the bone and horn trades by Philip Armitage provided a stimulating start to the afternoon session. He described the waste products from bone-working and the making of horn sheets by the process of boiling, unravelling and grinding to a translucent finish the horn sheaths.

Carole Morris gave a lecture on coopering and other wood-working trades. She described the different processes involved in cask making and the three main branches of wet, white (the making of straight-sided vessels) and dry coopering.

A session on buckle-making, pins and aspects of jewellery followed. John Clark illustrated his description of the manufacture of small metal objects by showing slides of the residue (in various stages of production) from a metalworker's shop, and Christopher caple gave a summary of pin types and the history of the pin industry and its decline in the 16th century.

Leather trades formed the next topic and Mr MacCormick gave a description of an excavated tannery at Nottingham. The lucky (or not so lucky!) few were then treated to the final lecture of the day- a tantalising taste of leather articles from excav-

ations in Hull by 'yours truly'.
Medieval finds other than pottery seem a sadly-neglected conference subject, considering the amount of material that has been recovered during the last ten years, and the Birmingham day conference provided an excellent opportunity to inform and be informed of current research. So watch this spot for the next scintillating summary of the second meeting which should be about the glass trade.

S.J.

Excursions 1981 Amongst the plethora of papers within the bulging envelope of the current mailing (you do get a lot for your money, you know!), you may have managed to extract details of of the YAS/ERAS day conference and excursion, Early Iron Age in Eastern Yorkshire, on Saturday 16th May. The outing by coach to Iron Age sites in the Riding constitutes one of the two excursions for the Society this year, although obviously it is to be shared with YAS members. So don't delay with your booking if you wish to attend. The ERAS's very own excursion this year will be on Saturday 26th September and is to Laxton in N. Nottinghamshire to see the medieval field system and administrative organisation of this remarkable modern-day survival of our medieval farming past. A visit to the Collegiate Church of Southwell Minster will also be included. Details will appear in ERAS News 9 in June.

Summer Training Dig Now here is an opportunity comparable to an earlier advertisement in ERAS News 7. Keele University in Staffordshire are running an Archaeological Training School for two weeks from 25th July to 8th August 1981. It is residential or not as you prefer (£67 and £40 per week respectively) and the blurb runs thus:
This year's Excavation Training School will be the third season of work on the platform of a deserted medieval moated site not far from the University. The site, which is permanently available for our Training Schools, will be totally excavated over a period of years, and will be one of the few to be so excavated. So, in addition to receiving training,

students will be making a valuable contribution to the archaeology of the area. The course will be suitable for both absolute beginners and those with archaeological experience, and students may enrol for the full fortnight or for either of the two weeks. In both weeks training will be given in a variety of aspects of archaeological work. The main aspects of training will be in: 1. Excavation techniques. 2. Various types of site record - written, drawn and photographic. 3. Surveying. 4. Post-excavation work, especially the treatment of finds.

Enrolment must be completed by 8th June 1981 and enquiries should be addressed to Brian Threlfall, Adult Education, The University, Keele, Staffs, ST5 5BG.
So if you haven't got your hols booked yet and you feel that there is something in the opening paragraph of the Newsletter you are reading at this moment, then why not give it a try. It's a good way to start!

The alternative Can't face it, eh? Oh well try this instead. Discovery Holidays Ltd., of Dowran, St.Just-in-Penwith, Cornwall, TR19 7RS, are doing a number of Archaeological Tours this year. The list is The Archaeology of West Penwith, Brittany - the Megaliths of Carnac, The Prehistoric Sites of Wessex, Hadrian's Wall, The Romans in Southern England. They appear to be between five and seven days and prices range from about £160 upwards. (Go digging instead - it's cheaper!).

Book news I would be pleased to receive information about recent archaeological titles for the next newsletter. Space precludes other than one or two this time.
The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies is launching a series of A4 format Monographs. Number 1 is David S. Neal, Romano-British Mosaics: an Intro to their schemes and a Catalogue of paintings. This is a collection of the author's measured and painted record of 88 mosaics carried out during the last 25 years. 109pp, 26 Figs, 94 Plates, plus two 60 frame microfiches of all the mosaics in colour.

Price is £9.75 (post free) from Mrs P.Gilbert, Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1H OPP.
Three publications relating to Eastern Yorkshire's prehistory ought not to be missed. The Directorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings Occasional Paper 3 is The Past under the Plough (1980) and includes an article by Terry Manby, "Yorkshire Wolds: field monuments and arable farming". Price is £7.22 plus 75p postage from Ancient Monuments Publications, Dept of the Environment, Victoria Road, South Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 ONZ. Terry Manby also has an article, "Bronze Age Settlement in Eastern Yorkshire" in No. 73 of B.A.R. (1980) "The British Later Bronze Age", ed. J.Barrett and R.Bradley, two volumes price £16 post free from British Archaeological Reports, 122 Banbury Road, Oxford. From the same source is B.A.R. No.74 (1980), Stephen Pierpoint, "Social Patterns in Yorkshire Prehistory 3500-750 BC", price £10 post free.

A.G.M. April 15th All the papers are enclosed. Please look over them carefully in the context of the motion proposed by Mr Calvert. This has very serious implications bearing upon the Constitution of the Society, the most up-to-date draft of which is included for your information. Please try to attend if it is at all possible. After the business meeting there will be a showing of a thirty minute film produced by the West Yorkshire Archaeological Unit on the excavations of the Romano-British villa at Dalton Parlours. It is very well produced and worth turning out for alone. But don't underestimate the importance of the A.G.M. business.

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