

Some useful addresses! September 17th marks the start of the 1980/1 lecture programme.

Addressing the Society at this first meeting will be Terry Manby, taking time out from his excavations at Thwing to talk on the wider topic of Early Man in Yorkshire. It is a particularly appropriate subject as it coincides - deliberately so - with the touring exhibition of Early Man in Yorkshire 200,000-500 BC currently on display at the Town Docks Museum in Hull, a review of which follows.

The more traditional opening to the programme, the reports meeting, has been given something of a face-lift this year as an official Humberside Archaeological Unit contribution - excavation reports for 1980 and allocated to the December slot.

November 12th sees Dr Ian Stead reporting on his excavations on Iron Age cemeteries in Champagne, France, the final season of which is in full swing at the time of writing. We can expect a scholarly summary of this significant British archaeological invasion of Gaul. The second meeting on October 15th, to which I hope to draw your attention by mentioning lastly, is a combined lecture by staff of the York Environmental Unit, or as they style themselves for the occasion Biologists on the trail of the urban past. These latter day Sherlock Holmes's of the nightsoil, these doyens of the dunghills, these sifters of cesspits, seeking after wisdom down the barrel of a microscope, will bring you a specialist's eye view of this developing branch of archaeology. I emphasise through flippancy this October meeting, since I am aware of the unnatural bias which exists amongst many against the exposition of the scientific or specialist approaches in archaeology. The number of reluctant members who were so richly rewarded by their attendance at Arnold Aspinall's lecture last March on geophysical surveying for arch-

aeology is a measure of the hidden delights of the apparently "too technical for me" lecture. So don't give this one a miss - there may even be a glimpse down the microscope for those with an eye to see.

Archaeology at the Town Docks One of our members, Jeff Watkin, acting no doubt also out of filial attachment to his parent body being currently employed with the museum, offers his impression of two exhibitions on show there:

By the time you read this you either will still have the opportunity to catch two travelling exhibitions about archaeology or will have just missed both. If you didn't see them, here's your chance to find out what you have missed!

Both have been on show since 26th July and until 28th September in the room reserved for temporary exhibitions at the Town Docks Museum, and they form an interesting contrast in style and content. One display is titled "Early Man in Yorkshire 200,000-500 BC", and since much of it has been prepared by Yorkshire prehistorian Terry Manby (of Doncaster Museum) it gives an authoritative coverage of the subject. The display begins intriguingly with a graphic of a giant footprint with a skull in the heel - representing the traces of Early Man, so I'm told. It looked a bit like a question mark to me, which seems to catch the flavour of the next display which is one of those temperamental audio-visual devices. A series of faded colour slides accompanied by a tape of Manby's voice gives a potted introduction to some of the places and 19th century personalities of Yorkshire prehistory. When working this proves popular with TV-conscious younger visitors but I found the voice in the distance a distraction when attempting to read labels elsewhere.

However after this the exhibition really gets underway as far as this writer is concerned. The first section covers archaeological techniques and publication (with boards labelled "Discovering the Past", "Fieldwork", "Aerial Photography", "Science and Archaeology"), showing how sites are located, excavated

and published. Information here is conveyed chiefly by b/w photographs with explanatory labels. There then follows a sequence of old-style archaeological "Ages" arranged in chronological progression from the Old Stone Age (c.200,000-8500 BC) to the Late Bronze Age (c.1000-700/500 BC). The displays here are a selection of artefacts loosely linked with b/w photographs, maps and site plans within the cases, with in addition especially commissioned paintings and models in areas adjacent to the appropriate cases. The first of the paintings, labelled as "Hunters at Langcliffe Scars 15,000 BC" seems a bit eccentric in that the hunted deer are in the foreground while the human hunters are tiny figures skulking in the middle distance. However the idea was a good one and the other paintings proved more effective imaginative reconstructions of prehistoric people and their environment. The cases of models showing people carrying out particular tasks (flint knapping, bronze casting) or reconstructions of archaeological features (building the gateway at the Thwing hillfort) are also stimulating, albeit in some instances hard to see due to bad light in the gallery.

Photographs used in the exhibition include some very good aerial ones of sites like the Castle Dykes henge monument (at Middleham in Wensleydale), the Neolithic ceremonial site of Thornborough Henge (5 miles north of Ripon), and a particularly fine shot of enclosures and square ditched barrows at Rillington (near Malton), although these were Iron Age. Non-aerial photographs include some of the Old Stone Age habitation site at Victoria Cave, Langcliffe Scar, Settle, the (?Neolithic) monolith in Rudston churchyard, and the prominent late Neolithic round barrow known as Duggleby Howe.

Finds on display are also an interesting selection of material mostly from Yorkshire, including bone implements, flint tools, handaxes, food vessels and bronze axes and swords. A useful feature of these displays is the coloured tags used to relate labels to particular groups of objects, helping to avoid the confusion caused by attempting to relate labels numbered consecutively to items scattered out of sequence

throughout the case (as at the British Museum Viking Exhibition). A group of particular local interest is the hoard of four gold bracelets (replicas here) found at Cottingham in the late 19th century. Also of local interest are two cases added while on show in Hull by Hull Museums. One shows finds from Garton Slack (including the fascinating series of Iron Age chalk figurines), the other shows recent discoveries brought in for identification to the Archaeology Museum (flint dagger, bronze spearheads, bronze axehead, gold Stater coin, etc.)

Overall this exhibition is both pleasing to the eye, with plenty of variety in the types of displays, and informative, serving as a fine introduction to the highlights of the pre-Iron Age archaeology of Yorkshire. It is also a useful reminder of the richness of the area's archaeological heritage.

The second exhibition is a display called "Archaeology and Planning" and was put together by the York Archaeological Trust. A total of forty display boards are employed, apparently in the attempt to cover the gamut of archaeological topics. Sample titles of subjects covered include The Historic Environment, The Nature of Archaeological Evidence, Rescue Archaeology, The Council for British Archaeology, The Uses of Archaeology, Excavation Procedures, Positive Planning Policies, Museums, Universities, and (most stirring of all!) The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Unsurprisingly, several boards deal with the York Archaeological Trust and its work, although the activities of other archaeological units in the area (including the Humberside Unit) also get a brief mention. Displays make extensive use of b/w and coloured photographs, as well as a few reproductions of archaeological maps, plans and sections. Some boards simply show the covers of recent (and still available) publications produced by organisations like the Council for British Archaeology and the Department of the Environment. Most topics are introduced by a lengthy "Sunday Times" type text. A surprising piece of information amongst this welter of facts is that no less than 17 million people visited D.o.E. guardianship monuments in 1978, an interesting reflection of the

popular interest in the national heritage! Less pleasing is the discovery on the Yorkshire Archaeologists' board that the E.R.A.S. has changed from being an Archaeological Society to an Antiquarian Society. Is this based on inside information about the archaeological prowess of the Society?!

In general though the wordy and two-dimensional nature of this exhibition left this reviewer with the feeling that it would have made a better pamphlet than a display for the general public, although this may partly reflect its origins as an exhibition for the rather more specialist audience at the Town and Country Planning summer school at York in 1979. It is also perhaps unfortunate that this exhibition is on at the same time as the display on Early Man, which holds greater local interest and is more orientated towards the general public, and that it suffers by comparison. Even so the attempt was a worthwhile one and the notion of travelling exhibitions covering archaeological topics is one to be encouraged.

N.B. John Rumsby tells me that for those who treasure their memories of the Early Man exhibition, four post-cards showing items on display are available (at a cost) from Hull Museums.

J.R.W.

Readers write (rarely!) It has been a fond and indeed unfulfilled hope of mine that I should be privileged to edit a letters' page in ERAS News. You know the kind of thing - weighty matters of archaeological concern, practical suggestions, cris de coeur, not to mention the more burning issues of the moment such as the statistical probability of the Brough excavation team being decimated by the low trajectory of a golf ball driven by a property speculator using a three-iron at the seventeenth. Well, the letters have not exactly been rolling in, but maybe things will improve in the wake of the following, the first (of many more, I hope, particularly since its content demands a reply).

Sir,

In response to the eloquent invitation in the Secretary's Report for 1980 reproduced in the June 1980

issue, I am writing to offer some comments on the regrettable decision at the April A.G.M. to increase the annual subscription for Ordinary Membership to £5.00. I hope as a result some views will be forthcoming from members not present at that meeting or members who did attend but for some reason refrained from taking part in the almost non-existent debate.

Enquiries addressed to the Chairman at that meeting elicited the view - presumably of the majority of the Committee, though our esteemed Secretary was noticeably silent on that occasion - that the cost of printing and publishing comprehensive reports of the kind seen recently in the Hull Old Town Report Series did not affect the rate of subscription since these reports pay for themselves in the sense that copies sold cover the printing costs. Even so, as I said at the meeting, it is hard to believe that the free issue of copies to members costs nothing. If these valuable publications were made a separate enterprise and members desiring a copy paid the production (without a profit) then the annual subscription if increased to say £3.50 per annum, an increase of £1.00 per Ordinary Member, should cover lecturers' fees and all other expenses.

If, as already provided by most comparable Societies (notwithstanding doubts expressed by our Hon. Treasurer) arrangements were made for subscriptions to be paid by Covenant covering several years, the value to E.R.A.S. of each subscription of £3.50 would be increased to at least £4.55, so I am credibly informed. I am also informed that if our Hon. Treasurer were to write to H.M. Inspector of Taxes, Claims Branch (Charities), Magdalen House, Trinity Road, Bootle, L69 9BB, he would receive full advice on the procedure for setting up a covenant system.

Coming back to the larger question, I think it would be possible, notwithstanding the decision reached at the last A.G.M., for the next general meeting to approve a rider or modification to the subscription resolution providing for Ordinary Members to opt out of the free receipt of a copy of each major Report on the understanding that if they wished they could purchase a copy at cost and at the same time pay a reduc-

ed annual subscription of (say) £3.50.

I hope members generally will feel that the matter raised is of fundamental importance to the welfare of our Society and that it is improper to double at one go an existing subscription of £2.50 per annum. The late lamented Dr Fred Brooks, and Mr Bartlett now transferred to another area, both of whom contributed in an outstanding way to the development of the Society, would I am sure deprecate, or have deprecated, any move which would tend to decrease the popular appeal of its activities - so admirably fostered by the bright and informative News bulletin prepared (mainly) by our Hon. Secretary. Members who (like myself) wish to have copies of the more learned publications would have no objection to paying for them.

Hugh Calvert,
217 Victoria Avenue,
Kingston upon Hull.

The Fieldwork Group in the field On July 26th members of the group launched themselves upon an unsuspecting grid reference in the East Riding. Peter Halkon put considerable effort into clearing the ground to make the day's work (did I say work?) possible. Here he reports on a very excellent and productive reconnaissance.

With the kind permission of Mr Goodhart and Mr Morford of the Warter Priory Estate, and Mr Boswell of Nunburnholme, the group had an enjoyable and informative day, made even more pleasant by the weather. Members present were Peter Armstrong, Rosemary Major, Norman Trickey, Ray Ketch, Don and Marie Pattison and myself.

The first features explored were the earthworks known as Nun's Walk (SE852483) and the site of the Benedictine Nunnery, which gave Burnholme its prefix (SE853485). After lunch at a local hostelry we walked over the hillside on the south side of Nunburnholme Beck (SE850480 to 850478). The group also looked at the Church with its famous Anglo-Danish cross and fine Norman arch.

In the first area traversed, traces of a linear earthwork were observed running next to the feature known

as Nun's Walk. Further investigation showed that this earthwork, which appeared to have a ditch on each side, carried on towards Warter along the line of the foot-path (SE855490 to 859494). Due to the proximity of Roman finds at Methill Hall (SE867491) and objects unearthed in an excavation of the Nunnery site in 1905, when traces of Roman buildings were found, it is possible that this feature is a section of Roman road unpublished by the O.S. running from Burnby to Warter.

On the site of the Nunnery scatters of stone could be seen and also clear embankments which are all that remains of the 12th century foundation. (Further details can be found in "Nunburnholme - its History and Antiquities" pp 149-78, by Rev.M.C.F.Morris).

Study of the small streams, or sikes, running off Nunburnholme Beck showed the possibility that the stream was diverted at certain points, presumably to provide water and sanitation for the Nunnery (SE855490).

A ramble over the picturesquely named Totterdown Hill on the south side of the Beck revealed possible strip lynchets and fied terraces preceding the medieval rig and furrow of the lower slopes.

The village fishponds marked on the 1:25000 O.S. map were also explored. Halfway up the hill there was a curious terraced feature covered by gorse and scrub with scatters of stone (SE851478).

Detailed contour surveying and study of aerial photographs will reveal much more about this pleasant parish packed with antiquity. However our dedicated band proved how much could be discovered from a single day's walking.

Thanks must be given to Mr and Mrs Halkon for their hospitality and much needed sustenance.

E.R.A.S. Chronicle No, nothing to do with M.M. in Humberside! A former member of the Society "from the old days", now removed to Cheshire, Mrs Judy Burrows, has presented E.R.A.S. with a scrapbook of cuttings which she put together over the years relating to the Society and archaeology in general. Our committee member, Mrs Mary Hanby, has something similar herself and has willingly volunteered

to combine both into a portfolio for the Society. We would be pleased therefore if there are other similar collections which could be incorporated to form the basis of what will become a continuing record of archaeological activities in the area, and ultimately an important archive. If you can supply anything which you think might be useful, please do contact Mrs Hanby, 126 Victoria Avenue, Hull, or simply parcel it all up and post it off - you know how nice it is to receive lots of mail!!



Representative bodies within British archaeology have at last spoken out purposefully and with one voice against indiscriminate treasure hunting through the use of metal detectors. The C.B.A. Stop Taking Our Past campaign, launched last March, has not, I am sure, escaped your notice. Your comments and views would be received with interest by your editor. But in case you,

like me, are aware of and utterly condemn much of the frightful "work" of metal detector users, but are short of the ready answer to brother-in-law or the acquaintance who was only reading the other day ..., then let me quote Henry Cleere, Director of C.B.A., for you: "Archaeologists do not wish to have a total ban imposed on metal detectors. Instead, they seek to educate public opinion so that indiscriminate use of detectors on archaeological sites becomes as socially unacceptable as birds' nesting or the rooting up of rare plants. Those users of metal detectors who, like us, are genuinely motivated by an interest in the past - and these represent the majority - are welcome to join together with archaeologists in their work, the only condition being that they acquire and observe the rigorous disciplines developed over the past century."* Please do what you can to support C.B.A.'s efforts.

* C.B.A. Newsletter and Calendar, April 1980.

If there is a green spot here ... then according to my records you really should not be receiving this newsletter at all because your subscription is six months overdue! Please act promptly to remain in the fold. Of course if there is no green spot up there, move swiftly on to the next item smug in the knowledge that you probably also don't cheat at patience and always put your Archaeological Society above personal gain!!

Urban archaeology in the north C.B.A. Group 3 have organised a two-day meeting entitled Urban Archaeology in Northern England to be held at Lancaster on Saturday and Sunday, September 27th-28th. Speakers will be P.V. Addyman on York, P. Armstrong on Beverley, A. Carter on Norwich, M. Carver on Durham, Barbara Harbottle on Newcastle, R. Leech on Lancaster and Cumbria, and M. McCarthy on Carlisle. Also planned is a field trip to sites in the Lancaster area. Further details can be had from Mrs S. Haselgrove, Department of Archaeology, 46 Saddler Street, Durham, DH1 3NU.

A critic writes A second welcome contribution comes from a very game two-fingered typist, Jeff Watkin, this time after a spell of reading!

As it is notoriously THE YEAR OF THE VIKINGS, it seems appropriate to review yet another book on them (groan!). The good news is that it is about objects that are found in this area and that you can see for yourself if you have transport and a map (hoorah!).

The book is a new one by Richard N. Bailey called Viking Age Sculpture, and as he himself says one attraction of this subject is that "it is easy to get at. Stone carving is the only form of art produced between the seventh and eleventh centuries which is still readily accessible to both the student and the casual visitor. Unlike metalwork, manuscripts or ivories, the sculptures are still scattered across the countryside in the churches and churchyards with which they have always been associated." And it must be said that his book is a very useful introduction to the topic, esp-

pecially as he takes most of his examples from the area between the Humber and the Forth. Naturally the book concentrates on Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture, but it also includes a glance at the less numerous and less regionally diversified stonework of the preceding Anglian period. The text is helped out by plenty of black-and-white plates and line drawings, and at the back there is a handy short list of sites to visit, plus maps to show you where they are (you have to guess where Hull is!). Important nearby stones include those at Nunburnholme and Leeds, plus the many found in churches in and around the Vale of Pickering (the famous cross from Middleton, which figures in the B.M.'s Vikings exhibition is from the latter area). The book also has a very comprehensive bibliography including some items worth noting here for anyone interested in looking at sculpture in Yorkshire.

The works of W.G. Collingwood, although written a long time ago, are still essential reading for any one aiming to understand Viking Age sculpture. His articles in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal (Vol. XXI, 1911, deals with the East Riding) remain the basic catalogue and guide to individual stones in the area, while his more general Northumbrian Crosses of the pre-Norman Age is far from superseded by Bailey's book. More recent work relevant to this area includes an article by I.R. Pattison about the relationship of recent finds in York to the Nunburnholme, an article by J.T. Lang on "Anglo-Scandinavian Sculpture in Yorkshire", and a series of articles edited by Lang in Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age Sculpture. A booklet by Lang in collaboration with R.J. Cramp, A Century of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture also has photographs and descriptions of select stones, including some from Yorkshire.

Books and articles referred to were:

R.N. Bailey, Viking Age Sculpture (Collins, London, 1980), £10.95; J.T. Lang (ed.), Anglo-Saxon and Viking Age Sculpture, B.A.R. 49, (Oxford, 1978), £4.50; J.T. Lang, "Anglo-Scandinavian Sculpture in Yorkshire", in R.A. Hall (ed.), Viking Age York and the North, C.B.A. Research Report 27, (London, 1978), £6.00 (£7.50 from August!); R.J. Cramp and J.T. Lang, A Century of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture, (Newcastle, 1977), £1.00; L.R. Pattison, "The Nun-

burnholme Cross and Anglo-Danish Sculpture at York", Archaeologia CIV, 1973; W.G.Collingwood, Northumbrian Crosses of the pre-Norman Age, (London, 1927); W.G. Collingwood in Y.A.J. XIX, 1907; XX, 1909; XXI, 1911; XXIII, 1915.

J.R.W.

Excavations at Brough The Society excavation hastily advertised in the last newsletter is proceeding apace, and Ray Ketch supplies the following note.

The site being developed at Brough is situated between Welton Road and the Brough Golf Course. Two houses are being built and should be completed by the late autumn - this being the reason for our investigation which must be finished before the new owners take over. An average of ten Society members share the digging each Sunday, and in spite of the "summer weather" we have been fortunate not to lose more than one hour's work since the dig began on June 29th. The building developer had exposed a scatter of masonry with his mechanical excavator and our investigation started in this area. Romano-British pottery, which has been identified as 2nd century AD, has been found through the various levels, mingling with the shells which indicate the Romans' fondness for oysters. There is evidence of burning on the stone scatter, and soil discolorations of the lower levels require further investigation if we are to interpret the signs already noted and discover the nature of the site and type of occupation indicated by the spread of broken pottery and artefacts.

R.T.K.

Brief lives Try this: J.B.W. is P.A.O. and P.A., J.S.D. and K.R.M. are F.O.s now that H.A.U. has become part of H.C.C.'s D.L.A. J.G.W. is P.R. and of course S.J. remains S.F.A. I'm tempted to leave you to work it out! Maybe not: As of April 1st last, the Humberside Archaeological Unit (Staff: Principal Archaeological Officer-Ben Whitwell, Field Officers-Peter Armstrong, John Dent and Keith Miller, Pottery Researcher-Gareth Watkins, Small Finds Assistant-Susan Jackson) is part of the Department of Libraries and Amenities, Humberside County Council.