ERAS News

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F.W.Brooks Fred Brooks died on 31st January 1980. Co-founder of the East Riding Archaeological Society and its first Chairman, Fred Brooks presided over the inaugural meeting of the Society on 26th October 1960. His role in the Society's development through the sixties will be well remembered by senior members, but for those perhaps less familiar with the man, a well-loved and respected local historian, the following is abstracted from the pages of the Times and reproduced here with the permission of its originator, Professor Kenyon of the History Department, University of Hull.

Fred Brooks was born in Lincoln and educated at Lincoln City School. After a short spell in the Army in 1918 he went up to University College, Nottingham, where he took a first in History (London external) in 1922. He went on to take his M.A. in palaeography, diplomatic and historical sources in 1924, afterwards supporting himself as a schoolteacher in Lincoln while he pursued his research into the navy under John and Henry III. It was there that he first conceived a life-long interest in local history, through his exploratory work in the Lincoln borough archives, and began his long relationship with the Historical Association... After further schoolteaching and a temporary assistant lectureship at University College, Leicester ... he went to Hull as Assistant Lecturer in History at the new university college, then only one year old. There he stayed until his retirement in 1967, except for the war years, when the college was virtually disbanded and he again retreated to a schoolteaching post in Lincoln. Like many university lecturers of his generation, he sacrificed his own research to teaching. Hull did not boast many students in the 1930s, but Brooks, with the late Prof-

essor Conrad Gill, was solely responsible for taking them through the demanding syllabus for the London honours degree. Moreover, his awareness of the need to forge links between the new college and the local community led him to assume heavy additional burdens as an extra-mural tutor in the East Riding and Lincolnshire. So, although in 1932 he published a monograph on The English Naval Forces 1199-1272 which was sufficiently authoritative to be reprinted thirty years later, his further output was small, consisting of a number of editions of manuscripts from local archives, notably The First Order Book of Hull Trinity House 1632-1665 in 1942, and a scattering of articles in learned journals. He was one of the first Readers appointed by the University College in 1946, but on Conrad Gill's retirement in 1949 the chair of history eluded him, and so subsequently did a personal chair, which many felt he richly deserved. However, he took his disappointment unflinchingly, and gave loyal assistance and support to successive heads of department much younger than himself. In his retirement his plans for a history of Hull, a monograph on medieval stained glass, and a history of Hull Trinity House, were gradually abandoned, though his study was stacked high with notes on all these subjects and more. This was a tragedy, for his knowledge of many aspects of local history was absolutely unrivalled, and even the pamphlets he published for the Historical Association, notably one on The Council of the North (1953), displays this knowledge and also a gift for lucid and elegant exposition. His work in the field of local history for the Universities of Hull and York, and for the Historical Association, made his name throughout the region and farther afield, and led York to award him an honorary doctorate in 1968.

Journals A large number of journals for 1979 remain unclaimed by members. How can this be so, I hear you say, dissolving in disbelief. But it is true, so if you have not yet acquired your copy

of "Excavations at Chapel Lane Staith 1978", then there are two ways by which this little treasure of archaeological exposition, yours by right of membership, can be claimed. Either collect in person at the A.G.M. on 16th April (your last chance to do so this year), or ask for it to be posted to you. In the case of the latter, however, there is a not so hidden extra. In view of the exceptionally large outlay involved for the Society, we must ask you to forward in advance to the Hon. Secretary 80p to cover postage and packing. All complaints may be voiced at the A.G.M...!

Fieldwork study group I have been apologising on and off for more than two years now for failing to organise fieldwork on a regular Society basis. Much of the problem has been the shortage of time with winter excavations effectively absorbing available energy. However, even though another winter has slipped by, the opportunity has now presented itself to get something together thanks to kind assistance offered by Hull Museums. John Bradshaw, Curator of Hull Museums, has agreed to allow the Society to use the Wilberforce Library (in Wilberforce House, High Street) as a meeting place for a fieldwork study group. The idea would be to establish regular meetings attended by those members who would like to apply themselves to the practical side of amateur archaeology and get out and about in the East Riding landscape. Effectively becoming the Field Section of the E.R.A.S. such members would be involved in activities such as consulting air photos and large scale maps, checking on the state of existing known monuments, walking ploughed fields in areas which have produced evidence of settlement or land use in the past in order to identify the extent, period or nature of the site, walking parish boundaries, etc., but most important of all committing the information so gathered to record, be it in the form of drawn plans, site index cards or annotated O.S. maps. All such activities can of course be undertaken by anyone who is so inclined without needing to combine

with others. But by getting together, working out schemes, designating areas of research and comparing notes, experience can be gained and the E.R.A.S. can begin to show itself actively pursuing archaeology in the Riding, a not insignificant contribution in itself in the face of the metal detector users' omnipresence these days. Initially, however, there may be a slight drawback depending upon interest. The size of the Wilberforce Library is a limiting factor which may determine the numbers for the field-work group. Twelve is the maximum possible. If there is a large response, then we might have to think again about the nature of indoor meetings. But for the moment two meetings are arranged, April 23rd and May 7th at 7.30pm. If you wish to take part, please contact the Hon. Secretary - 632946 - so that an idea of numbers can be gauged. Once things begin to take shape we will be able to settle on a regular pattern of meetings that will not require individual notice.

Museum notes John Rumsby writes: The museum has recently benefited from the generosity of one or two of the more responsible local "treasure hunters". We have a fragment from a late-Roman buckle of Hawkes and Dunning's "Germanic mercenary" type, from Langton, and an interesting group of Anglo-Viking decorated strap-ends and pin-heads of 9th century date. The exact find spot, near Market Weighton, must unfortunately remain unknown for the time being. The objects are closely paralleled by finds from York and Whitby. ... We have at last acquired eight coins from the Barrow hoard (see ERAS News 2), and very nice they are too. All are silver Siliquae, in good condition, and will be going on display shortly at Georgian Houses Museum, High Street, Hull. Other coins from the hoard have been acquired by the British Museum, Scunthorpe Museum, Glanford Museum, and Humberside County Museum Service, and the remainder have been returned to the owner.

From our Norwich correspondent Brian Ayers, one time

archaeologist of this parish, is now a man of letters the 10p kind that is! - by which means he sends the following very welcome notes on two of his excavations in Norwich: ...Anglia T.V. Extension Site Excavation was undertaken within the NE bailey of Norwich Castle prior to redevelopment by Anglia T.V. The bailey itself proved to be a fortified meadow which continued as an open space until the late 17th century, sealing a late-Saxon graveyard and church. The graveyard contained some 68 articulated burials within the area of excavation, of which 35 were children. All were aligned east-west and many rested on pillows of flint. No traces of coffins were located although some graves may have been plank-lined. Traces of one or two shroud pins were recovered and the later graves had crushed chalk markers at the feet. They all lay to the north of a small timber building which was found to be of 3 phases. The first of these had burnt down, some burnt cabled limestone, probably from an arch in a screen, being recovered in the debris. The second phase would appear to have been briefly occupied before the final phase established the structure as a church with a rectangular nave and a square chancel and an overall length of 9.6m x 5m wide. This building was previously unrecorded and was presumably destroyed after the Norman Conquest. It adds greatly to present knowledge of the distribution of pre-Conquest churches in Norwich.
...Whitefriars Car Park Site A trial trench was sunk south of the River Wensum and west of Whitefriars' Bridge to investigate the possibility of Saxon and medieval use of this part of the waterfront. A shelving beach was uncovered which had been consolidated by levels of brushwood matting to form a firmer surface. It is assumed that craft were beached on this surface, being tied to mooring posts, examples of which were also excavated. Finds included objects of leather - boots, shoes and possibly part of a jerkin - an almost intact 11th century bone comb and a high percentage of imported pottery, red painted wares, Andenne and Badorf products. The area fell into disuse in the late 11th century, probably with

the shift of market emphasis from the tombland area of the Saxon borough to the new Market Place in the Norman and French borough, the commercial waterfront moving downstream. The strong possibility that a bridge stood on the site of the present Whitefriars' Bridge in the pre-Conquest period makes it likely that the excavated area of waterfront was only used by rivercraft and that larger shipping berthed immediately east of the bridge, near the church of St. Martin-at-Palace. It is hoped that this area can be excavated in 1980 or 1981 prior to redevelopment for magistrates courts.

Lecture summaries:

24th January - Prehistoric Avebury, Aubrey Burl

Mr Aubrey Burl gave a stimulating lecture to the open meeting about the possible background to the construction of the Avebury complex of neolithic monuments. First sketching a brief picture of the early neolithic people in the area as scattered family units of peasant farmers living in rectangular timber houses, keeping cattle, growing wheat and barley and making pottery, he then progressed to the more speculative aspects of their society. The total population of the Marlborough Downs at any one time was probably in the order of 100 people, two thirds of them children, living in four or five family groups. One interpretation of the great long barrows which date from this period, whether constructed entirely of earth and timber or containing megalithic stone elements, is that they were skeletal storehouses and ritual foci for one family. Bones stored there, possibly after exposure elsewhere or previous interment, may have been used in religious ceremonies. Analagous practices have been reported in historical times about peoples at a similar level of material culture. The use of the dead as intercessors for the living with the spirit world, allied perhaps to the use of a skull as the seat of the soul of the departed, can be imagined. By the middle neolithic, c.2900BC, the expansion of trade may have created the necessity for

such families to meet from time to time, and the causewayed camps may have been such trading centres. The gradual merging of families into larger sub-tribal groups may have encouraged the elaboration of the long barrow shrines, and it is possible that at sites such as West Kennet the barrow may have been used by the group with a chamber per family unit. The earliest timber phase of the Sanctuary at Overton may have been as a timber mortuary house similar to those used by some American Indians. The discovery of bones of young children at several sites in prominent positions as at the centre of Woodhenge may be pointers to ritual sacrifice in some instances. As social groups increased still further in size and complexity it is likely that the long barrow with its small forecourt became unable to cope with larger numbers participating at ritual ceremonies. No real change in customs or beliefs is needed to explain the move of ceremonies from such forecourts to a free standing cove, or circular enclosure, while community consciousness and status may have been expressed in such sites as Silbury Hill. Avebury in its early phase had two circular settings of stone, one centred on a cove and the other on an obelisk. Traces of an unfinished third enclosure have also been found. The completed circles were subsequently enclosed by a great bank inside a thirty feet deep ditch and lined by a ring of untrimmed sarsens. In the absence of area excavation there is no proof yet but Mr Burl considers it likely that these great outer works surrounded and defended not only these circles but a village associated with them. Two avenues of standing stones were added to lead into or from the great enclosure, one of these connecting with the later phase of the Sanctuary which was now a circle of stones. This Kennet avenue was constructed with alternating pillar and lozenge shaped sarsens, which it has been suggested may represent male and female forces. Imagination, fuelled by comparative social anthropology of primitive peoples in various parts of the world, can conjure up impressive ceremonies

taking place in these circles and avenues. Only small excavations have been undertaken but these have revealed large numbers of disarticulated human bones in the great ditch at the late neolithic fill level and overlying deposits of antlers which had apparently been covered by deliberate backfilling. A high proportion of the bones were mandibles, possibly discarded during the ceremonial use of the skull. The site was abandoned about 1700BC at the time of the rise of Stonehenge. Perhaps the Avebury people were involved in the erection of the latter, either willingly or after enslavement. The speaker pointed out the largely speculative nature of much of his material but hoped that the exercise had put some flesh on the bare bones of our current knowledge of the period. From his long and careful study of the sites and the period in question, Mr Burl's guesses are perhaps nearer to the truth than most. (J.D.D.)

20th February - Wessex Goldwork, Dr Joan Taylor

Dr Taylor began by considering the origins of goldwork in the Early Bronze Age. Gold in sheet form, the only technique by which it was worked, appears with the earliest bronze metalwork in Ireland for the first time, taking the form of trinkets - earrings, discs and badges. The form of decoration can be seen paralleled by the surface decoration applied to beaker pottery. Also the motifs used on Irish goldwork can be found recurring on later Wessex examples. The broad cross is such a motif. Lunulae, heavy crescentic collars fashioned from sheet gold, occur in some quantity in Ireland where as many as a hundred examples have been recorded. They are also a find of the highland zone, including Brittany. Not found in grave groups but rather in caches together, these perhaps were never personally possessed but had a ceremonial use only. The decoration on lunulae is very precise and the discovery of identical types has enabled schools of design to be recognised. These are defined simply as classical, embracing examples from Ireland and others of comparable quality of execution from further afield, and unaccomplished, which are technically cruder and

entirely restricted to Ireland. Although it has been commonly held that gold lunulae were modelled on jet necklaces, this cannot be upheld since the designs achieved with jet beads are found with late beakers. The distribution of goldwork can be seen to be linked to the Hiberno-Scottish trade in decorated axes. Fro this introduction Dr Taylor proceeded to examine the grave groups of the Wessex culture, drawing parallels from all parts of Britain (workable gold which can be hammered cold to produce sheet occurs as a natural resource in Cornwall, Wales, Scotland and Ireland). The Wessex burials were excavated in the 19th century, but the more recent work in Brittany is helpful inproviding parallels excavated by modern methods. The central point in the chronology of the wealthy graves of the Wessex culture is put at 1500BC, althou burials continue to 1200BC. Irish connections can be discerned from comparable decorative motifs, such as occur on V-perforated buttons. The gauge of sheet gold used might be compared to modern aluminium foil. Decoration is executed in high relief, grooves made with a rounded stilus, incisions and dots with a point ed awl. The exquisiteness of Wessex goldwork lies in its decorative treatment rather than in its weight. The softness of the gold used throughout argues against any functional purpose for the objects which were probably specially manufactured for the burial rite. Buttons worked from shale or jet and capped with gold sheet demonstrate advanced skills of the craftsmen. Both pinning and resin glue were employed as methods of sheet attachment. The Bush Barrow belt hook was cited as an example of how the outer shape of the object determined the decorative motifs applied within the field. The basis of ornamentation cannot be shown convincingly to be geometric in inspiration. Techniques of craftsmanship appear to provide links between Wessex and Armorica (Brittany), techniques which may be likened more to that of a tailor than a goldsmith, given the fine cutting and snipping involved. Both cultures also appear to have been obsessed with death to a similar degree, and the relationship between death and treasure is also similar.

There are also object parallels between Wessex and Armorica, in particular concave sided box-like pieces made in luxury materials such as amber and gold. The Bush Barrow crown ferrules on the sceptre are similarly paralleled at Carnac, and there is much similarity in the trinket objects of gold. The Rillaton gold cup from Cornwall does not stand alone but can be paralleled in Germany, although this may have been an export from Britain. The form of the corrugated cup is not unique to gold either, but has ceramic equivalents in the food vessel tradition. Shale cups from Wiltshire are also of the same style, as too is an amber cup from Clandown barrow excavated in 1882. In summarising an extremely visually stimulating lecture packed with scholarly detail, Dr Taylor drew attention to the pan-European nature of Beaker Society and emphasised the contact which must have existed between Wessex and Armorica. Four phases of development of Beaker culture related to gold-working practices could be identified: 1. a trinket phase at the beginning tied to early beaker vessels. 2. personal ornament phase related to the colonising movement of beaker folk. 3. further development from 2 leading into the Wessex phase with an extension and variety of beaker forms, and the beginnings of food vessels. 4. a breaking out from the previous phase into urn pottery with developed arrowheads. This latter was a series of indigenous developments occurring spontaneously across a very large geographical area stemming from a common root.

19th March - Recent work in Geophysical Surveying for Archaeology, Arnold Aspinall

Mr Aspinall proposed to explain the methods by which the geophysicist was able to assist the archaeologist in the detection of archaeolgical sites and features. Air photographs and fieldwalking each provide means of identifying sites when no surface trace is visible, but the physical properties of the earth itself, if examined by the geophysicist, can provide an added dimension to the search. These soil properties are

divided into three categories, mechanical, electrical and magnetic, each of which may be tested by scientific methods. Mechanical properties are such that soil composition and density respond to 'bosing', a simple technique of literally sounding the ground by thumping and noting the variation in sound emitted. Scientific seismic techniques can be applied here with some useful but limited results. The electrical properties of soil can be tested by measuring resistance. Electrical resistance is the ability of material to withstand electrical current. Copper, for example, conducting electricity readily, has a low resistance; paper or wood, a bad conductor of electricity, has a high resistance. Applied to archaeological features it can be demonstrated that wet soils (i.e. the contents of a filled-in ditch or pit) will have a low resistance, since water conducts electricity well, whilst dry soils or features (walls, roads, floors or any compacted deposit) will have a high resistance, being poor conductors of electricity. These differences can be measured on sites by the use of a portable resistivity meter wired to probes inserted systematically - normally on a grid system at one metre intervals - into the ground, when the passage of current through wet and dry areas below the surface is monitored through the meter. Readings are not always wholly consistent from season to season on the same site; these may vary according to the moisture content of the ground, and this has to be taken into account when conducting surveys of this type. Computer printouts of readings translate the data into dot-density patterns providing a visual image of buried features, where areas of high resistance are depicted as darker shading and low resistance as lighter shading. In this way aerial photographs can be, as it were, enhanced by surveys of this type, and an example of a Romano-British site at Alcester was cited as an example by the speaker. The magnetic properties of the earth also provide an avenue for the geophysical exploration of occupation deposits. All earth material may be treated as a magnet to some degree. The range of magnetisation is very great, base rock having a low

magnetic property, igneous rock, slag and burnt material a high one. Measured on a scale upon which magnetic iron has a value of 100,000, baked reduced clay has a value of 100, baked oxidised clay 10, soil affected by occupation 10, average topsoil 1.0, limestone and unbaked clay 0.1. The relative differences in magnetisation between a range of materials encountered on buried sites are, therefore, theoretically capable of being distinguished one against the other, provided that a device sensitive enough to separate them can be utilised. Such devices are known as magnetometers, of which there are two types: the proton magnetometer, a very sensitive instrument used over the past 20 years in archaeology, but of a design which renders the process of surveying slow and laborious (each reading, again on a metre square principle, necessitates holding a long boom in position for 20 seconds). The fluxgate magnetometer by contrast is a compact portable device which can produce a rapid survey. It is however susceptible to gremlins! In use magnetometers can provide exceptionally well-defined patterns of magnetic variations, and on computer print-outs of dot-density plans, darker shading represents the more magnetised features and soils, lighter shading the less magnetised. This was shown with startling clarity at Terry Manby's Thwing hill fort site, where details from very clear aerial photos were markedly enhanced by the magnetometer survey. A great advantage of such surveys, often complemented by resistivity work, is that from the very precise detail achieved at ground level, the archaeologist may site with extreme accuracy areas for excavation, eliminating some of the problems of feature location often experienced when working from air photos. Magnetometer surveys also indicate that aerial photo information may often be incomplete, and systematic survey work will fill in omissions successfully. Mr Aspinall emphasised the geophysicist's interest in the end result of archaeological excavation by which means alone the surveys may be checked for accuracy. The geophysicist is only able to suggest possibilities through his work and may in fact produce

misleading information at times. Supposed archaeological features, for instance, may turn out to be natural geological formations, and some sites can be wholly masked by demolition deposits of stone scatter sealing structures beneath, thus producing uniform readings normally indicative of sterile sites. In conclusion Mr Aspinall had several comments to make on the use of metal detectors, instruments which have acquired a bad name in archaeological circles as a consequence of irresponsible treasure hunting practices. Some models marketed are of use in that they can differentiate between metal objects and magnetic earths such as hearths, although most are of no value in the type of survey work described, since manufacturers deliberately calibrate them for a more sensitive response to metal. The practice of some archaeologists in spreading tin tacks over known sites in order to deter treasure hunting is in one sense ill-advised, since such sites are thereafter totally excluded from serious geophysical examination.

Vikings at the B.M. John Rumsby has been casting a professional eye over the Viking Exhibition at the British Museum which he here reviews, together with some thoughts on the available literature for those perplexed by a multiplicity of titles.

As a museum curator, I always approach these large, glossy, London-based exhibitions with mixed feelings. They certainly attract many thousands of people who might otherwise not enter a museum at all. On the other hand, is there any reason to suppose that they will ever again enter a museum (more specifically, their small local museum)? Such exhibitions always, explicitly or implicitly, emphasise the "treasure" aspect of archaeology, as this appears to be the only way to attract sufficient finance to fund the enormous cost of transport, security and display. But by emphasising the "treasure" the organisers inevitably give a false impression of what archaeology is all about. Not every Viking owned a sword by Ulfbert, nor did his wife necessarily wear a filigree-gold box-

brooch. To be fair, the everyday items are there in this exhibition, but you have to look very hard to find them in the publicity material. To anyone who has ever looked at illustrated books on the Vikings, many of the objects on display are bound to seem familiar. This does not necessarily lessen the impact: studying measured drawings of the sternpost from Skuldelev 3 is no substitute for seeing the real thing. Other items will be less familiar and perhaps less spectacular, but do help to put outstanding pieces in a context that makes their development easier to understand. One of the most impressive aspects of the display is that one can study a group of very similar objects, for example oval brooches, with provenances ranging from Kiev to Dublin. It illustrates, far better than a map could do, the homogeneity of Viking culture, and at the same time its tremendous geographical reach. As far as individual objects are concerned, everyone will have his own favourites. I particularly liked the tool chest from Mästermyr (Sweden), the gaming-board from Ballinderry Crannog (will we soon be seeing a Hneftafl Corner in the Newsletter, Mr Editor?)*, the bowstave from Hedeby (looking complete and ready to use), and the superb gold and silver box-brooch from Gotland. It was good to see Yorkshire so well represented in the exhibition, but why was the famous Middleton B cross displayed with the back obscured? My one disappointment was that it was apparently not possible to include that most fantastic of archaeological finds, the 7th century Indian bronze Buddha found in the Swedish Viking town of Helgö. The presentation of the exhibition did not, unfortunately, live up to the interest of the objects. The circulation was cramped and confused, involving much annoying doubling-back. The division into roughly circular areas resulted, as usual, in two opposing queues trying to view the same cases. The main labels and graphics were well-produced, giving just the right amount of context, but were invariably obscured by shuffling lines of people. The labels to the individual objects seem to have been designed especially to

* It'll never take the place of Skgrabl, Ed.

be unreadable - tiny print, often on a dark red background, and positioned far from the item to which they referred. The mounting of the objects was usually good, except for one of my personal favourites, the tiny Irish crozier from Helgö, which was at the back of a deep case, in a shadow. The cases are designed for viewers of average adult height - no allowance has been made for children, who must constitute a large proportion of visitors. I liked the full-scale reconstruction of the Hedeby House, and I did eventually find the label that went with it. To sum up, a magnificent collection of objects, badly exhibited, with an entirely inadequate catalogue. British Museum: could do better. (The exhibition is on until Sunday 20th July. It will be closed Good Friday and Spring Bank Holiday, 5th May. Opening hours are 10am - 5pm weekdays, 2.30pm - 6pm Sundays, with last admission 45 minutes before closing. Avoid Mondays - unless you like your archaeology knee-deep in kids. Admission is £1.40. Children, students and OAPs and pre-booked school parties 70p.)

Books on the Vikings: You will be relieved to hear that I am not going to review every one of the dozen or so Viking books that have been published/reprinted/reissued-with-bigger-pictures this year. Most of them seem to have been written by the same three people and use the same pictures anyway. If you want a good introduction to the Vikings, Bronsted's The Vikings, and Wilson's The Viking Achievement and The Vikings and their Origins are still essential reading. I am instead going to concentrate on two books published by the British Museum to complement their exhibition. One of the lasting values of any large exhibition should be a well-produced catalogue, with a general introduction to the subject, followed by a full listing of all items exhibited, with discussion, references and illustrations. The Pompeii '79 catalogue is a good example of a publication which remains useful long after the exhibition itself is forgotten. The Vikings exhibition "Official Guide and Exhibition Catalogue" is in fact not a catalogue at all: it is another general book on the Vikings, with just a brief

listing of the display items taking up a few pages (9 out of 200) at the back. The illustrations, many in colour, are certainly lavish, but there is no cross-reference to the list at the back, and the captions give no indication of size, and often none of provenance. To take one example, Plate 71 shows 22 iron tools, captioned "A group of tools deposited in the grave of a 10th century Norwegian metal-smith". There is no indication of scale, and one is left to assume, after a lot of searching, that these are the same tools listed in the "catalogue" as "359. Metalsmith's tools, iron, with modern handles. Bygland (Nor.). Max. l. 62.1cm. Oslo C27454". What archaeological journal would be content with just one dimension for 22 objects? A great opportunity to produce a book of permanent value, within reach of everyone, has been sadly missed. The exhibition book's one merit is that it is cheap. There is a much more scholarly"selective" catalogue ("selective" apparently means leaving out some of the exhibition items, and including others that were not displayed). This book has all the detailed discussion and illustration that one could wish for. It claims to make the research necessary for the exhibition "permanently available to students of the Viking period". How many of you students out there can afford £45 for a book? And don't think you can come and use the Hull Museum copy, because £45 is almost exactly half our annual archaeology book budget, so we won't be buying a copy either. The hiving-off of the British Museum publications section into a separate, profit-orientated company over which the curatorial staff have little control, is one of the worse disservices inflicted on the museum-going public for a very long time. One book does deserve special mention, and not just because it was written by one of our Society's members. Alan Binns' Viking Voyages is an excellent, well-illustrated account of what is known about Viking ships and navigation, and its practical application in a recent voyage of the replica Viking longship "Odin's Raven". "Odin's Raven"'s present position, high and dry on the lawn outside the British Museum, is, we hasten to add, no reflection on Alan's navigational abilities.

Books discussed were:

J.Bronsted, The Vikings (Penguin 1965)
P.G.Foote and D.M.Wilson, The Viking Achievement (Sidgwick and Jackson new p/b edn. 1980) £5.50
David Wilson, The Vikings and their Origins (Thames and Hudson new edn. 1980)
James Graham-Campbell and Dafydd Kidd, The Vikings (British Museum 1980) £2.95
J.A.Graham-Campbell, Viking Artefacts: a Select Catalogue (British Museum 1980) £45.00
A.L.Binns, Viking Voyages (Heinemann 1980) £3.95

(J.H.R.)

Vikings at Ingleton They do get about a bit! 1980 just might finish them off for all time. The terror struck into the hearts of our forebears will be as nothing compared with the wear and tear of this year's Viking invasion. Once Magnus Magnusson has been thoroughly through your living room, why not have a session on Saxon and Viking in the North, a day conference at the Ingleborough Community Centre, Ingleton, on Saturday 10th May, when Professor Leslie Alcock will speak on Early Fortifications in North Britain, James Lang on Local Styles of Anglo-Saxon and Viking Stone Carvings in the North, Richard Hall on a Review of Recent Discoveries about Viking Age York from the Coppergate Site, and Dr Alfred Smyth on Viking Chronologies. The day starts with coffee at 10am and finishes in like fashion at 4pm. Lunch is not provided, but facilities exist for those who wish to eat a picnic lunch at the Centre, and a choice of local hostelries and restaurants are to be found within 400 yards (which is obviously why the Vikings came here in the first place). Ingleton lies between Skipton and Settle on the A65 and is 15 miles east of Junction 34 on the M6. Tickets for the day conference are £2.30 each available from The Warden, Ingleborough Community Centre, Ingleton, Via Carnforth, Lancashire. Cheques to be made payable to North Yorkshire County Council.

Keep an eye on Sheffield The Department of Pre-History and Archaeology of Sheffield University have entered the field of publication of cheap monographs on archaeological topics, especially excavation and specialist reports. One that I can speak for is Faunal Studies in Urban Archaeology: the animal bones from Exeter 1971-75 by Mark Maltby, being Volume 2 of Exeter Archaeological Reports. Selling at £5.50 post free (with a pre-publication offer of £4.75 post free) it really is a very workmanlike production. The subject matter may sound highly specialised, and indeed all the essential data is there, but it really does make very interesting reading for the lay man. The conversion of the evidence into detail of diet, economy and social organisation in the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods is well presented, and it is a treat to see the results of specialist study of this kind translated into a readable, easily assimilated form, rather than confined to species lists alone. The work is, as the advertising literature proclaims, the first detailed report to be published on a large collection of animal bones from one of our major cities. Try at least to get a sight of it. It is nice to have, if only to demonstrate to the doubters the contribution of archaeology to history through material remains which not so very long ago were summararily dumped on the spoil heaps of excavation sites!

Another title from Sheffield is Rome and the Brigantes edited by Keith Branigan, containing chapters by Brian Hartley, The Brigantes and the Roman army; Peter Salway, Vici and the urbanisation of the north; Keith Branigan, Roman villas in northern England; Herman Ramm, Native settlements east of the Pennines; Nick Higham, Native settlements west of the Pennines. Published this month, it retails at £3 post free (pre-publication price £2 post free). Derrick Riley's air photo survey work on North Notts. and South Yorks. (remember the E.R.A.S. lecture last November?) is also destined for this series. Orders for any of the titles should go to Anne Hill, Dept of Prehistory and Archaeology, University of Sheffield, Sheffield;

cheques payable to 'J.R.Collis re publication'.

Beverley excavations Although there has been no break in the work over the winter, Sunday digging ground to a halt a little before Christmas. The earlier arrangements however will be back in force from April 27th, the offical start of the 1980 Sunday season! A somewhat arbitrary date chosen on the assumption that Easter holidays will be behind us and a glorious Spring and Summer will be ahead of us. It is hoped that as many Society members as possible will take advantage of Sunday opening. Not only does the success of the excavation depend upon the additional support of the willing amateur, but it was the splendid response of Society members that got the site off to a flying start and established the potential which is now being realised in the area excavation, so the E.R.A.S. has something of an investment in the site. So do come along - archaeology in Beverley needs you!

Don't ignore the A.G.M. It rarely promises to be the highlight of the year, but make an effort to get to the meeting on April 16th. There is a weighty item on the agenda bearing upon membership subscriptions. Come and have your say. Indeed let us have your ideas and opinions. The A.G.M. ought to provide a forum for discussion, and would do if enough members turned out and had their say. So don't let slip the opportunity to comment on the running of the Society - your Society. And besides, at enormous expense, a celebrity guest speaker has been secured to address the meeting when the business is over. The title of the lecture is A Winter's Tale of Archaeology in Beverley.

That is the end of the news Well, we hope not, but it does complete the first year of ERAS News. It ends on the same note on which it began with a call for contributions, and indeed suggestions. Is it doing what it should be doing? If not, why not - or so what!

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