

The Newsletter There have been several attempts in the past to circularise members with information on something like a reasonably regular basis, most notably in the days when the massed rank of Hull Museums' secretarial staff could provide the necessary typewriter-time. Nevertheless, undaunted by a historical patchwork of original successes and subsequent failures, and fearless in the face of secretarial adversity, ERAS News is hereby launched! Intended as a quarterly newsletter its aim will be to keep all members informed of Society business and activities, to provide summaries of lectures, to draw attention to events, courses or meetings which have an archaeological content, and generally to communicate with members, particularly those who are unable to attend Society meetings in the winter months. In this your Hon.Secretary, donning the hat of Hon.News Editor, craves your support. It will be apparent that a newsletter can only be as good as its newsgathering process. Please help to make it as informative and lively as possible with your suggestions and contributions. One individual cannot pretend to be conversant with all the potential material for inclusion. So please help! Without your support Number two may be thinner, Number three less interesting, and Number four non-existent!

Secretary's Report 1972 Mr Chairman, it is a source of great pleasure that your Secretary finds himself in the happy position of having to acknowledge the efforts of others in the running of Society affairs.

Guest Speakers this year have been recruited by Mr John Rumsby and Mr Derek Gore who ably secured, I think you will agree, a balanced programme of lectures. An imbalance of attendance lay beyond

their central part the hand of winter weather at its worst, the sole factor in what must rank as one of the all-time low turn-outs of 16 members for possibly the best lecture of the year, Stephen Johnson's Roman Ports of the Saxon Shore. Those with a developed sensitivity in the matter of value for money will not have failed to note that one more than the customary seven meetings was included this year, an innovation which is to be emulated in the 1979/80 programme. When we may ask ourselves, shall we make it one over the eight?

Which brings me to coffee, the continued provision of which at meetings by Mrs Hanby and her helpers remains a service to conviviality whose efficiency is such that it is all too easy to overlook, but this is clearly a commendation and not a slight.

Behind the scenes also the work of Miss Aldabella in sorting out covenanted subscriptions and of Miss Lamb in rattling out on demand eight score or more addressed envelopes must not pass unrecognised merely because such work does not command immediate attention. For herein lies happiness for a Secretary.

The excursion to Beamish Hall and Durham in May, incorporating the statutory yet ever unorchestrated mystery tour without which no outing would be complete, was another non-secretarial function owing its undoubted success to Mrs Hanby. And it is by Mr Simcock's hand that plans have already been laid for the forthcoming excursion this summer.

Keith Simcock indeed should be decorated for heroism above and beyond the call of Society membership for pulling out of goodness knows which pocket a beautifully illustrated lecture on Mycenaean civilisation to plug the breach in the programme caused by the inopportune illness of Dr Joan Taylor. Dr Taylor, members will be pleased to hear, is now fully recovered and has agreed to deliver her paper on Wessex Goldwork on February 20th next.

Membership, it is also pleasing to report, is up, but only marginally from 155 to 170. New members are warmly welcomed to our bosom, and we must all

endeavour to encourage even more newcomers to the Society. To this end the judicious insertion of the new promotional leaflet between pages two and three of our workmates' tabloids seems to me to be a wholly legitimate tactic in the drive toward a greater cultural fulfilment for our fellows.

The Society excavation at Brough has revealed more of the extra-mural settlement of the Roman town, but much remains unanswered. Site work was greatly prolonged this year, from May to December (and that's a long, long time!) This was partially a consequence of a disappointingly small digging team, small in numbers that is but big in heart! And partially through uncertainty as to the future availability of the area for excavation. Apologies must here be extended to those members who had good cause to anticipate group fieldwalking originally planned for the winter months, which had to be postponed in view of the extended digging season. With hindsight, however, this winter is best left to memory, being fit only for the vigorous promotion of armchair archaeology.

Good food, drink and company - not necessarily in that order - are proven antidotes to winter depression, and all, I think, were to be had at the Society dinner in February held at the University. The new departure for this annual event of an informal buffet and bar was enjoyed by over fifty members and by our guest speaker, Peter Wenham, who braved snow-drifts to share with us the selected memoirs of a digging man.

Whilst on the subject of departures, the Society and its Committee will miss the enthusiasm and drive (quite literally 45 miles each way!) of Mr Derek Gore, who has within the month departed Hull Museums to take up a new post closer to his Scarborough home at Filey. Mr Gore's stimulation of archaeological interest at Senior School level in the Riding will be sadly missed and we wish him well.

Resignations somewhat more predictable are those which occur once every three years when our principal officers are required by constitution to resign

their commissions. Heavy of heart and moist of eye we must hurl them from the heights - in the gentlest possible way! - and entrust to others the room at the top. But it is with a genuine and not feigned affection and gratitude that we must thank on the one hand our outgoing Chairman, Professor Bernard Jennings, for his skill and concern, his encouragement and humour in the handling of meetings and committees (for which latter he yet remains a nominee); and on the other Mr Jack Robins, who after a full six years first as Chairman and then as Vice-Chairman, is with that characteristic diffidence yet determination of purpose retiring to the ranks, electing to make room for another member on Committee. Gentlemen, for your time, your commitment and your energies, we thank you both most warmly.

And finally, Mr Chairman, at the risk of outstaying my welcome on the rostrum, I stand before the assembled throng today the fifth incumbent of the noble office of Hon. Secretary and the most recent excavator of the stratified deposits of the Minute Book which chronicles the eighteen years of this Society's history. I crave indulgence for there is, I feel, a moral to be drawn from the recollection of those heady days in 1961 and their culmination, the presentation of the first ever Secretary's Report at the first ever Annual General Meeting on 10th January 1962. 146 members had launched themselves into the new venture and had been rewarded not by lectures alone, and not at all by sumptuous dinners, excursions or publications at that early stage, but by archaeology. Two Society excavations, modest enough perhaps, at Melton and Littlethorpe had been undertaken. Some members were also involved with other excavations at Swine, Barmston, Lockington and Wharham Percy. Two members were conducting their own excavations - Ken McMahon at the Priory in Beverley, Rodney Mackey digging ditches at Easington (or, as he might perhaps prefer to recall it, putting archaeological sections across Romano-British linear features at Easington). The existence of the Tycho

mosaic pavement at Brantingham had been confirmed by Society originated investigations that first year, and a rescue excavation culminating in its lifting was soon to follow. Halcyon days? Or were those yet to come? Either way, with the passage of time and like the citizens of Rome in the days of the Republic, perhaps we should take benefit from being ever mindful of our roots. For my part I should be happy to share in a general resolve to reposition firmly the letter A in E.R.A.S., as the Society marches steadily on behind its improved standard of living.

June Excursion Full details of an excursion to the Lunt Roman Fort, Baginton (near Coventry) and Kenilworth Castle on Saturday 30th June are enclosed. This promises to be a splendid day out, and at a ridiculously low cost! The organiser, Keith Simcock, is to be congratulated for putting it all together so admirably. It promises to be a popular trip, so return the tear-off slip to Keith as soon as possible to secure your place. Any further suggestions for a second excursion this year??

Excavations in Beverley An opportunity exists for members to lend their very valuable support to an excavation programme in Beverley. A proposed housing scheme south of the Minster in Lurk Lane has prompted the need for archaeological examination of the area which is something of an unknown quantity. Pre-reformation ecclesiastical buildings might be anticipated - only excavation is likely to provide an answer to the nature of the underlying condition of an area occupied by allotments for a considerable part of its more recent history. The work is to be directed by Peter Armstrong (not as Hon. Sec. but as H.J.A.C. Field Officer!), and at the present time no funds are available to finance the excavation. Society members have a significant, if not a primary role to play therefore in getting things under way. Those who would like to help out and thereby launch a new programme of archaeological excavation in Bev-

Beverley should make themselves known in order that immediate plans can be put in hand. Phone 632946 to sign up!

Excavations at Brough Something of a tease this section, I'm afraid. Sadly it is not possible to continue the Cave Road site for a third season because of a change of land ownership and all that goes with it. This is a great disappointment, particularly as the potential of the site is so great. However I have little doubt that we shall return in due course. In the meantime operations in Beverley will inevitably keep itchy trowels busy. But there is more to Brough than Cave Road alone, and another site north of Welton Road may be available for at least a trial excavation - negotiations are in hand and something this year may be possible. As with the Cave Road site, the exact nature of the area is unclear, but inhumation burials and the five pigs of lead (the latter on show in Hull Museums) have come from hereabouts. Anyone involved with the Beverley work will get to know how things progress for this site; otherwise watch this space!

Wharham Percy A day school jointly run by Hull University's Adult Education Dept. and N. Yorkshire Education Department entitled "The Deserted Village of Wharham Percy and research on the history of the English village" will be held on Sat. 21st July at the Norton Centre for Adult Education and on the Wharham site itself. With Maurice Beresford and John Hurst as tutors you can expect the definitive account. Course fee is £3.50. Get a form with further details from the Dept. of Adult Education, 195 Cottingham Road, Hull. Certainly a date for your diaries - act now!

Read any good books lately? It occurs to me that we can all benefit from exchanging notes and recommendations for reading.

How about these relatively recent titles to be going on with? An absolute must for the archaeological history of our area is Herman Ramm, The Period (Duckworth 1978, £3.95, in the Peoples of Roman Britain series). Essential reading for the Lunt Fort excursion is Graham Webster, Boudica The British Revolt against Rome AD60 (Patsford 1978). Prepare yourself for a five star lecture in next year's programme with Aubrey Burl, Prehistoric Avebury (Yale 1977, £8.95), and don't forget the same author's magnificent Stone Circles of the British Isles (Yale 1976, £12.00). A splendidly produced book drawing many archaeological threads together for the medieval period is Colin Platt, Medieval England A Social History and Archaeology from the Conquest to 1600 AD (Routledge and Kegan Paul 1978, £8.50). For place-name enthusiasts Margaret Gelling, Signposts to the Past-Place Names and the History of England (J.M. Dent 1978, £6.50). Not yet published but very nearly (and you can get your order in now by sending £5, including p.&p., to the publishers - Yorkshire Philosophical Society, The Lodge, Museums Garden, York) is Ian Stead, The Arras Culture, an updated, completely new revision of Dr Stead's La Tene Cultures of Eastern Yorkshire. By no means an exhaustive selection then, but perhaps we can keep this section going. Old and new titles alike, if its worth reading let me know.

Beverley by-pass Construction work on the relief road south of Beverley has already begun. The route, particularly in the Woodmansey area, coincides with archaeological features known from air survey, and the recovery of any information relating to possible Iron Age occupation patterns, for instance, would be most important. John Dent's team at Wetwang Slack will be trying to keep a professional eye on the proceedings but will no doubt be stretched geographically speaking by other commitments. Society members, to whom the route will be somewhat more accessible more often, can therefore

greatly assist the watching brief by taking a more than passing interest in the contract work. If you are able to establish any kind of contact with the roadbuilders, if you can keep a watchful eye on the proceedings making notes on your observations or retrieving archaeological material which may come to light, this would be a tremendously valuable service. This indeed is the kind of job a Society like ours should be doing wheresoever in our area the ground is being disturbed, be it town or country. On a more general note a field section for more detailed research along these lines could be established, if there are enough willing hands (or more likely feet). Perhaps some informal meetings to help familiarise members with the type of features and material likely to be encountered would be an idea. Any takers?

Horkstow Appeal - the finished product You may recall that the Society contributed £100 to the Hull City Council's Horkstow Appeal Fund back in 1974 in order to help secure this unique mosaic for Hull Museums. Not only has this been achieved but now five years on a fine new gallery, in which the pavements figure and which covers the history and archaeology of the Romans in East Yorkshire, has just been opened. And a splendid piece of work it is too. If you haven't visited the excellent new addition to the Museums' display area (approached via the existing Roman Mosaic gallery) then don't leave it any longer to do so. After all, you helped to pay for it!!

Pass it on! Do you know of someone who might like to join the Society? On the assumption that you just might, one of our new promotional leaflets/membership applications is enclosed in this mailing for you to drop discreetly into the appropriate lap. The Society's good health and future rests upon a sound membership, and anything you can do to boost interest and support is a most valuable contribution not only to the E.R.A.S. but to the archae-

ology of our area, because the more people who take an active and informed interest in the subject the better we shall be able to cope with the pressures which are increasingly put upon it.

Lecture Summary "Chariot Racing in Humberside?" :
John Rumsby (13th April)

Apart from literary sources, evidence for the Roman sport of chariot racing can be gleaned from mosaic pavement designs, carvings on sarcophagi and friezes, lamp motifs, etc. Two-horse chariot (bigae) racing was known in Greece by 1000BC and has its origins, like gladiatorial combat, in funeral games and religious ceremonial. Four-horse (quadrigae) charioteering was included in the Olympic Games in the 7th century BC. The 1000ft long hippodrome at Delphi was built in 446BC.

Rome's adoption of the sport was through the Greek colonies or via Etruria, and the Circus Maximus, the largest and oldest of Rome's circuses, originated from a natural site, with Tarquinius Priscus adding wooden seating. Caesar was the first to embellish with stone, and later emperors added to it until it was capable of seating 260,000.

The central reservation (spina) was marked by turning points (metae) at each end. Obelisks from the Egyptian world provided additional decoration to these features. From mosaics it can be seen that wooden eggs and dolphins on the spina were used as lap markers, the one being removed singly, the other tipped up as each of the laps in a race were completed.

The competitors, originally men of high rank, became professionals as time went on, many of them slaves and many becoming hero figures in popular esteem, and indeed very rich. One Diocles in the 2nd century AD took part in 1500 races during his career and accumulated 35 million sesterces in prize money.

Entry to the races for the populace was free, and religious processions preceded the action. Light, small-wheeled chariots were used which possibly had

wicker coachwork. The horses, some of which became great crowd favourites, were five-year olds - mares and stallions. The charioteers wore protective clothing to a certain degree - crash helmet and leather corselet. The reins were secured around the driver's waist and a whip was employed. Races were contested between the four racing factions, the Reds, Whites, Greens and Blues, and remarkably as with modern -day sport there was something of a transfer market for the top charioteers!

A race was started with four or eight teams aligned behind the starting gates at one end of the Circus. Seven or ten laps was normal and the course was run left-handed. Three types of course official or assistant can be identified. A mounted outrider, possibly a pacemaker; a 'whipper-in', who directed horses away from dangerously wide turns; and an 'axle specialist' who hurled buckets of water onto the chariot wheels by way of lubrication to prevent overheating in the course of a race! The victor, having survived the rigour of a race was awarded the palm branch and laurel wreath of victory honour, as well as the more tangible winner's purse.

Outside of Rome in the Empire circuses are known at Arles, Viennes, Paris, Trier, Nimes, and Lyons, but none have been identified in Britain. However evidence for theatres and amphitheatres is not wanting, nor are graphic scenes in mosaics and on pottery demonstrating an active interest in gladiatorial combat. So why not also charioteering, which falls in the same category of entertainment in the Roman world. Celtic horsemanship in the area is amply demonstrated by chariot burials such as Garton Slack, and in the Roman period itself a mosaic pavement from Rudston illustrates a charioteer of the Red faction as victor. There are also two Lincolnshire examples of stone carving illustrating charioteers, and the Horksey mosaic shows a four team race of bigae with the circus spina and metae clearly depicted. From evidence such as this it is highly probable that chariot racing on the classical Roman model was a fea-

ture of British provincial life as it was in Gaul.

On the move Brian Ayers, assistant director of the Humber-side Archaeological Unit and principal supervisor of site work in Hull since 1975, has departed the Riding to join the Norfolk Archaeological Unit to embark upon an excavation programme in Norwich. We wish him every success in his new post. Archaeology in our area will be the poorer for Brian's leaving, but we may take some selfish comfort from the imminent prospect of the first of the reports under his pen in the Hull Old Town Series 'Excavations in Chapel Lane Staithe', the very important and startlingly impressive medieval river-front excavation undertaken in the winter of 1977/8. A nice leaving present on his part!

Enjoy a good walk? Then don't forget the Parish Boundary Survey! A very great deal of the East Riding remains uncovered so far by the Yorkshire Archaeological Society led survey. If you would like to beat the bounds in the cause of archaeological/historical research and enjoy the delights of the Yorkshire countryside at one and the same time, contact Jean Dawes, our newly-elected Chairperson, who will provide further information and guidance on what is required.

Excavations Two non-Society excavations, which may nevertheless provide opportunity for archaeological experience to those prepared and able to work on a regular day to day basis, are the Saxon cemetery site at Sancton and the Bronze Age Hill Fort at Thwing. For further details of each of these on-going projects contact (for Sancton) N.M.Reynolds, Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, 17 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh; and (for Thwing) T.G.Manby, Museum and Art Gallery, Chequer Road, Doncaster.

Y.A.S. meeting The Medieval Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, in conjunct-

ion with C.B.A. Group 4, is holding a one-day meeting on "The interpretation of timber-framed buildings" at Claremont, Clarendon Road, Leeds, on Saturday, 21st July. There is a programme of morning lectures on 'Buildings in their social and economic context', 'Recording buildings', and 'Timber-framed buildings in S. Yorkshire', by David Michelmore, Richard Harris and Peter Ryder respectively. In the afternoon there is a visit by coach to view some timber-frames in S. Yorkshire. The day begins at 9.30am and finishes at 6.30pm. The meeting is open to both members and non-members of the Y.A.S., and the cost inclusive of coffee and coach trip is a bargain £2. However, numbers are limited to 45 so act promptly if you wish to take advantage. Bookings should be sent to the Medieval Section, Y.A.S., Claremont, Clarendon Road, Leeds.

Society for Landscape Studies This new Society came to birth in March last with an inaugural meeting at Leeds University. The aims are "to promote the study of the interaction of man and his environment as it is reflected in the present face of the landscape and to encourage the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach to the interpretation of all features of the landscape which have been produced, modified, or exploited by man, whatever their date. These features will include boundaries, field systems, industrial development, settlement patterns and the exploitation of wood, marsh and waste...the Society will draw especially on the resources of aerial photography, archaeology, archives, botany, geography, geology, history, place-names and soil science, with particular emphasis on the complementary roles played by fieldwork and documentary research." A journal will accompany the Society in its development. Membership, payable annually on 1st January, is £7 (See what a bargain E.R. A.S. is!!). Applications to the Treasurer, Dr. R.T. Smith, Dept of Geography, University, Leeds.