BRISTOL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP BULLETIN

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The official address of the Bristol Archaeological Research Group is c/o The City Museum, Queens Road, Bristol, &.

BRISTOL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

Officers and Committee for 1962/3

These are stated on page 10 of the September 1962 <u>Bulletin</u>, excepting that Dr. G. N. Fowler has resigned on taking up an appointment at King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Mr. Michael G. Smith, M.Sc., has been appointed to replace him. It should be added that both Dr. G. N. Fowler and Mr. Michael G. Smith are physicists, appointed to the Committee of B.A.R.G. mainly to advise regarding geophysical aids (such as magnetometers and resistivity survey instruments) to local archaeological problems.

Membership

1

Membership of B.A.R.G. is for the present by invitation only. The annual subscription (due 1st March) is ten shillings for those aged 18 or over, and five shillings for those under 18. Subscriptions to the B.A.R.G. Bulletin, for those institutions or private persons who reside outside the Bristol area, is 7/6d. There is no outrance fee. Those wishing to be invited should apply to the Hon. Secretary, B.A.R.G., c/o the City Museum, Bristol, 8.

Editorial

What do they know of Bristol, who only Bristol know? This adaptation of a well-known phrase draws attention to the folly of concentrating exclusively on the archaeology of our own little plot of land, which could result only in a narrowness of outlook, lacking in any sense of proportion or perspective. The study of archaeological developments not only in other parts of Britain, but also in other parts of the world, reveals the growth of new techniques which can often be applied to the solution of our local problems.

Attention is therefore drawn to the fine series of lectures to be held-at-Bristol University on Tuesday evenings between Easter and Whitsun, at 7.30 p.m., on the archaeology of the Bible lands, by four eniment experts: Mr. J. M. Allegro (author of the Pelican book and other books on the Dead Sea Scrolls), Dr. Kathleen Kenyon (excavator at Jericho and Jerusalem), Mr. Peter Parr (the most recent excavator at Petra), and Miss Olga Tufnell (excavator at Lachich and other Near Eastern sites). There is also a course of six lectures on the Valley of the Kings in Egypt, in the City Museum on Thursday evenings beginning 25 April. The City Museum's Feature of the Month for June is to be a selection from the reserve collections of Mediterranean archaeology.

OTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUPS:

III. The Thames Basin Archaeological Observers' Group

by

Francis Celoria

The T.B.A.O.G. was founded in 1957 to organize the watching and recording of sites threatened by quarrying and building. A few professionals, including W. F. Grines, A. D. Lacaille and others, had formed themselves into a group after the war to try and cover at least the quarries of the Lower Thames but the task was huge and at meetings of C.B.A. Group 10 (Essex, Herts, London and Hiddlosex) they urged that volunteers be recruited to help. This article is an attempt to describe the result of these proposals. It is probable that the experiences of the group may offer useful parallels or illustrations for other regions and no apology is made for giving demestic details.

From the boginning it was insisted that the T.B.A.O.G. should not be accused of poaching members from societies. Members were told that they were to belong to county societies and that they were to ensure that their finds were reported to these societies. The T.B.A.O.G. was to act as an intelligence service, as a disseminator of information and as a means of enabling amateurs to participate usefully in archaeology. A quarterly newsletter was sent free to each observer listing not only the finds of the group but also all the archaeological work being done in the region. Later the newsletter contained reviews of useful books, and no subscription was charged until October 1962! It is still a mystery how we survived. We cadged £10 from Group 10, we sold newsletters to non-members, we made iniquitous profits out of teas and biscuits and occasionally a member would pass on the fees obtained for lecturing on discoveries by the group. Friendly museums supplied stencils and other material.

It was only when the group was re-organized in October 1962 and a monthly newsletter was decided on that an annual subscription of 10/- was levied. Even then the T.B.A.O.G. had £30 in the kitty.

What sort of membership was collected? The period 1955-1957 was the hey-day of extra-mural courses and summer schools and there were being trained persons who had no outlet for their new skills and knowledge. Professor Gordon Childe had devised an elaborate 4-year diploma course of London University which produced amateurs who would have been useful auxiliaries in sites ranging from Mesopotamia to Skara Brae. But in the London region there was little digging available for them and observation and recording were made the main task. Members were made to "patrol" the areas they lived in though nearly always they disobediently patrolled other districts which were more likely to bring in finds. Hany of the best spotters proved to be anarchists who liked amassing private collections and it has taken many years to persuade them to hand in their trophies to museums. High praise was given in newsletters to those who reported their finds promptly to the Ordnance Survey and then presented them to museums.

Recruiting was at first, as stated, from extra-mural classes and then members were introduced from the ranks of those "interested in archaeology". These were tactfully questioned about their skills and so it was found that typists, draughtsmen, chemists, photographers were very welcome. Genuineness of archaeological interests was assessed by asking how many books on archaeology had been read in the previous year. Any one scoring less than two or three was thought to fail to have the title of enthusiast. But later recruiting became more bold. For example a history graduate who was in management research found himself practically shanghaied into the group and almost forcibly made secretary. He proved a good investment, reorganizing the structure, adding effective members to the committee and ensuring that the rate of prowling, observing, recording and publication was stopped up. The organization is still sometimes changed with a rapidity that would paralyze a county society but each experiment seems to produce results.

One of the most useful activities of the T.B.A.O.G. in the past few years has been the helping of understaffed museums. At least four museums in the region have had card indexes of groups of objects prepared in a business-like way. Bronzes have been drawn for the national bronze implement index. Cellars have been swept, dusted, and tidied, pottery has been mended by the hundredweight, and so on. Some curators have been reluctant to use anateur help either through prejudice or else through a natural reluctance to be present on Saturdays, the only time the helpers can turn up.

Perhaps the most useful feature of the T.B.A.O.G. is its emergency dig service. Within four hours every member of the group is informed of an emergency (each member has six persons to phone up!). The group has worked in all weathers without groups but the strain for the secretariat of the group is considerable and we yearn for a full time electical officer.

The successes of the group have been marred by some failures. Even now the moving of a committee member to another area causes some dislocation. For though we proudly train understudies for every activity, the understudies reel at what they have to undertake, but somehow the work goes on. Other snags are that very few of the observers are born prowlers and vast areas are not explored, mid-Essex for example. In Herts and Middlesex an observer who is a surveyor has led groups into the field to produce plans of earthworks, both prehistoric and medieval. Some six structures are put on to paper at 40 ft. to the inch every year. This is valuable for teaching members that archaeology can be done without digging.

One failure in education (we run lectures and displays and sponsor extramural lectures) has been as mentioned above, ar inability to persuade members not to maintain private collections. The favourite excuse is "the - Museum will lose the stuff in their own cellars" and there is a sudden blindness as to the advancing of knowledge or even the purpose of museums. The only cheering note is that members with collections who joined some years ago are now beginning to distribute their loot to museums.

The membership of the T.B.A.O.G. was 200 in 1961 but it has recently been deliberately whittled down to 140 by means of a detailed questionnaire asking for information about interests, special skills and willingness to work. Professions in it range from psychiatrist and convict (yes we have a correspondent in jail!) to document mender and managing director of a television company.

The T.B.A.O.G. has owed much to its professional members and this is no panegyric, for without the support of Dr. D. B. Harden, the President, Mr. A. D. Lacaille (the initiator of the T.B.A.O.G.) and Mr. B. W. Spencer who, as the first secretary, licked the T.B.A.O.G. into shape, the group's members would not have felt half as confident in the value of their contribution and in their loyalty to what they all acknowledge is one of the rumest and most unorthodox archaeological societies in the land: every member to some degree is active. At the time of writing they are intriguing to get a club-house. To wish for such a thing in the London region is hopefulness indeed and, you never know, they may get it in the end.

THIS NUMBER'S UNSOLVED PROBLEM:

The Precise Course of the Roman Road from Mendip to Old Sarum and beyond

By the Editor.

The interest of this road resides largely in the belief that it was primarily for transporting pigs of lead from the Mendip lead-mines to various parts of England, and more particularly via Winchester to Bitterne near Southampton for export to the Continent. This use is supported by the finding of two pigs of lead at Bitterne in 1918, which are believed to have been of Mendip origin. The use of Bitterne for the export of lead is further shown by the Bossington (river Test) pig, now believed to be from the Flintshire lead-minos. This pig was found in 1723 in the river Test, at the point where it was forded by those travelling along the Roman road between Sarum and Winchester.

The general course of this road has recently been described by Mr. Ivan D. Margary (Roman Roads in Britain, 1955, vol.i, pp. 92-5), and by the present writer (Archaeology of Wessex, 1958, pp. 262-4). Dr. M. K. Tratman has just published an account of the debated westward continuation beyond Charterhouse-on-Mendip to Uphill (Proc. U.B.S.S. vol.9 (Part 3), 1962, pp. 169-70). The precise course is, however, conjectural between Beacon Hill above Shepton Mallet (ST 6446) and the chalk downs in the region of Maiden Bradley (ST 8438). There are also doubtful points in the course along the now largely wooded chalk ridge leading to Old Sarum, and forming the watershed between the rivers Wylye and Nadder.

A second of the s

Our friends and colleagues the Salisbury Museum Research Committee have the exploration of the eastern portion of this road as one of their research projects now being undertaken. It is clearly most desirable that B. A. R. G. nembers contribute to this work by doing fieldwork along the western portion of the course, especially in the most conjectural section between Beacon Hill and Maiden Bradley. The co-ordinator of this work at the Salisbury end is Mr. J. B. D. Stratton (an appropriate name for any student of Bonan roads), 47, Macklin Road, Salisbury.

YOUNGER MEMBERS SECTION

(1) The Conference of Young Archaeologists, Dec. 1962.

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The 19th to the 21st of December 1962 found a new conference taking place at the Institute of Archaeology in London. As the name suggests there was an upper age limit - fixed for the present at 32, so that most of the members were within a few years of being students. Some were still in the sixth form, some had completed higher degrees, and some are professional archaeologists or historians.

The proceedings were divided into three days, one for each of the main periods: Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval, and each day attempted to give an idea of work being done at the present time. This threefold division had interesting side-issues. Prehistorians and medievalists were in distinct minorities, while Roman-Britainists wore heard to complain of the first and third days wasting valuable time. This, I think may well give an accurate, if painful, impression of the present lopsidedness of British Archaeology.

A considerable range was covered by the papers given, both in space and time. The Prehistoric day started on a Palaeolithic site at Purflect and moved on through a Secondary Neolithic site in Essex; to an Iron Age semiborch on the island of Tiroe described by Ewan Mackie; and Belgic coin-moulds. Two more general papers were given, one on Bones and Archaeology by Raymond Chaplin; and Gavin Simpson presented an intorim report on the C.B.A.'s new departure in the Welland Valley Research scheme.

The Roman day was sited mainly in the highland zone, though Barry Cunliffe's paper on the civil site at Fishbourne near Chichester made sure that Southern Britain was not forgotten. Dr. John Wilkes on the fort at Housteads, Dr. Michael Jarrett on Roman Wales, and Anthony Birley on Horrea Classis (Carpow); were all concerned with the Roman military occupation, while the Roman army also came into Allan Wilson's description of the Romanization of S.W. Scotland.

Romanists had a little more than their fair share in that the last day started off with a survey of Mr. Frere's excavation at Dorchester—on—Thames given by Mark Hassall. This did overlap spectacularly with the Saxon period,

and so lead on to the Dark Ages. Here came something of a bomb-shell when John Bowles put before us a very well prepared paper summarizing our sources for the study of Dark Age Britain. His continental parallels proved very stimulating and his application of them to Britain promises considerable progress in this tantalizing subject.

The last session dealt with medieval archaeology, presenting a fascinating contrast between Long House sites in Wales, described by Dr. Lawrence Butler, where pottery and dating evidence are non-existent, and the better known Castle and Abbey sites of England where finds are more abundant. These were represented by Newcastle Castle, described by B. J. N. Edwards, and Newminster Abbey, described by Miss Barbara Harbottle.

To say the worst I think most people found this an interesting and useful three days - but as one of the prime movers in the conference I can afford to be more cutting in my criticisms than others. Firstly we were far too respectable: no gauntlets were thrown down, no theories were challenged, no radically new thinking of fundamental subjects took place, and if a Conference of YOUNG archaeologists does not do these things who will? Secondly we were too cautious in sticking to site reports. Next year we must begin to think more about our subject; we must consider why we dig, then how, what we hope to get out of a dig, and how to present it to the public.

Our second conference is already being planned for 1963; by correcting as many of the faults of the first as we can, we hope to make it of use and interest to any young archaeologists who think about their subject.

(2) Youth Hostels Association Archaeological Tours.

20-27 July, 1963. Searching for the Past: Dorset. Holiday Tour OT/54 B.

10-17 Aug., 1963. Offa's Dyke and Frontier Castles. Holiday Tour OT/53.

And the same of

17-24 Aug., 1963. Searching for the Past: The Welsh Marches. Holiday Tour OT/54A.

Each of these tours consists of a walking holiday with evening lectures, and each costs £8. 10. -. Further details are obtainable from Y.H.A. Home Tours, St. Albans, Herts.

NOTICES AND REVIEWS OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

Proceedings of University of Bristol Spelacological Society. Vol.9(no.3), Nov. 1962.

This part contains 125 pages, of which 24 are devoted to archaeology, 89 to caves and geology, and 12 to administration, obituaries, and index.

There is a substantial paper (pp.159-176) on 'Some Ideas on Roman Roads in a Bristol and North Somerset', by Dr. E. K. Tratman, which should stimulate some of our readers to useful fieldwork. This is followed by a short paper by W. A. Dowden on excavations at Little Solsbury hill-fort near Bath.

L. V. Grinsoll.

Proceedings of Somerset Archaeological and N.H. Society, Vol.106, 1962.

The greater part of this volume is concerned with local history, natural history, and administrative natters. The papers most likely to interest and B.A.R.G. members are Cadbury Castle (near Sparkford), by Mrs. M. Harfield, Aerial Photographs of the Frome area, by Miss E. D. Overend, and Mr. C. A. Ralegh Radford's presidential address on The Church in Somerset down to 1100.

Mrs. Harfield's paper (pp. 62-65) is illustrated by two excellent airphotographs specially taken when eropharks were visible on the ground; these show a large number of pits in the interior, and traces of an inner enclosure which is probably the earliest Iron Age enclosure on the hill, or less likely the earthwork of a Neolithic settlement already attested by finds of pettery and flint implements. Mrs. Harfield's paper has resulted from an intensive search of the area twice a week from 1954 to 1959 but without any digging. During this period she has collected Neolithic pettery and flint implements; pettery of the three main phases—of the Early-Iron Age and of the Romano-British period; and pettery of the Dark Ages, including fragments of Eastern Nediterranean amphorae, supporting the local tradition that the site is to be identified with Arthur's Camelot. Her paper shows how much can be learned from intensive fieldwork without any actual digging.

Miss Overend's paper; although convoying little fresh information, shows that she and her group are working along the right lines; by obtaining airphotographs of their region and following them up with fieldwork.

L. V. Grinsell

NOTICES AND REVIEWS OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS (Continued)

Grinsell, L. V. Stoney Littleton Long Barrow, Somerset. H.M.S.O., 1963. pp.5, 1 plan. Price 3d.

This work is a simply written guide to the Stoney Littleton tomb. The latter consists of a gallery 48 ft. long with three pairs of side chambers, set in a cairn 100 ft. long by 50 ft. wide and 9 ft. high, constructed probably about the middle of the third millonnium B.C. The opening paragraphs mention the probable date and origins of the tomb and describe its situation and the importance of the area in the Neelithic period.

There follows a discussion of the plan and structure of the barrow and its negalithic interior. On page 3 is a quite adequate cross-section and plan of the barrow with certain parts of the revetment wall wisely shown by pecked lines where the 1858 reconstruction may have been incorrect. A surriary of the barrow's recent history follows: the robbing of the cairn in 1760 and the Rev. John Skinner's exploration in 1816. The guide concludes with a bibliography which is not altogether satisfactory. An important work, for example, on the typology and structure of the Severn-Cotswold tembs (W. F. Grimes, Excavations on Defence Sites, vol. 1. 1960) is emitted.

It is a great pity that the author did not follow the excellent example set by W. F. Grimes' guide to the Capel Garnon chambered cairn (H.M.S.O. 1958). The absence of a section, as in the Capel Garmon guide, on the relationships of Stoney Littleton, listing similar monuments, with National Grid reference and the number of the relevant I" Ordnance Survey map, is to be regretted.

It is actually a fact, not a belief, as stated on page 1, that the colitic material present in at least six long barrows on the Marlborough Downs derives from the Frone - Bath region.

Thus, the guide, though basically sound, night well have been rather botter. H. Stephen Green.

Editorial Commont: the experiment of inviting one of our Junior Members to perform this review has been fully justified by the result. Geological opinion on the origin of the colite in the north Wessex long barrows has been subject to change for the last few decades, and I do not believe the prosent view is necessarily final, especially as colitic material is likely te be found in other long barrows yet to be explored. It is also a common failing of some of the best archaeologists to convert "probabilities" exprossed by an export in a different field to "established facts". - Editor.

B. A. R. G. Weekend Study-group on Pottery from St. Mary-le-Port

During the weekend of 19/20 January 1963, pottery from the abovementioned excavations, ranging in date from Saxo-Norman until late Medieval,
was sorted and classified by six of our members under the direction and
guidance of our Excavations Adviser Hr. Philip A. Rahtz, in the Schools
lecture room at the City Museum. It is hoped to arrange for similar weekend
'working-parties' of this general type as and when suitable occasions arise.

EARTH DISTURBANCE

In the region covered by B.A.R.G., constructional works have since the end of the War been proceeding on an unprecedented scale. The rebuilding schemes involving extensive bombed areas in and around the medieval city nearly all include some measure of earth disturbance, and the task of arranging for a network of volunteers to watch such exposures from the archaeological angle is by no means easy. The expansion of the suburbs of Bristol in all directions is causing many excavations for new acusing estates, new roads, and for many other purposes. Finally, the construction of important new roads and the Severn Bridge at Aust brings with it a need for the utmost vigilance even in the most rural areas.

It is suggested that B.A.R.G. members may like to assist in grappling with this most difficult problem by the following means:

- 1. Will members please play their part by exercising general vigilance on any forms of earth-disturbance which they may have occasion to notice?
- 2. Will those members who are willing to hold 'watching-briefs' to cover areas where they live, or work, please send their names and telephone numbers to our Hon. Secretary Mr. Charles Browne.
 - 3. Will any members noticing anything of archaeological significance in any exposed ground please contact the City Museum, by telephoning either the Director (Mr. Alan Warhurst) or the Curator in Archaeology (Mr. L. V. Grinsell).

By these or other means, it is hoped to improve our local organisation in this regard in the near future.

FORTHCOMING EXCAVATIONS AND SUPPLER SCHOOLS

Excavations

Prehistoric: Fyfield Down, near Marlborough, WILTSHIRE. Selective excavation of earthworks associated with 'Celtic' and nedieval fields. The first week only will include a short training course on fieldwork and excavation. Twenty volunteers needed, both trained and untrained. From 17th until 31st August, 1963. Apply to: Peter J. Fowler, Hsq., R.C.H.M., (England), Rougement, Manor Road, Salisbury, Wilts.

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Roman: . .

Circucester, GLOS. Excavation of Roman town-site. Any number of volunteers can be received. From 15th. July until 17th August, 1963. Apply to: J. S. Wacher, Esq., F.S.A., Dept. of History, The University, Leicester.

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Cannington, SOMERSET. Late to Sub-Roman cometery probably containing several hundred graves. From 1st April until 30th June 1963. Apply to: P. A. Rahtz, Esq., 27 Cothan Road, Bristol.

Caerloon, MONHOUTHSHIRE. Continuation of excavations in the Civil settlement, from 1st April until 31st May. 1963.

Apply to: George C. Boon, Esq., F.S.A., National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

Medioval:

Winchcombo, GLOUCESTERSHIRE. Trial excavations on site of Mercian and Medieval towns now occupied by the Abbey Fishponds will be undertaken from 27th May until 21st June 1963. 4 women and 6 men needed, preferably with experience in surveying etc.

Apply to: Brian K. Davison, Esq., Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments, Aboll House, John Islip Street, London, S.W.1.

Chopstow, MONMOUTHSHIRE. Excavations to take place on site of St. Kynomark's Priory. Volunteers with provious experience are preferred. From 29th April until 11th May. 1963.

Apply to: Dr. L. A. S. Butler, R.C.A.M. (Wales), 17 Queens Road, Aberystwyth, Cards.

Fyfiold Down, near Marlborough, WILTSHIRE: see above under Prehistoric.

Summer Schools

Wroxeter/Preston Montford Field Studios Centre.

and the real of the first of the real of t Training will be given at Wroxeter, and accommodation provided at Preston Montford Field Studies Centre, for the following Courses. Fees: deposit £2 weekly: board-residence £6.10.-. weekly.

- and the first of the section of the Course A. Introduction to practical surveying, excavation, and recording, with background, lectures on Romano-British archaeology. Director: Dr. Graham Webster, F.S.A., assisted by Dr. J. Wilkes. From 27th July until 10th August 1963.
- Course B. Designed to extend experience gained on Course A. Students will be given individual study tasks on which to report. Director: Dr. Graham Webstor, F.S.A., assisted by C. M. Daniel, M.A. From 17th until 31st August, 1963.
- Course C. Advanced course to include surveying, drawing and interpretation of sections, preparing a report, and classification and drawing of pottery and small finds. Director: Dr. Graham Webster, F.S.A. From 31st August until 14th September 1963.

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FORTHCOMING COURSES, CONFERENCES, LECTURES, AND EXHIBITIONS

Courses

Tuesdays.

Recent Developments in Biblical Archaeology. A course of six lectures, by Mr. J. M. Allegro, Dr. Kathleen Kenyon, Mr. Peter Parr, and Miss Olga Tufnell, beginning 23rd April. Bristol University main building, 7.30 p.m. Further details on enclosed programme.

Thursdays. The Egyptian Valley of the Kings. A course of six lectures, by L. V. Grinsell, in the City Huseum, Bristol, 7.30 to 9.0 p.m. beginning 25th April.

Fee for course: 7/6d.

Weekend Course

Fri/Sun 3-5 May 1963. Air Photography and the Fast. A course for B.A.R.G. members. Lectures will be given by Mr. L. F. Curtis (University Goography Dept.), Mr. L. V. Grinsell, Mr. J. E. Hancock, Mr. Michael G. Smith, (University Physics Dept.), and Mr. Alan Warhurst. The course will be based on Bristol City Museum. Further details on enclosed programme.

Conferences

10/12 May

Cheltenham, in the Town Hall. British Association of Numisratic Societies' Annual Conference. Lectures by Messrs. Derek F. Allen, R. H. M. Dolley, J. P. C. Kent, and others, on ancient British, Roman, and later coins, with special reference to those of local archaeological interest. Details from Mr. H. R. Pryce, Devonshire House, St. Cyril's Road, Stonehouse, Glos.

25/27 June Urchfont Manor, near Devizes, Wiltshire. Conference on Archaeology in Adult Education. Details from Mr. Harry Ross, Leighton Villa, Wellhead Lane, Westbury, Wiltshire.

Lecture

Thursday, 18 April, 1963

In the City Museum, Bristol, 7.15 p.m., to the Bath and Bristol Numismatic Society. The Whitchurch Roman Coin-Moulds, by Mr. George C. Boon, F.S.A. Visitors welcome.

Exhibition

June

Bristol City Museum. Feature of the Month: A Selection from the City Museum's reserve collection of Mediterranean Archaeology.