

# THE MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGIST



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*The Museum Archaeologist is the official publication of the Society of  
Museum Archaeologists*

*Cover : Crucifixion scene from the Calf of Man, 8th-9th Century.  
By permission of the Manx Museum and National Trust.  
Drawn by M. Solly*

## EDITORIAL

In this issue we carry a book-review, at the request of the publishers.  
Our fame is growing!

One of the major archaeological collections in a provincial Museum is also considered here : Susan Nicholson and Margaret Warhurst write about the Mayer Collection at Merseyside County Museums. We welcome any further contributions on collections.

In the last Museum Archaeologist we queried the exact nature of Department of the Environment policy on storage grants. Now we have some details to offer and hope that some case-histories will soon be available in order to see how the policy works in practice.

The 1980 York Conference on Archaeological Storage was published last year : we hope later this year to be able to publish the main papers given at the 1981 Winchester Archaeological Display Conference, with the aid of a grant from the Area Museum Service for South-East England.

Andrew J. White.

## HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1981/82

### 1. Meetings

During the last twelve months there have been three meetings of the Society as follows:-

- (i) Annual General Meeting at Bristol on Friday, 19th June, 1981, followed by a study session on storage concentrating on facilities at Bristol City Museums. The afternoon culminated in tea with the Lord Mayor of Bristol and a private viewing of the civic regalia. Twenty-eight members attended.
- (ii) Specialist Session, Museums Association Conference, on Tuesday, 22nd September, 1981, at Norton Priory, Runcorn. This comprised talks by the Director, Patrick Greene, on 'The Excavation of Norton Priory and its development as a museum' and by Barry Johnson on 'Experimental Archaeology with particular reference to research into the production of medieval tiles. There followed a tour of the site which included the new museum building in course of construction and the Walled Garden project. Eighteen members attended.
- (iii) Conference on The Display and Interpretation of Archaeological Objects, 23rd-25th October, 1981, at Winchester. On the first day there was a field trip to Butser Experimental Farm, Fishbourne Roman Palace and Portchester Castle, followed in the evening by a reception by invitation of the Mayor of Winchester at Abbey House, where Prof. B. Cunliffe gave the keynote paper. The second day was devoted to a series of papers given by nine invited speakers, discussion and members' contributions. On the final day members were able to visit the City Museum and Historic Resources Centre at Winchester and the Willis Museum, Basingstoke. Some forty-five people, including several non-members, attended.

The committee met on four occasions during the year, one of which was an open meeting to discuss the Department of the Environment's consultation paper.

### 2. Officers and Committee

The following were elected at the 1981 Annual General Meeting for the ensuing year:-

Chairman:	N. de l'E. W. Thomas
Vice-Chairman:	K. J. Barton
Secretary:	G. M. R. Davies
Treasurer:	Mrs. E. Hartley
Editor:	A. J. White
Committee:	C. A. Beardsmore
	Miss P. Beswick (due to retire at the 1982 A.G.M.)
	H. P. A. Chapman
	J. Cherry
	D. G. Davies
	C. N. Gowing (due to retire at the 1982 A.G.M.)
	A. G. Macgregor (resigned during the year)
	S. C. Minnitt
	Miss J. E. Peirson Jones
	R. T. Schadla-Hall
	Miss S. M. Stone

There were no co-options, but Gareth Davies also served as the Museum Association's representative.

In addition to transacting the normal business of the Society, the committee has been concerned with a number of important issues. The main items are as follows and as previously include liaison with several related bodies:-

3. Storage of Archaeological Finds from DoE Grant-Aided Excavations  
Having been represented in the preparatory discussions convened by the Museums and Galleries Commission, the committee agreed, despite certain reservations, to support the scheme now brought into operation as described in Advisory Note 31. Its implementation continues to be monitored and discussed and efforts are being made to press for improvements, particularly with regard to the adoption of nationally accepted criteria for approved museums.
4. Organisation of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings in England  
The views of the membership on the DoE consultation paper having been canvassed by letter were discussed at a special open meeting of the committee in February at which it was unanimously agreed to oppose the Government's proposal to transfer responsibilities of the DoE to a new agency. A submission giving basic reasons and offering constructive suggestions was prepared by the Chairman and Secretary. This was also sent on request to the Museums Association by way of advice to Council in formulating its own view.
5. S. M. A. Conferences  
Following the success of the first conference at York, the proceedings of which were published in December 1981 as a special issue of the Museum Archaeologist in collaboration with the Yorkshire and Humberside Federation, a second conference was held at Winchester in October 1982 as reported above. Publication of this is being undertaken with a promise of support from the Area Museums Service for South-Eastern England. Arrangements for a third conference are now in hand to be held at Newcastle on 22nd-24th October, 1982 on the subject of Site Museums and the Interpretation of Monuments.
6. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation  
The committee has given support to U.K.I.C.'s paper on Conservation Standards, Part I - U.K. Sites: Excavated Artefacts For Publication. Consideration is currently being given to the interim guidelines on Environmental Standards for the Permanent Storage of Excavated Material from Archaeological Sites in the U.K.
7. S. T. O. P. Campaign  
No meetings of the committee were held during the year. However, an important development has been the implementation of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 which has already led to prosecutions for treasure hunting on scheduled sites.
8. Association for the Promotion of an Institute of Field Archaeologists  
The committee has maintained its support in principle for the Institute which is in process of formation. A progress report was received from the Secretary of A.P.I.F.A., Brian Davison, who attended the meeting in February 1982. The committee continues to seek museum representation.
9. Museums Association  
The committee has expressed views on behalf of the Society when requested on a number of matters, including the Manual of Curatorship and the DoE consultation paper. A contribution to the 1982 Annual Conference has been offered and a specialist session is being organized at Nottingham. The Secretary has attended meetings of the newly formed Professional Consultative Committee.
10. Representation on other bodies  
The Chairman has continued to represent the Society on the Co-ordinating Committee for Archaeological Action and the Secretary has attended meetings of the steering committee of the Standing Conference of Unit Managers as an observer.

G. M. R. Davies, Honorary Secretary. June, 1982

# SOCIETY OF MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGISTS

## Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 1982

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
	1981-82	(1980-81)		1981-82	(1980-81)
Balance b/f			Museum Archaeologist		
Bank	£207.14	(£381.12)	Printing	£123.00	(£ 66.26)
Petty Cash	4.35	( 1.50)	Other production costs	-	( 20.91)
			Postage	49.94	( 43.62)
Subscriptions			Photocopying	42.38	( 16.49)
1978-79	-	( 2.00)	Postage and stationery	45.77	( 23.85)
1979-80	-	( 12.00)	Travelling	21.49	( - )
1980-81 (3 @ £2)	6.00	( 182.00)	Coach hire	70.00	( 60.00)
1981-82 (106 @ £3: 17 @ £2)	352.00	( - )	Refund of subscriptions	8.00	( - )
1982-83 (1 @ £3)	3.00	( - )	Trevor Walden Memorial Trust	25.00	( - )
Conference fees	287.00	( - )	Contribution to STOP Campaign	-	( 150.00)
1 @ £3			Conference expenses	244.27	( - )
1 @ £5			Balance at bank 31st March	263.95	( 207.14)
36 @ £7			Cash in hand 31st March	1.69	( 4.35)
3 @ £9					
Miscellaneous receipts	30.00	( 14.00)	Total	£895.49	(£592.62)
Sundry creditor					
(unpresented cheque)	6.00	( - )			
Total	£895.45	(£592.62)			

Elizabeth Hartley, Hon. Treasurer. 27.5.82

Dennis Hitch, Hon. Auditor.

## CONFERENCES

### Specialist Session, Museums Association Conference 1982

This meeting will be held at Brewhouse Yard Museum, Nottingham, on Tuesday, 21st September, 1982. Details will be published in the July edition of the Museums Bulletin.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Conference on Site Museums and the Interpretation of Monuments

Arrangements are proceeding for a conference to be held at Blandford House, Newcastle-upon-Tyne on 22nd-24th October, 1982. The format will be as previously with a field trip to site museums in the area on the first day followed by talks by guest speakers and members' contributions which are invited.

\*\*\*\*\*

## SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1982/83

Please note that subscriptions for the current year fell due on 1st April. Prompt payment (£3) to the Honorary Treasurer, c/o The Yorkshire Museum, York, would be much appreciated.

\*\*\*\*\*

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT STORAGE GRANTS

Members may be interested to see a sample of the application form for storage grants which are available from Allison Robertson at the Department of the Environment.

Her address and telephone number is:

Allison Robertson,  
Department of the Environment,  
Room 334,  
Fortress House,  
23 Savile Row,  
London W1X 2HE.  
Tel. 01 734 6010 x 457

'Approved Museums' may make bids at £7 per standard DoE unit ( $0.017m^3$ ) from a total budget of £126,400 available for the whole country in the financial year 1982-3. This amount is not divided on any regional formula and is to be allocated on a 'first come first served' basis.

We would welcome any comments from members on how the system works in practice.

**Application for a grant  
towards the cost of storing an archaeological archive  
from a DOE grant-aided excavation**

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**A — Excavation**

---

1. What is the name of the excavation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which organisation is responsible for this excavation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Who owns the excavated material?  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**B — Storage**

---

4. (a) Who is the Museum Authority?  
(b) Which Museum Service will take charge of the material?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the total volume in cubic metres of material to be stored?  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

**C — Declaration and application by the museum**

---

6. (a) I declare that the organisation responsible for the excavation, the owner of the excavated material and the museum have made a formal agreement about storage.  
(b) I accept the conditions of grant listed overleaf.  
(c) I apply for a grant of £.....towards the cost of storage.

Signed.....(for and on behalf of.....)

Name (BLOCK LETTERS).....

Date.....Position held.....

Address for correspondence.....

.....Postcode.....Telephone number.....

---

**D — Declaration by the Museum Authority.** *(To be signed by the Head of the Museum Authority or, in the case of a Local Authority, by the Chief Executive)*

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7. I declare that this application has the consent of the Museum Authority which undertakes to abide by the terms of the agreement.

Signed.....(for and on behalf of.....)

Name (BLOCK LETTERS).....Date.....

---

**For DOE Use**

Application received on.....IAM responsible.....

I certify that:

- (i) the post-excavation archive material mentioned in this application is worthy of storage
- (ii) the museum applying for this grant has been approved by the Area Museum Council.

Signed.....Date.....



**Conditions attached to grants  
towards the cost of storing archaeological archives**

- 1- The approved museum may accept only the complete archive of an excavation, including all documentation.
2. The unity and integrity of the archive of an excavation must be preserved wherever possible, subject to the wishes of the landowner.
3. The approved museum shall be responsible for:
  - (i) taking care of the whole of the archive under suitable curatorship;
  - (ii) maintaining adequate levels of security and environmental control;
  - (iii) ensuring that students and scholars have access to the archive;
  - (iv) consulting the Department of Environment and obtaining the consent of that Department, should it wish to remove permanently or dispose of the archive.
4. After accepting the archive, the approved museum may either transfer or permit a limited loan of items to other museums and institutions in the interests of scholarship or for exhibition, subject to the approval of the landowner and the Department of the Environment.
5. The grant shall be:
  - (i) a once and for all payment made when the archive of an excavation is handed over to the approved museum;
  - (ii) calculated on the basis of a given sum per unit of 0.017 cubic metres. This is the volume of one of the standard boxes used by the DOE Central Excavation Unit. Any other boxes and items that cannot be boxed, such as stonework and waterlogged wood, will be converted to equivalent units.

**NOTES:-** (i) *The unit rate for calculating grants is at present £7. It will be reviewed annually to take account of inflation.*

(ii) **Please return the completed form to:**

*Department of the Environment  
Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments & Historic Buildings  
Fortress House  
23 Savile Row  
London  
W1X 2HE*

'..... a tradesman by choice, a gentleman by nature, a scholar by study, a wealthy man by industry, and a modest philanthropist by instinct.'<sup>(1)</sup>

### PREFACE

1986 will be the centenary of Joseph Mayer's death. He came to Liverpool from Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1821, and from then until his death he lived and worked on Merseyside, contributing through his own skill, interests and patronage to the business, social and cultural life and heritage of the area. A biography of Mayer has not yet been attempted so the present article is intended to be a brief introduction to the man and his collection, and to draw attention to him.

The collection donated by Joseph Mayer to Liverpool in 1867 consisted of nearly 14,000 items including prehistoric, Egyptian, Classical, Etruscan, Peruvian and Mexican antiquities, medieval and post medieval manuscripts, ivories, enamels, embroideries, pottery, clocks and watches, arms and armour, and ethnology. (See Anon. 1869). This collection represents the biggest single donation of objects of art and antiquity to Liverpool museum, and it placed Liverpool in the front rank of provincial museums both for the scope and the quality of its collections.

We would be grateful to hear from anyone knowing the whereabouts of any objects or documentation relating to Mayer.

We are grateful to Mr. L. Burman, Miss G. Chitty, Mr. E. Greenwood and Mrs. A. Jarvis of Merseyside County Museums, Mr. A. Treherne, Department of Philosophy, University of Keele, Dr. M. Gibson, School of History, University of Liverpool, and Mr. E. Morris, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool for information and helpful discussions. Our thanks are also due to the staff of Bebington Central Library and the staff of the Liverpool Record Office, Liverpool Central Libraries. Mr. R. Dolan kindly helped with typing the article.

The photographs of Joseph Mayer's Egyptian Museum are published by permission of Merseyside County Museums.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1850 a committee of Liverpool Town Council looked into ways of setting up a museum. The following year the Duke Street News Room was bought to serve as a museum and library. In the same year, 1851, the 13th Earl of Derby bequeathed his extensive zoological collection to the town. The building in Duke Street was never large enough to house both institutions and the Council earmarked a site on what was then Shaw's Brow. A local M.P., William Brown, provided money for the new museum and library building which opened to the public in 1860.

From its beginning in 1851 the museum had received all kinds of gifts from all over the world, but it had remained largely a museum of natural history. In 1867 the scope and reputation of the museum was extended and enhanced as a result of the letter which follows:

'Feb. 4th, 1867  
Lord Street.

Dear Sir,

*Having determined to offer my collection of Antiquities to the Town of Liverpool, I should be greatly obliged if you would at the next meeting of the Town Council be kind enough to be my representative, and as you are Chairman of the Museums Committee I thought it would best go through you.*

*My proposal is that the Mayor and Town Council be the Conservators for the public, that the Collection shall be kept together and be known as and called "The Mayer Collection,"...*

*Assuring you of my esteem,*

*Believe me,*

*Dear Sir,*

*Yours truly,*

JOSEPH MAYER.

To:

J. A. Picton Esq., F.S.A. <sup>(2)</sup>

The collection presented by Mayer to Liverpool remains, in large part, in Merseyside County Museums today, though some material was lost in the May blitz of 1941. The present article is intended to be a brief introduction to Mayer and his collection. <sup>(3)</sup>

#### EARLY LIFE 1803 - 1821

Joseph Mayer was born on 23 February 1803 at Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, the sixth of eleven children born to Samuel and Margaret Mayer. Samuel (1767 - 1838) a tanner and currier, had married Margaret Pepper in 1792. <sup>(4)</sup> Joseph retained close ties with his family and with Newcastle throughout his life.

Three recorded interests of his childhood were to develop in later years: sketching, <sup>(5)</sup> the military, and antiquities. He is reported to have enlisted as a drummer boy in the 34th Regiment of Foot in 1815, and to have marched with them from Newcastle to Macclesfield. <sup>(6)</sup> When he was fourteen he witnessed a ploughman's chance discovery of an urn containing Roman coins at Little Madeley in Staffordshire. In his Presidential Address to the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire in 1867 Mayer said 'Some of those coins and a fragment of the pitcher I have now, and they represent the very nucleus of that collection I have lately given to your town.' The incident was also referred to in a lecture entitled 'The Mayer Collection... an educational possession,' given in 1877 by C. T. Gatty, then assistant curator of the Mayer Collection. He noted that the coins and sherds were in a little wooden box labelled 'Antiqua moneta' and were included in the 1867 donation. <sup>(7)</sup> They do not seem to have survived the 1941 blitz.

## TRAINING AND TRAVEL 1821 - 1843

Eliza Mayer, an older sister of Joseph, married James Wordley, a silversmith who had set up business in Liverpool in 1817; in 1821 Joseph travelled to Liverpool to be apprenticed to his brother-in-law. It was evidently a private, family arrangement as a letter from Samuel Mayer to Joseph shows <sup>(8)</sup> and Joseph's name does not appear in either the Apprenticeship or Freeman's records. <sup>(9)</sup> A watercolour by Joseph of the south side of Lord Street in 1820, and possibly including Wordley's shop, is in the Liverpool City Libraries' collection.

In 1828, presumably the year in which he completed his training, Joseph travelled to France, Switzerland and Italy. <sup>(10)</sup> Before he set off, he gave the Mechanics' School of Arts 'Eight Plaster casts from the Antique and four volumes relating to the Arts...'. <sup>(11)</sup> The School of Arts had been founded in 1825 and in 1832 was renamed 'The Liverpool Mechanics' Institution'. <sup>(12)</sup> While in Italy, Mayer presented the Grand Duke of Tuscany with a Roscoe medal of his own design and received from the Duke the gift of an early 15th century Della Robbia mother and child. <sup>(13)</sup> He took the opportunity of sketching a statue of St. Charles Borromeo in Milan Cathedral. <sup>(14)</sup>

A journey to France in 1833 was followed in 1835 by a further visit to Switzerland and Italy, this time in company with a Liverpool friend, William Clements, who was an artist and wood engraver. France, Switzerland and Italy were again visited in 1841, and Clements' detailed letters to his wife record something of their travels and progress. <sup>(15)</sup>

Mayer went to Rome in 1845, Copenhagen in 1850 <sup>(16)</sup> and in 1854 made a tour of Austria and various German states. <sup>(17)</sup> A further visit to Italy was planned for the autumn of 1857. <sup>(18)</sup>

## 'MANUFACTURING GOLDSMITH, JEWELLER, AND SILVERSMITH' 1843 - 73

After his training, Mayer had become first Wordley's assistant, and later his partner. The business address of Wordley and Mayer was 56, Lord Street while Mayer himself had then lived at Clarence Terrace, Everton. Joseph Mayer set up business on his own at 68 - 70 Lord Street in 1843 and he moved to live over the shop. The 1851 Census entry records that Joseph Mayer aged 41 [sic] and born in Newcastle-under-Lyme was living at 68-70 Lord Street. He was a goldsmith employing 22 men, and had a housemaid, a cook, a porter and a general servant living on the premises. Evidently Mayer's business was highly successful since he was able to pursue his interests of collecting and exhibiting a wide variety of antiquities and other works of art, books and manuscripts, as well as continue his philanthropy. Examples of his work over the years include the design for a trowel for the laying of the foundation stone of Birkenhead Docks on 23 October 1844, <sup>(19)</sup> the Royal Mersey Yacht Club Grand Challenge Cup made in 1845, <sup>(20)</sup> and a gold horn decorated with hunting scenes and presented to Sir John Massey Stanley by his local Wirral hunt in 1847. <sup>(21)</sup> One particularly elaborate piece, specially designed and made by Mayer in 1848, a model silver cradle, was presented by some Liverpool burgesses to Mrs. Mary Horsfall, wife of the Mayor of Liverpool whose daughter was born during the Mayor's term of office. (The cradle was displayed at Windsor Castle in 1849.) <sup>(22)</sup> In 1848 Mayer designed a seal for the Curator of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire's collection. <sup>(23)</sup> At the laying of the foundation stone of St. Peter's Church, Everton in March 1849, a trowel made by Mayer was used. <sup>(24)</sup>

The Great Exhibition of 1851 meant a national viewing for thirty three items of plate and jewellery from Joseph Mayer 'Designer and Manufacturer', <sup>(25)</sup> including the Challenge Cup and a model silver cradle already mentioned, an elaborate silver dish <sup>(26)</sup> and a mudstone cameo after a portrait by Durer, in a gold strapwork setting of late 16th century style. <sup>(27)</sup> A seal for the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme was designed in 1852, and the civic chain reworked. <sup>(28)</sup> The centenary of the

Liverpool philanthropist William Roscoe on March 8th 1853 was marked by a medal designed by Mayer, and drawings for tickets for the Roscoe centenary breakfast.<sup>(29)</sup> He produced drawings to mark the laying of the foundation stone of 'the Free Public Library and Museum' in Liverpool on 15th April 1857,<sup>(30)</sup> and designed a commemorative medal for the opening in 1860.<sup>(31)</sup> His design was used for a seal for the Bebington Local Board set up in 1863.<sup>(32)</sup> Other examples of Mayer's work include designs for shop cards,<sup>(33)</sup> drawings of Tranmere Old Hall, Wirral, and its decorated glass,<sup>(34)</sup> and the title page for his own unpublished 'Materials towards a History of the Arts...' in 1875.<sup>(35)</sup>

Dacre Park, Rock Ferry, on Wirral became Mayer's home in 1854. In 1860 he moved to 'The Pennants' in Lower Bebington, a property he extended and re-named 'Pennant House'. It later served as the Town Hall for the Borough of Bebington until 1971. From his retirement in 1873<sup>(36)</sup> until his death on 20th January, 1886, he continued to live at Pennant House.

### THE COLLECTION

William Daniels, a Liverpool artist, painted a portrait of Mayer in 1843 at the time when Mayer was still living in Everton. Mayer is shown seated in the elaborately carved 'Roscoe' chair, designed by himself and made of timbers acquired when William Roscoe's Liverpool birthplace was demolished.<sup>(37)</sup> Some engravings by Buss show a slightly different version.<sup>(38)</sup> The portrait is currently on display in the Port of Liverpool Gallery at Merseyside County Museums. In the painting Mayer is surrounded by antiques and works of art from his collection. Several of the objects depicted were contained in the vast number of items donated to Liverpool by Mayer in 1867; three of these are displayed in the case, in front of the portrait: a Peruvian pottery vessel 1100-1300 AD, a Wedgwood vase, and a Sevres porcelain group.

Mayer enjoyed and appreciated his collection and the fact that he exhibited it widely and subsequently gave so much of it away, shows his desire to encourage others to share his pleasure in it and to profit, as he had done, by studying the objects. He knew the value of noting the place and date of manufacture of the items, and of trying to represent a wide range of specimens<sup>(39)</sup> even if he did not always acquire or sometimes preserve whatever documentation there might be available.<sup>(40)</sup>

*Acquisition:* Auction sales, private purchase and exchange seem to have been the main ways in which the collection was built up. Mayer also received gifts, largely of pottery and antiquities, from friends, for example from Joseph Clarke and Charles Roach Smith. Clarke, who lived in Saffron Walden, Essex, shared a number of interests with Mayer: antiquities, local volunteers and horticulture. Charles Roach Smith was a well known antiquarian and author.<sup>(41)</sup>

An example of an important auction at which Mayer acquired items is that of the Valentia sale in 1852. Egyptian antiquities and European prehistoric bronze axes were among items known to have been purchased by him.<sup>(42)</sup>

Some of the dates when Mayer made purchases from private collectors can be noted from the surviving records. Gatty wrote that much of the collection of Egyptian antiquities, displayed by Mayer in 1852 in his 'Egyptian Museum', had come to him by purchase from Joseph Sams of Darlington.<sup>(43)</sup> Sams himself had bought items at the London sale of the late Henry Salt's collection in June-July 1835. Salt had formerly been Consul General in Egypt.<sup>(44)</sup> Between 1830 and 1839 Sams also purchased the Egyptian collection of Charles Bogaert of Bruges,<sup>(45)</sup> which included several famous pieces such as the New Kingdom wood carving of a Nubian slave carrying a lotus-shaped jar.

Mayer, while travelling in France, amassed a noted collection of miniatures and medals relating to the Bonaparte family. Some of the miniatures were purchased directly from the artists. He sold the collection to a friend, Mr. John Mather of Mount Pleasant, Liverpool at some date before 1854 when Mayer edited a catalogue of the collection.<sup>(46)</sup> Mather bequeathed the collection to his sister with the proviso that it pass to Liverpool on her death. Miss Mather died in 1872.<sup>(47)</sup>

In 1854 Joseph Mayer bought a group of mainly Bronze Age pottery from Samuel Anderson of Whitby.<sup>(48)</sup> The collection was originally offered to Mayer for £150, but after negotiations he paid £100. The exact number of items involved in the sale is difficult to calculate from the surviving documentation but there were about forty urns. (Of these only twelve survived the 1941 Liverpool blitz, mostly in a fragmentary state.) The urns had been excavated by Anderson from at least twenty-six barrows in the neighbourhood of Whitby. No documentation seems to have been included with the urns when Mayer acquired them. Two of the urns were exhibited at the Yorkshire Exhibition of Arts and Manufactures held at Leeds in 1875, and mistakenly listed as coming from Danby Moor.<sup>(49)</sup> This prompted Canon Greenwell to write to Mayer as a result of which the then curator of the collection at Liverpool Museums, Charles Gatty, was able to borrow from Greenwell the manuscript of Anderson's excavation notes. Gatty copied that part of the manuscript which related to the group of urns which Mayer had acquired.<sup>(50)</sup> Anderson's son wrote to the museum in 1915, 'I remember my father telling me that he took Mr. Mayer over to Danby and Goathland Moor to show him the tumuli which he had opened, on that occasion my father picked up a flint arrowhead and gave it to Mr. Mayer in return Mr. Mayer sent my father a present of a silver mounted pipe with the following inscription (Samuel Anderson Whitby from Joseph Mayer Liverpool Danby Moor November v MDCCCLIV)'<sup>(51)</sup>

Mayer's 1854 tour of Austria and various German states provided the opportunity for him to purchase 'Antique bronzes, Terra-Cottas, Roman glass, manuscripts, Antique Arms and Armour (Swords, Guns, Pistols, Daggers etc)'. At the meeting of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire on the 8th June 1854, Mayer exhibited a number of the items he had acquired including.... 'a series of small objects, apparently the toys or playthings of a child; they had been found in a Roman burial ground, near Cologne on the Rhine, and in the grave with them were the remains of the skeleton of a female child.'<sup>(52)</sup>

1854 was also the year in which Mayer bought the Faussett collection. The Reverend Bryan Faussett lived at Heppington, Kent in the eighteenth century. Between 1757 and 1773 he excavated at a number of sites near Canterbury, recording in detail the objects recovered. All but one of the sites were cemeteries of the pagan Saxon period, although Faussett himself believed them to be Roman in date. The material preserved by the family along with the six volumes of the diary were in 1853 offered for sale to the British Museum at a valuation of £665.<sup>(53)</sup> The offer was not accepted by the Trustees in spite of a considerable campaign to secure the collection for the nation. Mayer agreed to purchase the collection in 1854 in order to preserve it in its entirety, and thereby acquired what was at that time the finest group of Anglo-Saxon antiquities. On this occasion, at least, the documentation, so valuable in any study of the collection and its wider implications, was preserved.<sup>(54)</sup>

Baron Gábor Féjerváry, together with his nephew, Count Ferenc Pulszky, had left Hungary as a result of the revolution there in 1848. The Baron himself died in 1851. He had amassed an outstanding collection, largely composed of Continental prehistoric, classical and medieval material, including the Fejerváry ivories. Pulszky exhibited the collection in London in 1851 and 1853,<sup>(55)</sup> and delivered a series of lectures about it.<sup>(56)</sup> Mayer subsequently acquired the ivories and other items, including much of the Hungarian prehistoric metalwork.<sup>(57)</sup>

The Mayer Papers in Bebington Library include a photograph of a painting showing Mayer with the two ivory panels which form the Asclepius and Hygieia diptych. In the background are the glass display cases of the Egyptian museum in Colquitt Street.<sup>(58)</sup>

Correspondence in the Mayer Papers indicates that by early 1857 Mayer had purchased the Bram Hertz collection.<sup>(59)</sup> Classical gems and bronzes formed the bulk of the items, but there were a few rare and important Mexican antiquities.<sup>(60)</sup> In March 1857 Mayer disposed of over 400 lots at auction<sup>(61)</sup> and two years later well over 3,000 lots were sold, including the Mexican items, bought by Christie<sup>(62)</sup> and later acquired by the British Museum. In the same year a part of another Egyptian collection was bought privately by Mayer, that of the Reverend Henry Stobart. Bronzes and hieratic papyri were among the items selected but perhaps the best known individual piece was the linen belt 17 feet long, inscribed with the name of Rameses III, and known as the Rameses Girdle.<sup>(63)</sup>

William Rolfe of Sandwich, Kent had inherited material from a relative, William Boys of Sandwich, and to this he added prehistoric, Roman Anglo-Saxon and medieval items, largely collected locally. As a result of correspondence in September 1857, Mayer and Roach Smith visited Rolfe to discuss the purchase of part of Rolfe's collection. In a letter of 17th November 1857 Rolfe wrote "My regret at parting with my Collection, is daily giving way to a feeling of pride at the distinguished fate to which you have kindly assigned them."<sup>(64)</sup>

The Mayer Papers contain several letters from antiquarians, dealers and others offering small collections or individual items for sale.<sup>(65)</sup> Some have notes appended by Mayer indicating purchase or refusal.

Local material, notably pottery and documentation connected with it, together with local broadsheets and other printed material formed a considerable part of Mayer's collection. The work of local artists and engravers was keenly sought.<sup>(66)</sup>

Although, on most occasions, Mayer was discriminating in his purchases there are a few examples of times when he was deceived. In 1863 a committee of the Royal Society of Literature declared as forgeries some rolls of papyri from Mayer's collection which had been unrolled and 'translated' by Constantine Simonides.<sup>(67)</sup> His translations had been published in 1861.<sup>(68)</sup> Simonides was a very able person, but unfortunately he was also a clever forger. He was for a time a trusted friend of Mayer's with a ticket for free admission to the Egyptian Museum. He was also made an honorary member of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire.

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### Abbreviations:

Liverpool RO: Liverpool Record Office, Liverpool Central Libraries, William Brown Street, Liverpool

MCM: Merseyside County Museums (formerly Liverpool Museums), William Brown Street, Liverpool

MP:B: Mayer Papers in Bebington Central Library, Civic Way, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside

MP:L: Mayer Papers in Liverpool RO

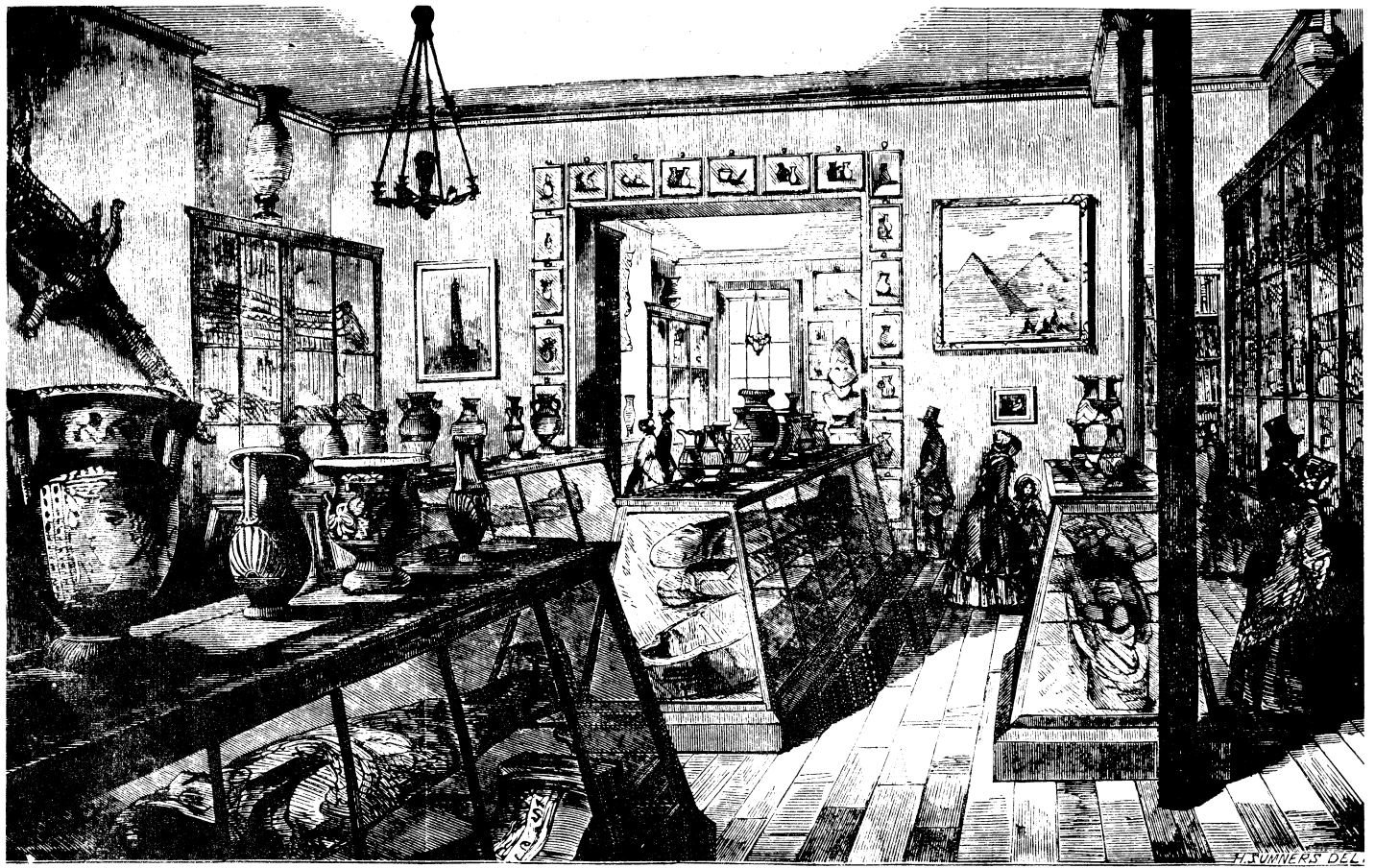
THSLC: Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire

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63. MP:L, Gatty 1879, iii
64. MP:L
65. Briggs 1978,1979
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67. Anon 1863
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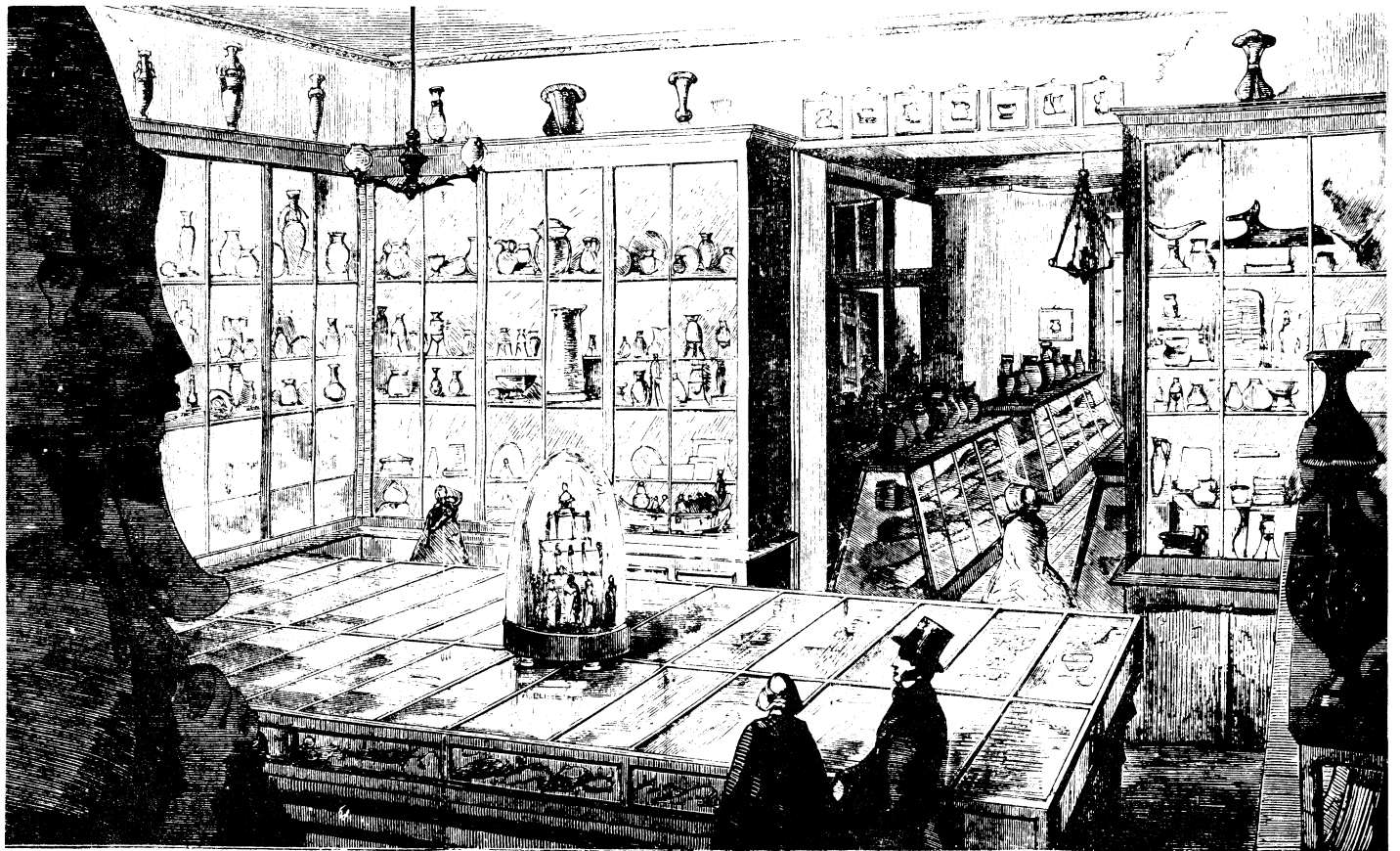


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MUSEUM ROOM  
AT MR. MAYER'S "EGYPTIAN MUSEUM", LIVERPOOL.



Two views of Joseph Mayer's Egyptian Museum, Colquitt Street, Liverpool, engraved by H. Sumners

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OF THE LAKE DISTRICT by T. CLARE. 159 pages, 306 figures and plans. Paperback £4.90, hardback £7.50. Moorland Publishing Co., Derbyshire, 1981.

The geographical scope of this book covers the Lake District in its broadest sense, i.e., Cumbria, the pre-1972 counties of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire-north-of-Sands. In view of the fact that this area is rich in archaeological sites of all periods, it is strange that no field-guide to standing monuments of the Lake District has previously been published. In recent years several useful potted archaeologies of the Lake District have appeared, but the publication of this field-guide fills a long-standing vacuum. It is clear from the cover notes that this book is aimed at the non-specialist.

Following a general introduction the book examines thirty sites which are grouped under five broad headings. The grouping is as follows:

1) Stone Circles and Burial Mounds, 2) Settlements and Hillforts, 3) Roman Forts, 4) Castles and Fortified Buildings, 5) Monastic Remains. The format adopted is that a ground plan is provided for each site, onto which are clearly marked several viewpoints: corresponding illustrations are included for each of these viewpoints, and the significance of the features shown is explained in the accompanying notes. Consequently we find that the 159 pages are packed with no less than 263 line drawings and 43 maps or plans. In being led around each site the reader is provided with a skilfully presented structural history, one in which the significance of such features as butt joints, old roof lines and blocked doorways is brought home to the visitor. The excellent clarity of the drawings greatly aids the effectiveness of this approach.

The general introduction makes the point that 'while the individual forts, castles and abbeys which have survived are interesting and important in themselves they are only part of landscapes which previously existed' (p.8). Following from this I would like to have seen the introductory notes to each section put the features under discussion more firmly in their broader context.

A couple of statements in the text need some qualification. The contention that the Romano-British ard 'could only scratch the surface' (p.22) has been shown by experimental work at Butser and elsewhere to be somewhat of an underestimation of their effectiveness. According to the author the original owner of Arnside Tower, a south Cumbrian pele tower, is not known (p.94); there is in fact a seventeenth century reference which makes it almost certain that Arnside Tower was built by the de Broughton family.

The selection of a mere thirty sites no doubt provided the author with something of a headache. The criteria for selection were, according to the preface, that they are good examples of their type and either have public access or are adjacent to public rights of way. On this basis the sites chosen would seem to be a very fair selection. However, there is one curious omission: the period between the Roman occupation and the Norman Conquest is totally unrepresented. The Lake District has not yet produced anything like the 9th century Pennine homestead at Ribbleshead (although this is surely a matter of time), but it does have a good series of wheel-headed crosses and hog-back stones. Any visitor to the Lake District wishing to see a cross-section of archaeological sites in the area should certainly include Gosforth on their itinerary where a fine wheel-headed cross and a collection of hog-backs can be seen: alternatively many other churches, such as Aspatria, Gilcrux and Millom have examples of Anglian and Viking age sculpture. In adhering to the five groups of monuments selected, the author has missed the opportunity of including other characteristic Lake District features such as pack-horse bridges and shielings which the visitor may have welcomed information on. Space was no doubt limited, but one feels that, no matter how informative, the twenty five pages devoted to Furness Abbey (more than twice that given to any other site) could have been sufficiently pruned to include several other remains.

The book does not claim to be a gazetteer to Lake District sites, but its use as a field-guide would have been greatly enhanced if a selected list of comparable sites with grid references had been appended at the end of each section. Not only would this have provided welcome information for visitors unfamiliar with the Lake District, but it would have provided the opportunity for readers to try their hand at unravelling the structural development of a range of sites, following the example so ably set in the text.

The lack of a bibliography, both at regional and site level, is an unfortunate omission. A list of museums with Lake District material in their collections would have been a useful complement to the field remains.

These reservations apart, this publication can be thoroughly recommended to anybody wishing to acquaint themselves with the archaeological sites of the Lake District. The appealing format and uncluttered presentation make this a particularly useful book for those new to archaeology. Even for those who are familiar with many of the sites discussed, this book provides a compact and accessible account. All readers should find something new here; indeed, as far as this reviewer is aware, the deserted village at Dalton (pp.32-3) (an early nineteenth century desertion) has not before been published.

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#### NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles, notes and reviews for publication in the Museum Archaeologist should be submitted on A4 sheets, typed on one side only and double spaced. Drawings, diagrams etc. (not photographs) must fit within an area of 150mm x 240mm and be sent complete with necessary scales and captions.

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