

the
museum
archaeologist



volume ten

THE MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGIST

VOLUME 10

1985

Editor: Malcolm J. Watkins

The views expressed in this Journal are not necessarily those
held by the Society of Museum Archaeologists

@ The Society of Museum Archaeologists, and individual authors

CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Chairman's Report, 1984	3
Secretary's Report, 1984	6
IFA and Museum Archaeologists	9
Your Money or Yorvik	12
Information Exchange	17
Any Fool Can Pass the Diploma	19
The Ancient Monuments Laboratory	23
Reviews:	24
<i>Greek Coinage, by N.K.Rutter</i>	
<i>Roman Coinage in Britain, by P.J.Casey</i>	
<i>Verulamium Excavations, Volume III, by S.S.Frere</i>	
<i>Bone, Antler, Ivory and Horn, by A.MacGregor</i>	
Constitution and Rules of the Society	29

EDITORIAL

Andrew White, after several years as Editor for the Society stepped down from the post at the 1985 A.G.M. It was with deep regret that the Committee accepted Andrew's decision, and they wish to thank him for the considerable efforts he has put into the job; his careful work will be sorely missed but we hope we are not losing him completely. The final work to be done by Andrew will be the editing of the proceedings of the highly successful 1984 Conference held at Leicester. The value of that weekend is known to all those who attended and we anticipate that the resulting volume will be the finest yet produced by the Society, and that it will prove to be a significant addition to the study of the role and methods of archaeology in the museum context.

Because of the anticipated workload of the Conference volume, Andrew felt unable to devote sufficient time and energy to the production of this edition of The Museum Archaeologist. As a result the Committee accepted the rash offer of the present writer to take on the mantle. I seem to recall something about never volunteering, as well as something about one born every minute. However, my position was not clearly ratified by the A.G.M. and as a result the production of the next Museum Archaeologist will be undertaken with Maggi Solly of Lincoln as Editor. It is with regret that I hand over so soon, particularly since I hoped to revamp the journal, but it would not be wise to have two Editors, as suggested, because of the need for a continuity of style to be developed. What happens with the following issue has yet to be resolved.

At the same time as I took on the editorship for The Museum Archaeologist, Yvette Staelens accepted having thrust upon her the responsibility for creating a newsletter for the Society. We wish her the best of luck in this new venture which is intended to provide more immediate information to you the members than you have received in the past. The frequency of its appearance will however depend on the expense of distributing it; by the time you read this you should have received two editions of MAN. (I wish I'd thought of that title first)!

I hope that you will all take the Museum Archaeologist seriously in the future for as I sit at the keyboard writing this it is in the knowledge that there is little or no copy available to make this issue. It is on this fact that you can blame the late appearance and apparent ego-tripping of this edition. The infrequency with which the journal appears is to blame for this apathy I am sure, but there must be much in your minds that would be worth putting on paper as a contribution. The main point is that we should be aiming for copy which will be of long term benefit rather than perhaps topical items which can be better covered in the newsletter or some other more regular and frequent organ. To that end I am hoping that we will be able to begin to build up a useful database in TMA to include such things as a reading list for both Diploma students and

those with the Diploma, details of suppliers used by us and information about their products, and a gradually growing identifications archive. The success of these and other such ideas lies in your hands; I can give the ball a push but you will have to keep it rolling.

Nicholas Thomas, in his 1984 Chairman's report herein, draws attention to the need for more articles from you. I cannot endorse this too strongly: there is not an article in here that I have not either had to commission or write myself. If you want a weak journal, irregularly issued then carry on being apathetic, but if you want value for your subscriptions (about which you doubtless grumble) it is upto everyone of you to pull some weight. You can send in brief notes on new finds that have come to you for identification, exhibitions that you have visited, or sites you have seen. We do not guarantee publication, but since probably only one of you will respond it is a strong probability. If you are too lazy, then why have I been up at 1.00 and 2.00 in the morning typing this into my computer (two-fingered)?

IF YOU WANT A LIVELY JOURNAL -
BE LIVELY YOURSELVES

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, 1983-4.

1. By far the most important events of the year have happened - or are happening - for political or organisational reasons: I mean the creation of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, the demise of the Metropolitan County Councils, the appointment of a Director General for our professional Association, and a replacement for our good friend, Sir Arthur Drew.

We have done our bit in recent months to make our view known to those charged with protecting and promoting the ancient heritage: though we failed to get Peter Rumble to this A.G.M. he has expressed a keenness to address us on a future occasion and perhaps we can capture him next year. Though depressed at the apparent lack of new faces, of people with a proven 'entrepreneurial flair' in his team, I believe that Lord Montague will receive good advice, and possesses the necessary authority to get things done. He has been good for the Museums Association and will I am sure, be good for the Heritage. We have welcomed him in writing and have offered our help. I have not yet discovered whether he naturally burns with enthusiasm for down-to-earth (and more especially under-the-earth) archaeology; and so in the months ahead, it is up to us to keep drawing his attention to issues which we believe matter, to dangers which we see ahead.

Indeed, a very real danger, despite Government reassurance which we have received in response to our letter, concerns the demise of the Metropolitan Counties. Here, we fear for the future provision of proper resources for rescue archaeology. Here we fear, also, for decent museum provision when that burden is to be shouldered by Districts instead of the giant County authorities (whose record in both areas has been so good). We are protesting and we are monitoring events. Your Officers would welcome any hard facts that members uncover.

Lord Howard is due to replace Sir Arthur Drew in the Museums and Galleries hot seat on 2nd September, 1984. I have not yet met him but I understand that he has a reputation for listening and for being willing to take advice (as Sir Arthur never stopped doing; and generally was). I think that at present his sources of advice are being dominated excessively by the Area Museum Councils, too many of whose chief officers are far removed from direct experience in archaeological matters. In the year ahead we shall do our best to feed to him our own views, especially on such matters as the perennial hardy and burgeoning *Thesaurus antiquorum*! [Editor's note: since this was written we have heard of the sad loss of Lord Howard after a brief term in post; he has been replaced by Professor Brian Morris, a long-standing Commission member to whom we have tendered a welcome].

2. The metal-detecting fraternity does not go away, nor do I change my personal view that, except within a few specialised fields of archaeological research, they really have little

place in serious archaeology and our best course of action is to work to restrict their activities whenever we have the occasion. Perhaps you disagree. I detect a slight softening in the attitude of the C.B.A.: and more museums purchase detected finds than is, perhaps, wise. We would welcome your views, and above all we - or preferably the C.B.A. - would be glad to receive well-documented case-histories of scheduled or other sites under attack from treasure hunters.

Within this field, we are preparing guidelines on the problem of antiquities dealers and their growing attempts to win respectability among influential bodies. Their sales are closely linked with the activities of detector-users and with those smuggling antiquities into this country from abroad, and we are preparing to take a stand against both.

3. I began my survey of the year by saying what I thought were the most important events of that year. I could have added that Government-sponsored rescue archaeology was under serious threat, that Units are going under, and that the golden years of Treasury-financed research by this means - rescue archaeology - seem to be over. This is very serious indeed. We have asked Lord Montague (wearing his Association coronet) what he thinks about it: what does the Museums Association think about it? Nothing - do you reply? If that is so, we are failing in one of our primary objectives (3.D.i of our Constitution, our role as a pressure group....) and we need to do better. One way would be to get a *bona fide* archaeologist on Council. We shall renew our attempts to get one of our members elected this summer and you must all support him with your vote and lobby colleagues to do likewise.

Meanwhile, our member and good friend Ian Longworth (to whom we are deeply indebted for his and his colleagues' contributions to our A.G.M. today) has had his document on selection and retention of archaeological material accepted by those at Fortress House. We were, to be truthful, unhappy with some of it and told him so. But much of it was valuable and we hope that in due course some of its weaknesses (treatment of post-mediaeval material for instance) can be strengthened. Barry Cunliffe's perverse preference for Record Offices rather than Museums as the proper repositories for the archives from rescue excavations, in his otherwise acceptable report on the publication of excavations, was sadly typical, still, of our leading archaeological academics: and luckily it was reversed by wide-based protest. Here again we seem to fail to impress the non-museum world of archaeology of our sincerity, of our case for partnership with universities, units and all others concerned with practical archaeology (did I hear somebody say that museum archaeologists are not exactly conspicuous on the council of the Institute of Field Archaeologists?) and with our expertise in housing the finds and associated documentation. We have had one conference in recent years on an aspect of that work; and this early winter we shall be dealing, museum-wise, with all aspects of the organisation of a rescue excavation and its aftermath in depth - which we shall publish. We can't do more.

4. Indeed, the proper housing of archaeological material should, I believe, continue to occupy our main attention during the

coming year. We on your Council cannot think of a museum-orientated issue that is of greater importance at the moment. We still need to get the business of Government (now English Heritage) storage-grants right, especially the criteria for grant and the adequacy of the amount available. Assuming that our own Ken Barton becomes the next President of the Museums Association, we have a golden opportunity - our best yet - to make our presence felt. I understand that, all being well, the subject before Conference in Brum in 1985 will be dear to our hearts and may include contributions from some of us. It is up to us to make a good submission to him as the President, on the vital subject of storage, and to ensure that we are heard.

Meanwhile, as I have mentioned, we have a potentially fascinating subject for our conference at Leicester in November, "Dust to Dust? Field Archaeology and Museums" and it is vital that it is well attended.

5. This brings me to my last item for consideration concerning the year under review. It is the matter of communication. Your Council sometimes feels that it is a little out of touch with what the membership wants; that it works in isolation. We have worried about this at Council meetings and considered ways to improve contact between each other. We considered a newsletter, but the time seems not quite ripe for that: it would be a big and expensive undertaking. We feel that more support for your conference, and A.G.Ms. and more contributions, however short, for our journal, and more communication directly or indirectly with members of your Council are what are needed at present. We hear regularly from the West Midlands, but from nowhere else. Help us to help you. Feed us with information; warn us of your problems. We are entering a difficult period and we must work together to meet the challenges of an epoch which, unless we are careful, may not be as productive for archaeology as that of the seventies.

Nicholas Thomas,
Chairman

HONORARY SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1983/4

1. MEETINGS:

During the year there were two meetings of the Society as follows :

(i) The Annual General Meeting was held at the Museum of Science and Engineering, Newcastle upon Tyne, on Friday, July 1, 1983. This was preceded by to a field trip to the Roman fort of Arbeia at South Shields, the Bede Monastery Museum at Jarrow, and Wallsend fort. After the meeting members were shown round the Headquarters of the Tyne and Wear Museum Service at Blandford House, and the Museum of Antiquities at The University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

(ii) A specialist session at the Museums Association Conference, at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, on Friday, September 23rd, 1983, when members joined the visit to the Archaeology Department.

The Committee has met on three occasions since the AGM, and the sub-committee formed to organise the forthcoming conference at Leicester has met twice.

2. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE:

The following were elected at the 1983 AGM 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:	S. C. Minnitt	(to retire 1984)
	Miss J. E. Peirson Jones	(to retire 1984)
	R. T. Schadla-Hall	(to retire 1984)
	Miss S. M. Stone	(to retire 1984)
	Miss H. C. Adamson	
	Miss C. E. A. Dudley	
	K. A. Leahy	
	Mrs. S. P. Muldoon	
	M. J. Watkins	
	Mrs. L. E. Webster	
CO-OPTED:	B. Bennison	
	H. P. A. Chapman	
	J. Cherry	
	D. G. Davies	
OBSERVER:	M. C. Corfield (U.K.I.C.)	

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL STORAGE:

Having continued to urge the adoption of standard criteria for designating approved museums, the committee has been pleased to have the opportunity to make comments on the second draft of the Museums and Galleries Commission's

paper, Storage of Archaeological Finds, on which the views of the membership were sought.

4. PROPOSED ABOLITION OF GLC AND THE METROPOLITAN COUNTY COUNCILS:

Grave concern has been expressed on behalf of the Society of the implied prospect of reduced provision for Rescue Archaeology and the care of archaeological collections in those areas affected by the Government's proposals. Assurances have also been sought that the present levels of funding would be maintained and that archaeological opinion would be heard when the proposed changes were discussed.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS FOR THE PERMANENT STORAGE OF THE WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE FROM EXCAVATED SITES:

Draft guidelines, compiled by the Museum Documentation Association at the suggestion of the Co-ordinating Committee for Archaeological Action, have been discussed by the Committee and comments made. This is the preliminary stage of consultation leading to the publication of the revised guidelines which it is hoped will appear in late 1984.

6. HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND MONUMENTS COMMISSION:

Following the establishment of the new Commission an expression of welcome was sent to the Chairman, Lord Montagu, which at the same time indicated the Society's interest in the integral role of museums in Rescue Archaeology, with particular reference to the care of the excavation archive, its interpretation and that of sites, and the importance of storage grants.

7. THE WALLTOWN PROJECT:

At the request of the Museums Association a paper was compiled to provide specialist advice to Council on the form of its response to Northumberland County Council's proposals for an Archaeological Theme Park at Walltown Quarry and Carvoran fort on Hadrian's Wall.

8. ARCHAEOLOGY AND MUSEUMS:

A review of the Society's role has been made by the Committee and constructive discussions held concerning future policy. The Committee considers that, in view of current national trends and changes, the Society has a significant role to play over the next few years in influencing positive developments to major topics of moment, such as the discovery and disposal of antiquities, and archaeological storage.

9. CONFERENCE AT LEICESTER:

Arrangements have been proceeding, and are almost complete, for the Society's next conference, "Dust to Dust? Field Archaeology and Museums", which is to be held at Leicester on 9th - 11th November, 1984. Speakers have been invited to contribute on various topics relating to the care of the excavation archive from the planning stage onwards.

10. REPRESENTATION ON OTHER BODIES:

The Chairman has served as Chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee for Archaeological Action during the past year, while the Secretary has attended meetings of the Steering Committee of the Standing Conference of Unit Managers. The Museums Association's Professional Consultative Committee has not met since June, 1983.

G. M. R. Davies
Honorary Secretary
18th May, 1984

I.F.A. AND MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGISTS

by Tony Gregory

(I.F.A. Public Relations Officer and Deputy County Field Archaeologist, Norfolk County Museums Service).

The need for a professional body for archaeologists working in the field has been felt for many years, but was brought to a head in the first few years of the full-time professional units in the mid-1970s. The 'established' archaeological workers, at that time in the universities and museums which until then had been responsible for a large proportion of excavation and were starting to be interested in the relatively new practice of field survey, were catered for by professional bodies in the universities and museums in general, even though these had no special brief for field archaeology. For those in the units there was nothing.

A brave but unsuccessful attempt by the C.B.A. in 1974 to establish an Institution was frustrated by the violent opposition to such a move from the universities and amateur archaeologists. But the formation of the Society of Professional Archaeologists (SOPA is its peculiarly unfortunate acronym) in the U.S.A. in 1976 showed that it could be done, and in 1979 Phil Barker and Trevor Rowley put British archaeology back on the road to a professional body. The new body was the Association for the Promotion of an Institute of Field Archaeologists (APIFA), with a final membership of 564; a process of consultation led to the proposals which, in 1982, saw APIFA give birth to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA).

By the end of its second full year of existence, in June 1985, membership of the Institute stood at 411, of whom 325 were Members, 65 were Associates, and 21 were Students. Considering the numbers who have come into archaeology since 1982 there are obviously a considerable number of APIFA members who have not gone on to join IFA. The reasons for this are worth examining. APIFA was open to the widest range of archaeologists, anyone whose work involved them with work in the field or on material and information from fieldwork. Consequently there was a healthy proportion of museum and university archaeologists among the members. The majority of the museum and university archaeologists have not applied for membership of the Institute, and this has led to an imbalance in its membership which needs to be corrected.

Confusion over eligibility has been one of the major factors in creating this imbalance. The earliest councils of the Institute were composed of 'names' - well-known, largely established, archaeologists, most of whom were closely associated with the units or with unit-style archaeology. This tended, erroneously, to create the impression that the Institute was intended strictly for muddy-booted archaeologists, and although the whole tenor of the Institute since then has been to dispel this impression, it still lingers.

The matter came to a head at the Council meeting of October 29, 1983, when the eligibility discussion centred around the proper

definition of 'appropriate experience in field archaeology' which is demanded as an entrance qualification. The range of opinion was wide, but finally a definition was accepted, to wit - 'that direct involvement with the exercise of professional judgement affecting primary archaeological material should be considered an adequate criterion for appropriate experience in field archaeology'. The Validation Committee, which is responsible for recommending to Council whether or not a particular application should be accepted, thus had a clearer direction before it. But still there were problems; does the administration of field archaeology count? Are all those unit directors (who now perforce spend all their time filling in H.B.M.C. forms and negotiating with developers, landowners, and local authorities so that their field officers can go ahead with the work of field archaeology) members of IFA on the strength of their past digging records (which must seem like another life to many of them) or on the basis that their present work creates the climate and circumstances for field work, and that the future of field archaeology lies to a large extent in their hands?

Not an easy question, but IFA is not about easy questions, nor easy answers. The solution was to establish a working party to consider the mechanism for establishing a professional register of field archaeologists; since this register would include those areas in which a field archaeologist was recognised as competent, the definition of these 'areas of competence' was obviously part of the question of eligibility and the fine definition of field archaeology.

The conclusions of this working party were clearly amongst the most important issues decided to date by the Institute, so when they were presented to the 1985 AGM there was considerable and constructive discussion. It is worth setting out here what the AGM decided.

Competence for the category of Member will be assessed against the applicant's capacity to carry sole responsibility for a substantial project embracing one or more areas of competence.

Competence for the category of Associate will be assessed against an applicant's capacity to exercise responsibility for a part or parts of one or more areas of competence, and/or on his/her capacity to exercise delegated responsibility for a substantial archaeological project.

(Thus, at its very crudest level, the difference between a Member and an Associate is equated with that between the excavation director and the site assistant or the site planner).

The areas of competence accepted by the AGM are: excavation; survey; underwater archaeology; aerial archaeology; environmental archaeology; finds study; structural analysis; and cultural resource management.

So, for example, the unit manager can be considered for membership on the basis of executive management or commissioning of archaeological projects in any area of competence. An illustrator whose job was restricted to recording finds or drawing on site would only be eligible as an Associate since the

other aspects of the area of competence concerned, namely field conservation, study analysis and publication in the case of Finds Study, and evaluation, strategy, analysis, publication, and project management in the case of Excavation, would not be covered.

So, by combining the minute of October 29, 1983, with the definitions of areas of competence, the Validation Committee now has an even better set of guidelines to consider in judging applications. With these definitions, surely the time is now right for museum archaeologists to consider their positions. There are of course many archaeologists employed in museums who have never been in any doubt that they are eligible, and therefore have applied and have been accepted. These are those employed specifically as excavators, sometimes alone and sometimes as part of archaeological units within museums. London, Gloucester and Norfolk are all good examples, and are well represented in the Institute. But what of the rest, the majority of the members of the Society of Museum Archaeologists, whose duties are primarily curatorial, who may do some digging and fieldwork, a little surveying, with a dash of emergency building recording, but whose main duties lie elsewhere?

Firstly, ask yourselves, do you want to join? Primarily, do you want a say in the future of field archaeology in this country? IFA does provide its members with a journal, 'The Field Archaeologist', and a series of Technical Papers, the first of which, on dewatering techniques, appeared earlier this year. It does organise conferences, and from 1987 a series of annual conferences on the grand scale will provide the major forum for field archaeology. It will provide a disputes/grievances procedure to assist with the settlement of allegations of improper conduct on the part of a member and other grievances which a member may have. But these are secondary to the part which members of the Institute will play, and indeed are already playing, in the establishment and monitoring of standards in field archaeology. Membership is not just a case of calculating returns for the investment of the annual subscription (now somewhat tempered by tax relief), but an act of faith, an investment in the future of the discipline.

Secondly, ask yourselves, do you consider yourself to be eligible; that is, are you 'directly involved with the exercise of professional judgement affecting primary archaeological material'? The relevance of this definition of field archaeology to the curating of archaeological collections, including excavation archives, is obvious enough. Then, are you competent to exercise sole responsibility for a project (as a Member) or for part of an area of competence (as an Associate)? The areas of competence likely to be relevant to a curatorial museum archaeologist are:

FINDS STUDY, comprising field conservation, technical study, analysis (including machine-based information handling and analysis) recording by drawing and photography, and publication. CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, comprising executive management or commissioning of archaeological projects in any area of competence and/or the creation of sites and monuments records and/or the presentation, or management of presentation of archaeological materials.

With these definitions in mind, considering that IFA needs the museum archaeologists, and vice-versa, it is clearly time for the museum archaeologists to consider, or reconsider, their position very carefully, and hopefully to apply for membership.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND APPLICATIONS FORMS, CONTACT:

OR, Tony Gregory, Public Relations Officer, IFA, Norfolk Archaeological Unit, Gressenhall, East Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 4DR.

YOUR MONEY OR YORVIK

The reconstruction of part of the Viking town of Jorvik has been greeted with considerable enthusiasm by the press and public alike. Figures in excess of 600,000 visitors during the first six or seven months have demonstrated the validity of the gamble taken by the York Archaeological Trust in a way that no other provincial museum attraction could normally hope to emulate. But to what extent is all this enthusiasm justified, and, perhaps more important, what lessons may be gleaned by those of us in less adventurous museums?

I found a visit to Jorvik an interesting but disappointing affair. Perhaps I was set into the wrong frame of mind by the queue that I suffered (despite being part of a special group visiting outside normal hours), and the alarming and sensational first panel in the sequence of interest-grabbers, which reads, despite all the protestations of Magnus Magnusson and his ilk, "They came from the sea.....to rape and pillage". A suitably animated transparency of waves crashing silently on a beach did little to leaven the silliness of this, the first introduction to their goal, that we, the visitors, receive. Even now my wife and I find ourselves intoning "They came from the sea..." in all sorts of slightly ludicrous situations, despite the fact that it is months since we saw it. The visitor at this stage is still a long way from the multi-person Sinclairmobile that will take him and three companions on their voyage back in time.

After what seems to be an endless series of backlit panels explaining how Vikings were really just misunderstood one arrives at the entrance to the ghost train. When I went, I think the exhausted attendant had about 45 seconds in which to load the customers and tell them to keep in the cars, but I understand that life has become more frenzied now as a result of the hordes of sensation-seekers who have parted with their money. It matters little, as one is obliged to listen several times to the same spiel as the 'people-processing' goes on in front. Then comes the excitement of sitting in these restrained dodgem cars, with the final admonition 'You are travelling back in time...' delivered in what strikes as a funereal tone, but which probably is not.

The novelty is that you actually do travel back - or at least backwards. The sad thing is that the time tunnel through which

the dodgem slowly crawls in reverse seems exceedingly long and is probably for many people totally incomprehensible. The odd thing is that for me, despite developing a crick in the neck, this was the most imaginative part of the whole experience. Suitably eery figures in period dress adorn the tunnel through which the cars travel and offer a really good historical framework for the discerning visitor. It just goes on too long.

Eventually the car backs into Jorvik, while an expatriate Icelfander describes the scenes that greet the eye. Mercifully, the car enters a siding and emerges forward to continue the journey. There is no doubt that the creators maintained a strong eye for detail, but this in itself led to my main frustration; I just could not examine as much as I would have liked all the really well made reproductions in the stalls and houses. In addition, the necessarily well marked emergency exits rather spoiled the impression.

As the car moves through the village the commentary explains the unintelligible conversations between the freeze-dried inhabitants. The conflict between the voices proved for my party to be difficult to resolve, but the YAT people were already planning to reduce the modern version so this may have improved by now. The village is, however, very well done, but seems to come to an end far too rapidly. When I visited the much-vaunted odours were overwhelmed by the smells of modern construction techniques - not even leaning out towards the latrine resulted in olfactory sensations. To judge from the quantities of scent which were supposed to be in use the citizens at street level who were closest to the ventilation outlets would have had justification for rate reductions.

After the village the journey continues through mock excavation offices and a recreation of the excavated site. The offices and conservation labs seem to have more equipment in them than many real workplaces can boast, and seem a poor substitute for visitor access to the real thing, but they do help the visitor to understand some of the less glamorous work resulting from excavation. The reconstructed site is done so well that I can believe the story that the original engineers for the development were nonplussed because it did not seem to be in the right place. The theatrical techniques work so convincingly that it is entirely believable that one is looking at genuinely rusty piling on the genuine site; believable maybe, but it is in fact not the original site.

The real museum containing the real finds is a walk-through affair with a sequential arrangement of cases which only seemed to be understood by the museum professionals in my group. The sad thing is that the visitors are encouraged, by dint of a carefully laid wide escape route, to pass through without looking at any real finds. They are, however, trapped by the shop which suitably straddles the exit and creates a bottleneck.

I must confess that I found the museum was rather crowded despite this rapid through-route, and as some of the cases are in tight corners it is not the easiest of museums to enjoy. Like everyone else I spent money in the shop which is really excellently stocked with a wide range of souvenirs from the cheap and amusing (mugs inscribed 'I was plundered from

Jorvik') to the expensive academic publications. I also could not resist the customer participation of striking my own coin on a die based on the one found during the excavation.

A visit to Jorvik is an interesting experience, but it is also a very expensive one. I did not record the actual time in the village and excavation reconstructions but I doubt that it is as long as half an hour. Considering the probable queuing and the expense of entry I am amazed that so many people are so keen to spend so much money so rapidly. I went as part of an organised weekend, but I think I would have felt cheated if I had paid on entry. Perhaps it is because I am mean anyway. If I could have dwelt longer in the village, looking at the details and trying to understand the dialect I might feel differently, but I do not think that it is so astonishingly original that Jorvik deserves the accolades it has received. I admire the courage of the entrepreneurs who have established it, and I admire their exceedingly good publicity. I am not so sure that they are doing anything that will help either museums or archaeology generally; perhaps even the opposite.

In order to avoid accusations of suffering a sour grapes mentality, I had perhaps better explain why Jorvik worries me, and perhaps indicate what I feel are its good points. What really disturbs me are crassly unaware comments by leading lights in our tourism authority such as 'this is how museums ought to be developing', or words to that effect. (Just in case there are any readers who are still under the widely held misconception that these immortal words were uttered by our erstwhile President in the Museums Association, the name was similar, but the personage was different). It is not that Michael Montague was saying anything stupid, but rather that he misunderstood the role that most museums are fulfilling. To compare Jorvik with the average museum, be it provincial or national, is like comparing a delicatessen or a lingerie shop with a corner shop or a department store. They neither serve the same functions as one another nor seek to pretend that they do so. Put another way, Jorvik is to the normal museum set-up what a village history is to an encyclopaedia.

Peter Addyman is one of the first to admit this fundamental fact, and it does him and his colleagues much credit that they are aware of it. Jorvik is exciting because it is different and because it has developed an excellent publicity machine with at its core that best of all forms of publicity, the adulation of the press and television. Salesmanship is the key, and I am sure that many of us could achieve greatly improved popularity if we could either obtain that key or learn to pick the lock. The problem is that for most of us neither the time nor the resources are available to learn the art; we are too busy running to maintain our present levels of service. The York Archaeological Trust has things going for it that many, indeed most, of us can not hope to emulate. It is based in a city with an already thriving tourist industry, it has excavated a really spectacular site in Jorvik, it has appeal to more than just a British audience, it had something nice to say about those archetypal villains the Vikings, and it had somebody with popular appeal and the right contacts simply itching to rehabilitate his ancestors. The Trust has tried the economy of the marketplace, and because it was able to raise sufficient

capital and offered a highly marketable commodity in the right place it has succeeded. There is nothing wrong with this and much that is praiseworthy, but it is not an approach that can succeed everywhere.

Market forces are very much the thing of the moment by which our value is being measured. I venture to suggest that it is no way for the nation to assess the worth of its heritage. The current squabbles about restitution of cultural property demonstrate the folly of allowing simple market forces to dominate in this field. American and European collectors frequently offered more than local people thought their heritage was worth, and were probably right in doing so at the time. It is only with the benefit of hindsight that present governments are able to show the mistake of their ancestors in allowing those collectors to take that heritage. (Try to ignore the spoils of war which are in an entirely different category). Museums are the modern day preservers of the heritage, and it is arguable that they should continue to fulfill that role regardless of present day public opinion.

Set the notion of our true role in society to one side for a moment though. Jorvik is, I suggest, offering nothing new to the public in terms of its methods, except perhaps the scale on which it is operating. Reconstructed streets are now a familiar sight in British museums, the best known example of course being the York Castle Museum; moving around the sights by means of externally propelled transport has been a key element in fairground entertainment since the first ghost train or tunnel of love; audio commentaries are common in many museums and historic sites; smells were part of the attraction in a heritage centre in Chester that I remember visiting about 10 years ago; visitors are welcomed as a matter of course to many excavations actually in progress, and have been for many years; Beaulieu lets the visitor see the conservators actually working and so do other places (real conservators, not dummies); dressed figures to assist interpretation are nothing new either; and how many museums, sites and historic houses are left that do not have sales areas? It is the fact that all of these things have been done lavishly and spectacularly that makes Jorvik seem like a breath of fresh air. The cost was enormous and the need to make the money back is reflected in the admissions charges and relatively large area given over to sales.

If there were a Jorvik in every major town in Britain its viability would be considerably weakened. If there were Jorviks in many small towns and villages as well I doubt that many of them would survive in the open marketplace. That is, however, the position that museums are in. For most of us there are no sites that could be interpreted like Jorvik has been, simply because it is virtually unique. Jorvik by another name may be recreated elsewhere, but it is not possible to treat all sites like it. If you are sitting on large collections of many periods and from many sites, it is a dream that is as attainable as Oz, particularly if none of your material is outstanding. It would be easy for us to leave Jorvik thinking that somehow we are failing, but I believe the opposite is probably the case. Our museums have grown naturally over many years usually, and during that time have provided service to probably generations of visitors. Most of those visitors come back time after time,

and would be disappointed if we greatly changed what we offer. Against this background, Jorvik looks less striking; it is a place to go and visit, but probably only once in most instances.

The point is that Jorvik will perhaps attract the people who would not normally visit a museum. It does so using the methods that are demanded by an increasingly spoonfed society and it does so very well. The tragedy is that having coaxed and cajoled them in through the doors Jorvik offers no radically new or exciting techniques when they are looking at the real objects, assuming that they bother to stop. It has traditional displays and showcases in its museum section, and they suffer from all the problems that those in other museums do. In fact in some ways they are less successful than those of the typical museum simply because the visitor expects something different to have been done with the real finds just as it has with the site interpretation. It is this that I believe poses a threat to the rest of us. It is not that the Jorvik people have created a new form of attraction, using outstanding new techniques; as I have said the only new thing is the scale. The real threat lies in the fact that regardless of the intentions of the creators (which I am sure were on a higher plain than the simple profit motive) Jorvik has fallen into the modern trap of making the false look more worthwhile than the genuine. Against the assault on the senses that the reconstructed street makes, the excavated artifacts look drab and unexciting; they scarcely warrant a second glance. I do not believe that is why most of us are in museums, nor do I believe that is why museums exist. Yes, we are here to interpret the past through its remains, but the remains are what is paramount. The interpretation of Jorvik will no doubt be as funny to our successors as those interpretations made by the Victorians are today. What they will not be able to dispute is the finds that remain in the museum collections. The danger with exhibitions like Jorvik is that the finds become of secondary importance in the minds of the visitors and in doing so become somehow less worthy of concern. When the techniques of Epcot become normal practice here Jorvik will be as stale as our museums seem to many now (although I admit that the York Archaeological Trust are the most likely people to import them.) In twenty or thirty years time we will be able to judge the success of Jorvik as a museum; for now it is just an unusually successful exhibition centre.

Malcolm J. Watkins

INFORMATION EXCHANGE

The number of identifications that we have to deal with during the average year must be in the order of tens of thousands. How often have we seen items that are completely outside our experience, or finds that are familiar but on which there are no standard texts? Similarly there are probably categories of finds that are of particular interest to you but on which you are having difficulty making that interest known. This column will endeavour to provide a point of contact for this sort of information to be passed. So if you have found a class of material that proved difficult to identify, or if you have a deep interest in some group of finds, use this column to inform your colleagues elsewhere. You may just have something to say about a specimen in your collections that will help others, or you may seek the assistance of archaeologists elsewhere to give you parallels for something on which you are working. Bear in mind the timescale involved between editions of TMA, but there must be a lot of useful knowledge tucked away in people's heads that could be shared. Use this column if you have had a sudden brainstorm which has enabled you to cut a corner in your identifications of a particular type, or even if you have reached that skill by steady application.

I recently received for opinion a brass disc, with one face bearing a low relief design of a boar (fig. 1). The disc proved to weigh almost exactly one ounce, which led me to believe that it is more likely to be a weight than for example a gaming piece. The reverse of the piece bears a central depression as if it had been lathe finished, possibly to reduce the weight to its chosen value. The piece is in exceptionally good condition, with no evidence of corrosion, but has been cleaned by the finder. My problem is that the form of the boar appears to be in the style of the 15th or 16th centuries, but I am unaware of any similar pieces. If it is an early weight the boar may suggest a connection with the reign of Richard III, who certainly introduced the first legislation concerning standard measures, but I do not know if this applied to weights as well. On the other hand, it may be a much later piece, say Victorian. If you know of any similar finds I would be pleased to hear, as I would like to publish this example. CONTACT: Malcolm J. Watkins, Archaeology Director, City Museum, Brunswick Road, Gloucester GL1 1HP.

Another curious find brought in recently was a piece of corroded copper alloy, with a curvilinear profile and bearing spiralling decoration at the waist in the form of two conjoined crescents, each emphasised by radiating tooling (Fig. 2). The piece is clearly in celtic style, and a pre- or early- Roman date is certain. My problem here is that it was found in the same general area as the Birdlip grave-group, and the crescentic motifs, while a common enough La Tene design, are very similar to those found on the back of the mirror from the grave-group. I have, however, been unable to find a good parallel for the form or purpose of the new find. If you have any ideas please CONTACT : Malcolm J. Watkins, as above.

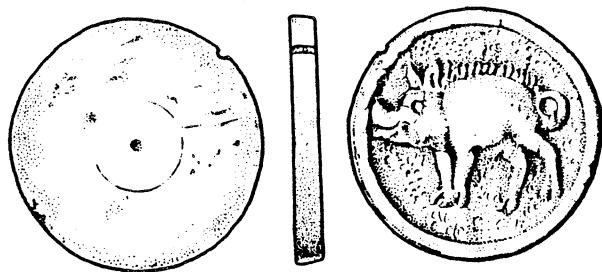


FIG.1: Uniface brass weight with boar motif, 1:1.

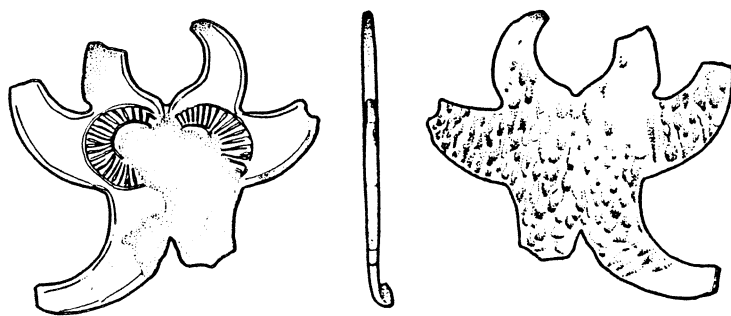


FIG.2: Copper alloy mount from Birdlip, Gloucestershire, 1:1.

" ANY FOOL CAN PASS THE DIPLOMA...."

If the title is true, why do so many fail? The simple truth is that the Diploma is not so low-level as many of the candidates think. Having worked in museums, often for two or three years, and often in a senior capacity, many candidates seem to think that the Diploma of the Museums Association is theirs as of right. The fact is that in many instances it is hard to believe that the candidates have already undergone the rigours of 'A' levels and Degrees. Many fails or referrals are attributable to the complete inability of some candidates to use elementary examination techniques, while others are due to the arrogance of students who believe they know it all anyway.

The Diploma is unlike any other British museum qualification in that it has been described (justifiably) as the licence to drive a museum. It is more practical than any other museum qualification, and places great emphasis on the candidate's ability to use deductive reasoning, rather than on simple learned knowledge. Those who decry the Diploma often do so from a position of ignorance, and without recognising the considerable efforts put in by the staff of the Association and those members of the profession who give their time and energy freely to improve the status and ability of their colleagues. A year examining one of the papers soon shows how dedicated the teams of examiners are to the overall standards of the profession. Another relevant factor is that all examiners, conscious of the role that is filled by the average candidate, are usually more inclined to leniency than to harshness when there are doubts about a particular paper.

So how can you ensure that you or if you are a tutor your tutee will stand a good chance of meeting the necessary standards? There are several ways in which students can help themselves, and this article will seek to demonstrate some of them.

The section that seems to terrify more candidates than any other is the Practical Examination. Why this should be so is something of a mystery, since it is basically testing the ability of a student to deal with strange objects of the type that must frequently be presented to him/her over the enquiry desk. How can the candidate best prepare for this exercise? Much work will have gone into preparing for the written papers, but all too often the practical is ill-prepared. There are simple ways to overcome this. A frequently voiced complaint from students is that they have never previously encountered material of the kind to be found in the examination; frequently the lament is linked with the comment 'I work in a small museum' or 'I work in a narrow role in a large museum'. This unfortunately has little effect on the Board of Examiners, and for sound reasons. The specimens in the room have all come from museums and could therefore be presented to any of us in our careers, in which case we would have to learn fast. If your collections are limited then travel to visit other museums. Almost all museums will assist students who want to widen the breadth of their experience, and even in those where this is not

so study of the displays will help you. If you are unable to travel in work time, which is sadly true for some whose museums are uncaring, then do so at weekends or on occasional leave. If you do not care enough to make such efforts then it is doubtful if you should be doing the Diploma.

In the examination you will be questioned on your portfolio or thesis. This might affect the mark that you are awarded for that work, but take heart in the fact that it is far more likely to work to your benefit than to your detriment. You will then be offered the opportunity to examine the exhibits in order to marshal your ideas. If you have expressed a specialist interest, remember that the examiners will be aware of it. Pick items up during this stage - there may be vital clues which are not immediately obvious to you at a distance; it may be advisable to confirm that the examiners do not mind you doing this, but I am not aware of an occasion on which there has been an objection. Remember that this is an examination against the clock, just like a written paper, so try to save time at this stage; you will only have about 5 minutes to speak about each item that is selected, so it is worth practising before the examination. Many students avail themselves of mock practicals, and that is an excellent preparation, but if you can not get to one ask your colleagues, or even your family to help you.

Different examiners have different techniques, but usually you will be expected to choose your three items before they choose theirs. This has the advantage of giving you the chance to select those objects or groups of objects that you feel happiest (or perhaps least unhappy) to deal with. The examiners then normally seek to test those areas that you have passed by when they make their selection. It is important therefore to use broad parameters in your selection. If you feel that you are a prehistorian do not choose three prehistory questions; the examiners will choose questions with later material or conservation problems, and they may choose the ones that you least like.

The practical examination is basically about technique rather than knowledge, so you must demonstrate the techniques that help you come to a conclusion. Even when the conclusion is wrong you can pick up valuable marks by using the right approach, because if you were in your home museum you would be able to see that your conclusion was wrong and amend it as a result. This does not require the testing of an obvious lead alloy with a magnet to show that you have proved it is not iron, but it does require you to recognise that it might be any one of several alloys, and to perhaps speculate on which. Look at the items and do not jump to conclusions unless you are sure you can back them up. If you are going down the wrong track the examiners will normally try to guide you on to the right one again. They may be asking you if there is any other interpretation that you could put on an object - if they are it is usually a sign that there is one that you are overlooking. If you have done your homework you may grasp what they are getting at, but if you have not you will probably sink.

Remember how to handle objects properly. There is nothing more distressing for an examiner than seeing often important specimens from his collection being maltreated, and if you do it

in the exam room you very probably are just as bad in your home museum. One example I remember with particular horror was the candidate who leaned across the table to pick up a restored pot, grasping the rim with one hand, and at no stage using the other hand to support the base; the pot was an extremely fragile Beaker, and how it survived the treatment I do not know. Other distressing occurrences include candidates who are nervously fingering or rubbing delicate material throughout the examination, such as poor glazes, or stamps in soft pottery. It does not demonstrate the careful handling that the examiners want to see, and may do irreparable damage. Some of the objects brought to the examination are very rare or very good examples, and they should be treated with the right amount of confident respect - they have to go back into the relevant collections afterwards, and may even be taken from displays.

If you do not know what an object is, do not despair. Examine it and explain what you do know about it - how it is made, with what, whether it is complete or part of something larger, where you would start to look for parallels. With the latter in particular the examiners will usually guide you if you are looking in the wrong place. Deliberate trick questions are usually avoided but be prepared for the unusual; if you have said that a piece of tile is Roman and the examiners are asking if you are sure, or telling you that you will not find parallels in the references that you are citing, consider the possibility that it may not be what you are saying.

Finally, do not get aggressive if you are feeling that you are making mistakes. As I have said the examiners are normally on your side, but you will be one candidate in perhaps three or four days of stressful work for the examiners, so remember that they are human too.

The portfolio presents many candidates with a problem, and is often hard work for the examiners too. Read the notes you have been given by the Association several times; it is amazing how many portfolios seem to have been produced by people who have not troubled to do so. You also ought to have tried to see the examples held at Leicester, to establish what the examiners consider to be good examples. If you send in a portfolio that is in an outsize heavy binder, expect the examiners to be less than sympathetic with other mistakes.

The portfolio was introduced following student pressure as a measure of the ability of the candidate to do his/her job. It should therefore seek to give breadth as well as depth. Two or three projects on different aspects of your work are better than one mammoth presentation on a narrow theme. The examiners are interested in your abilities as a curator, so aim for projects that will demonstrate those. Presentation is particularly important in the portfolio, for it is the only way the examiners have of measuring your eye for detail and the care with which you work. Poorly mounted illustrations in the portfolio suggest that you are equally lazy or clumsy mounting displays; inadequate illustrations or indexing suggest the same sort of thing. It is not just the projects which are being tested but also the way in which you present them. The thesis was introduced primarily to help those who are employed in non-curatorial posts, and it is not usually a recommended option

for those who are employed where they are doing work suitable for portfolios, but again care in presentation is important.

The other paper that seems to have caused most problems in recent years is Paper G (Curatorial). It ought not to alarm as much as it does for it is again examining your everyday roles and your responses to problems that arise. It also normally seeks to provide you with some background to the questions that you are being asked. Many of the points mentioned here are equally applicable to other papers, incidentally.

If a question gives you the opportunity to define your own parameters (e.g. 'you have to move part of the collection') do not seek to define them for simplicity. Use the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge rather than to seek to disguise your ignorance. Pick something that will show you know how to deal with widely varied problems rather than something for which the problems are small. Similarly, if you are asked to explain, say, the legal issues with which a curator needs to be familiar then demonstrate that you are aware of the main legislation affecting other disciplines unless you are specifically requested by the rubric or the question to answer from the point of view of your own discipline; you will not be expected normally to know the details of the legislation affecting your colleagues but you should show that you are aware of it.

When you are asked to prepare a report then do so. This does not simply mean numbering every paragraph, but requires you to structure one with main headings, sub-paragraphs and probably recommendations; orders to your management board do not impress the examiners any more than they would your management board, so use the tact and diplomacy that you would have to use in reality if the subject is a ticklish one. Take the trouble to find out something about the way in which your budgets are divided; this is particularly necessary for Paper H, where you may be asked to design a report to Committee on the subject of cut-backs or expansion. Even though you do not know the actual figures for your museum there is no reason for you not to know what percentages are spent on staffing, exhibitions, buildings, etc. These are normally much the same from one museum to another, but it is astonishing how few students seem to be aware of them.

Finally, if the examiners have set a scenario for you to respond to, take it reasonably seriously as most of them have occurred and those that have not could easily do so. One notable example of this was a question in Paper G recently that postulated a flood in one of the stores or work areas and asked for immediate steps that would be taken. At least one student claimed that it could not happen to him/her as the museum was nowhere near the river, and had no heating water pipes that might burst. This took no account of possible blocked gutters or pipes in rooms above bursting, or indeed the candidate not being in the exemplary museum at the time of the flood. It was even more interesting when the examiners learned that another candidate went home after the exam to discover that a flood had in fact occurred in his/her absence. I could quote other examples where the questions have reflected real life situations either before or after the event, but take my word that most of them are realistic, and again you should be seeking to show that you can cope in the worst rather than the best possible

situations.

Well, I hope that this will be of use to some of you; it has taken me a long time to type and is based on several years now during which I have sat in on three different types of practicals and have examined in two papers. It gets many of the problems that I have encountered and may give you one or two hints that will help you or your tutees to enter the Diploma examinations better prepared, and I hope less worried.

Malcolm J. Watkins

THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS LABORATORY.

The Ancient Monuments Laboratory offers a wide range of technical services to archaeologists. Perhaps of most interest to museum archaeologists are those of the Technology Section who deal with ancient industrial remains such as slags, crucibles and moulds, as well as with the technical examination and analysis of small finds, mainly of metal and glass. Much of our analytical work is done by X-ray fluorescence, which has the advantage of being completely non-destructive, though the results we obtain are only qualitative rather than fully quantitative. We can tell you which copper alloy objects are brass and which bronze; whether a white metal plating is tin, silver, or even nickel; whether a gemstone is stone or just glass and, if it is glass, why it is the colour it is.

If you have problems in these sorts of directions we may be able to help you. Our services are available free of charge to those working on material from HBMC(E) funded excavations or post-excavation projects, and older DOE excavations too. We can also work on material from other excavations and museum collections but in these cases we may have to make a small charge. In the first instance, please get in touch to discuss the work you would like done.

Justine Bayley,
Ancient Monuments Lab.,
Fortress House,
23, Savile Row,
London W1X 2HE.

REVIEWS

GREEK COINAGE, by N.K.Rutter. 1983.

56 pp., 15 pls., 4 figs.

Shire Archaeology, 35. *Princes Risborough*. '1.95

ROMAN COINAGE IN BRITAIN, by P.J.Casey. 1984 (2nd edition).

64 pp., 15 pls., 12 figs.

Shire Archaeology, 12. *Princes Risborough*. '1.95

Though both dealing with numismatics these two volumes adopt a somewhat disparate approach to their subject. Greek Coinage presents a fairly straightforward narrative account from the 'Invention of Coinage' through to the coins of the Hellenistic kingdoms. Rutter identifies three main standards of interest: 'the nature of the coins themselves, the description of what is represented on them and problems of functions and use' and seeks to answer such basic questions as 'who issued coins and why. Who used them and how?'. This book is clearly intended as an introduction to the subject, attempting both a geographical and a chronological survey of the Greek world. It presents, however, a rather selective account, concentrating on coins of Southern Italy and Sicily, Athens, and the Hellenistic kingdoms. Such a course does have the advantage of demonstrating well the approaches to the study of the material. Rather better use could have been made of the maps which fail to indicate all the main sites noted in the text, though this is nonetheless a useful introduction to the subject.

Roman Coinage in Britain has an altogether more specific brief inherent in its title. After an introductory chapter setting the background of the 'Imperial Currency System' Casey proceeds to examine the Roman coinage of Britain by period and site (civil and military) with a concluding section on hoards. The book is 'aimed at the practising archaeologist as well as the general students of the past' and is therefore written on a rather different level to Greek Coinage. The emphasis is placed on the historical and economic interpretation of the numismatic evidence rather than of individual coins. Casey has drawn together a large amount of useful information, though some of his sources, such as the work of Reece, are not always acknowledged. The claim that 'almost all of the commonest Roman coins found in Britain are illustrated...' is overstating the case somewhat! This is an extremely well written and useful book. It is by no means an introduction or an identification guide - neither is it meant to be. Its success is reflected in this, its second edition.

Both books reviewed here conclude with useful bibliographies and a list of museums housing important relevant collections. The plates are good in both.

Reviewed by Stephen Greep
Verulamium Museum.

VERULAMIUM EXCAVATIONS, VOLUME III, by Sheppard Frere. 1984.

vii + 297 pp., 27 pls., 119 figs.

*Oxford University Committee for Archaeology,
Monograph no. 1, distributed by:*

Oxbow Books, 10 St. Cross Road, Oxford OX1 3TU.

The third and final report of Sheppard Frere's excavations at Verulamium between 1955 and 1961 is perhaps the most useful to the average museum archaeologist, since it is devoted to a study of the finds. It is unfortunate that it is not the only volume to include finds because this leads to examples of references back to the first two volumes that make this less usable as a stand-alone source. This is, however, a minor criticism, since most museums able to purchase this volume will have a need, and will be able to pay, for all three. Unlike the two earlier volumes this one has been published by the Oxford University Committee for Archaeology. This is ironic since there are none of the dreaded microfiches that one is used to seeing since the report on publications known by the name of the writer of the book under review. This is perhaps uncharitable of me since Professor Frere is reputed to have made what is perhaps one of the most damning statements about microfiche, and certainly one of the most salient: 'I can't read it in the bath'. The absence of microfiche is, however, to be applauded, since I have found that there is little that is pleasant about its proliferation. Even if you have a microfiche reader, and few of us are so fortunate at work, let alone at home, the effort of reading long chunks from it, or quickly flicking through for parallels is not as satisfying as with a conventional book. Again, I find the aggravating practice of some writers who use microfiche for the bulk of their finds illustrations positively offputting. But I digress.

This is the first monograph to come from this source, and is perhaps to be forgiven the minor faults of production that it suffers. The plates are not very good, albeit better than those from offset lithography publishers, while there were some undesirable folds on pages of the review edition, but fortunately these do not affect its usability. Generally, and perhaps to be expected, the production is closely similar to that of the Research Reports from the Society of Antiquaries, and the volume should stand up to prolonged handling very well.

There are reports on eleven different specialist subjects, from coins to animal bones. Considering the numbers of bones that are recovered from the average site, this latter is an astonishingly abridged report, and I seriously wonder how valuable it will be to bone students. However, since these are few and far between and there appears to be nothing outstanding about the Verulamium series it probably does not matter overmuch.

The coin report by Richard Reece is heavy going, but it is worth reading, or even just dipping into, for he asks questions that we should bear in mind ourselves when considering the coin evidence from a site, such as the obvious but often overlooked point that the frequency of coins of a particular type or period is only meaningful when compared with data from other sites. The presence or absence of coins from each period can only be fully

appreciated in the light of the deviation from the norm for that period.

In the main the reports are adequate, but hardly outstanding; this is to some extent the fault of the material rather than of the relevant specialists, but there are a number of items that hardly merited inclusion. I particularly like Bill Manning's ironwork and Catherine Johns' discussion of a mildly pornographic knifehandle. I particularly dislike the report on the coarse pottery. It is some time since I have really had to work on pottery, but I find it amazing that a pottery report today can take such little cognizance of the fabrics. Having been one of the generation that viewed the early fabric studies at the expense of forms with considerable alarm, I now view the site or town fabric series as essential; it can only be by comparing fabric and type that we can fully understand the markets operating in the distant past. The use of terms such as 'hard granular yellow-buff ware' had, I thought, passed into the oblivion they deserve because of their subjectivity. We do find a revision of dates for pottery published in the earlier volumes, but there are none of the analyses that might have made this a valuable report for the specialist and the casual searcher alike. Wilson has indicated that all of this was an intentional omission, due to the volume of pottery, but I would question this having seen the speedy expertise of the new breed of pottery researcher.

I have a number of minor quibbles that are doubtless causing Frere and his proof-readers to kick themselves now. The plates are on the whole poorly reproduced; whether that is the fault of the printer or the originals I cannot say but some of the wall-painting plates are practically useless. One blunder occurs in the captions to the plates, and that is the transposition of the captions for plate XII a and b. If anyone finds the drawing of no. 37 on fig. 59, a piece of wall-plaster, I would be grateful for its safe return. Much the same problem occurs with an intriguingly described piece of military helmet brow-band (no.70) that has escaped from fig. 11. I am not clear about the meaning of 'A.D. 150-250, possibly local' which occurs in variants on a number of the pottery report notes; the 'local' clearly cannot mean source since we are told in one instance that the mortarium in question (no.2694) came from Lower Germany, but if it refers to date, what precisely does it mean?

Finally, having Romanesque art on the brain at the moment, I wonder why a charming little bronze plaque (no.240) is described simply as 'medieval plaque decorated in relief with a crouching lion. On the back a single pin for attachment'? It was of course unstratified, but I can see no reason why its possible Romanesque origin is not discussed and if necessary disproved. It is, however, so similar to the lions on the Bayeux Tapestry for example that I would have thought some discussion was necessary. This is, unfortunately, typical of the rather unenthusiastic treatment given to most of the post-Roman finds.

Reviewed by Malcolm J. Watkins,
City Museum and Art Gallery, Gloucester.

BONE, ANTLER, IVORY AND HORN: THE TECHNOLOGY OF SKELETAL MATERIALS SINCE THE ROMAN PERIOD, by A. MacGregor.

245 pages, 110 figures, 2 tables.

Croom Helm, London, 1985. Price: £35.

In view of the lamentable scarcity of museum archaeological catalogues the need for studies dealing with groups of objects in a systematic manner is clear. This is one such work. In attempting to deal with so widespread, common, material over a long chronological timespan the author has set himself a major task. Though the summary on the dust cover claims this as a comprehensive account of a much neglected group of artifacts it is so only in a limited sense. As MacGregor acknowledges himself in the preface, his objective is to provide a general background against which individual finds, specifically those of Northern Europe since the Roman period, may be viewed in their proper perspective. It is in this light that the work should be viewed. Anyone seeking parallels for individual objects may well be disappointed - such is not the intention of the study. They will, however, find a context and a wealth of references for future research.

The term skeletal materials is preferred to the rather more difficult, if more technically correct, alternatives such as osteodontokeratic. The study begins with rather complex and technical chapters on the raw materials and their working properties followed by discussions on availability, industrial organisation and working methods and tools. The point is well made that with the exception of ivory, though the materials in question are often considered as cheap and readily available, they possess qualities which made them ideal for certain complex items and could sustain organised, if seasonal, industries. The changing methods and organisation of the 'industry' are discussed though perhaps occasionally not enough care is taken to differentiate between the various periods under consideration.

The title of this work is somewhat misleading since around 65% is dedicated to a typological review, though always with the information contained in earlier chapters in mind. Most will, however, find this final chapter most useful. The majority of the common types of object found in Northern Europe since the Roman period are discussed though it is obvious where MacGregor's strength lies - the post-Roman - mediaeval periods. While it may appear unfair to criticise a work with over 100 figures, there is in places a lack of illustrations relating to the text. There are also a few minor criticisms on points of fact, though these are not crucial. Additionally in a work covering such a wide timespan it seems rather churlish to suggest that not enough 'backward glances' are made, yet one often feels that more could have been made of the contrasts and comparisons between Iron Age and later material. For example, one might be forgiven for assuming (p.109) that the use of boars' tusches as pendants was an innovation of the late Roman period, yet such a use has a much greater antiquity. Further, while it is noted that perforated metapodials of pigs and sheep were utilised from the Iron Age to mediaeval periods (pp.102-3) the text fails to draw the distinction between the use of those of sheep in the Iron Age and Roman eras and pig in early

mediaeval times.

The typological divisions within each object form are clearly not intended to serve as a 'type series' and anyone intending to use the book in this manner will face severe difficulties. The coverage given to individual forms is on the whole good, the more complex series of objects such as the combs receiving the most attention. The section on pins is, however, a little unclear in places and this is one of the less satisfactory parts.

It is unfortunate that the text and bibliography contain a wealth of errors which are annoying rather than crucial. The method of referencing - quoting only author and year but not page or figure number - is infuriating.

The book is important in that it deals with a much under-studied body of material covering wide chronological and geographic areas. It contains a wealth of published and unpublished material and references and it sets the framework for more detailed studies. It is to be hoped that MacGregor will provide us with further such work(s) in the future. This is a well researched and useful book, only slightly marred by some bad editing, and will form a useful addition to museum bookshelves, though at £35

Reviewed by Stephen Greep
Verulamium Museum

Forthcoming reviews will include: 'Kingsholm' by Henry Hurst, to be reviewed by G. Mark Davies.

CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF THE SOCIETY OF MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGISTS

1. The title of the organisation shall be THE SOCIETY OF MUSEUM ARCHAEOLOGISTS.
2. The Society shall be concerned with indigenous and foreign archaeological collections housed in British Museums, and with related fieldwork.
3. The objectives and activities of the Society shall be:

A Objective

TO PROMOTE ACTIVE MUSEUM INVOLVEMENT IN ALL ASPECTS OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND TO EMPHASISE THE UNIQUE ROLE OF MUSEUMS WITHIN THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINE.

Activities

- i Liaison with relevant bodies/organisations to represent the interests of museums and the general good of archaeology
- ii Support of a policy in respect of a rational and integrated national archaeological service and improvements in antiquities legislation
- iii To campaign for and give support to increased museum involvement in field archaeology, either in collaboration with archaeological units or by assuming responsibility for the totality of the field programme in their areas
- iv To ensure museums develop a positive attitude towards the acceptance, conservation and preservation of archaeological material and associated documentation, and to this end prepare a set of guidelines
- v To press for active museum involvement in the planning process and in the compilation and maintenance of sites, monuments and finds records, and to emphasise the interdisciplinary potential of the museum contribution.
- vi To campaign for the preservation of above- and below-ground sites as an irreplaceable cultural resource and to develop techniques for their interpretation
- vii To campaign for adequate financial provision to realise the above

B Objective

TO PROMOTE THE UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE MUSEUM AS A SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC SERVICE AND TO DEFINE A COHERENT PHILOSOPHY OF THE ROLE OF ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN MUSEUMS

Activities

- i Collection and analysis of opinion

- i To carry out or to assist in a survey of the state of archaeological practice in museums and to make recommendations thereon
- iii Preparation of a general policy statement and code of practice, and its updating as and when necessary

C *Objective*

TO PROMOTE ALL ASPECTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK IN MUSEUMS

Activities

- i To foster post-entry training and qualification with academic training to graduate level
- ii To improve curatorial standards (cataloguing, storage, information retrieval, interpretation, conservation, etc.)
- iii To promote and raise the level of archaeological research in museums, and the publication of museum collections
- iv To ensure that all museums and institutions with archaeological collections have at least one properly qualified member of staff, or failing this to ensure that such museums and institutions have access to specialist advice, and to this end the surveillance of collections
- v To campaign for adequate financial provision for the above

D GENERAL POLICY AND ACTIVITIES IN PURSUIT OF OBJECTIVES

- i To act as an archaeological pressure group within the museum profession and to offer advice to the Museums Association on all matters relating to archaeology
- ii To act in conjunction with, or if so desired on behalf of, the Museums Association in archaeological matters, but reserving the right to oppose the Association should its views run counter to the majority feeling of the Society, and to assist the Association in the general promotion of museums
- iii To foster a closer relationship between archaeologists working in national and provincial museums
- iv To encourage closer relationships with archaeological colleagues outside museums and other organisations involved in archaeology
- v To hold meetings and to promote the exchange of information, including regular publications
- vi To foster closer relationships with museum colleagues in other disciplines, and other specialist groups within the profession, particularly those concerned with historical studies

4. MEMBERSHIP

- i All museums staff (including retired members) involved in archaeology
- ii Associate membership (non-voting) for non-museum archaeologists in agreement with the Society's Aims and Objectives
- iii Institutional Membership (non-voting) for museums and other related institutions in agreement with the Society's Aims and Objectives
- iv Honorary membership for any member so elected at an Annual General Meeting in recognition of meritorious service to the Society or its Aims and Objectives

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To be determined by the Committee and subject to ratification by the Society at its Annual General Meeting

COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS

The management of the Society shall be vested in a Committee consisting of the following Officers (who shall be Members of the Society):

Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, and 11 members, plus upto 3 co-opted members (voting) and including a representative of the Museums Association.

Officers and Members of the Committee shall be elected annually and in the case of the latter shall hold the appointment for a period not exceeding three consecutive years, and Committee members shall not be eligible for re-election within one year of termination of any previous service.

Officers and Members of the Committee shall be elected on a straight majority by postal ballot declared at the Annual General Meeting, from a list of candidates, each of which shall have been nominated by three Members of the Society, such nominations having been received by the Secretary at least 21 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Any of the 11 places on the Committee which are left unfilled by election or which become vacant during the year may be filled by co-option, due regard being given to those regional or specialist interests not already represented.

MEETINGS

The Committee shall meet to transact the business of the Society at least four times a year, and the quorum at such meetings shall be six.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting, of which 28 days' notice shall be given, shall be held normally in the spring of each year, at which the Annual Report of the Society's proceedings, with a Statement of Accounts, shall be laid, and the Officers and Members of the Management Committee appointed as necessary.

The Society shall have the power to make new Rules at any Annual or Special General Meeting, but no addition or alteration shall be made unless the resolution proposing it has been circulated to the membership at least six weeks before the date of the meeting at which it is to be voted upon, and it is carried by a two-thirds majority of members present and entitled to vote.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The Secretary shall cause a Special General Meeting to be called within six weeks of receiving in writing a request to do so, stating the business to be transacted and signed by at least twenty Members of the Society.

REGIONAL GROUPS

To further the Aims and effectiveness of the Society, regional groups may be set up and may appoint their own management committees, but shall at all times work within and to the Rules and Objectives of the Society. The geographical coverage of the groups shall be determined by regional needs and preferences, but it is suggested that where appropriate they conform to Museums Federations, Area Councils, and DOE Area Advisory Committees.

If the Society at any time decides to terminate and wind up its affairs, then its assets, after meeting all liabilities, shall be distributed to any succeeding organisation with substantially similar objectives, or, in the absence of such an organisation, at the discretion of the Committee.