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OF MEDIEVAL
BRITAIN**

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Catalogue of the Mesolithic and Neolithic Collections

Edited by Dr Steve Burrow
Curator of Neolithic Archaeology
at National Museum Wales

- A guide to 7,000 years of ancient life in Wales
- Collections catalogued for the very first time
- Extensive use of maps and illustrations

The 7,000 years that followed the end of the Ice Age in Wales laid the foundations for modern life. The fascinating history of this important period is revealed within the collection of lithics, pottery and bone held by National Museum Wales, catalogued here for the very first time. This volume is a fundamental resource for the study of Welsh archaeology, offering intriguing insights into ancient life in Wales.

Each section is supported by an extensive selection of maps and illustrations of artefacts and sites. Detailed indexes provide access for those whose work focuses on specific artefact or material types.

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Instruments

Medieval Britain, the theme of this TA, is the fourth of our period issues, and has attracted a wonderful range of articles, principally from registered archaeological organisation that are at the sharp end of investigation. These range from individual finds, such a Visigothic brooch from Kent and medieval chess piece from Coventry, to massive projects in advance of urban regeneration at Bristol and Leicester. We take in problems of restoration work on three separate castles and narrowly avoid the Da Vinci Code at Rosslyn and Stenhouse. Our scope is broadened with introductions to national societies working on medieval material, and to the Europe-wide project to unite pottery studies, a project that should surely lead the way for other periods and artefact types in a context wider than Britain.

We try too to cover issues that affect archaeologists in their professional work, such as dispute resolution and the advantages of seconding staff, and have our annual round up of *Jobs in British Archaeology* (which is slightly more heartening than last year). We also are reminded that archiving issues are always with us, with good news (LAARC) and bad (maritime assemblages).

At the time of writing, IFA staff are just recovering from another successful conference, this time held in the glorious surrounding of central Edinburgh, with receptions in its City Chambers and the regal style of Edinburgh Castle itself. There were about 300 delegates attending 3 parallel sessions over the 3 days, with walking tours around the Old and New Town led by David Connolly, Tom Addyman and Charles Strang. We will be covering highlights of the sessions in next TA. Amongst some very exciting academic work there were useful sessions organised by IFA's Diggers Forum and our Finds, Maritime Archaeology and Buildings Groups. The conference ended with IFA staff explaining a new system of NVQs as accreditation for aspects of archaeological work and long term goals for raising archaeological pay.



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David Connolly instructs IFA delegates on Edinburgh's Flodden Walls

Notes to contributors

Themes and deadlines

Autumn: Archaeology and Identity: the IFA Conference
deadline: **15 June 2006**

Winter: Archaeology and Urban Regeneration
deadline: **25 Sept 2006**

Contributions and letter/emails are always welcome. It is intended to make TA digitally available to institutions through the SAL/CBA e-publications initiative. If this raises copyright issues with any authors, artists or photographers, please notify the editor. Short articles (max. 1000 words) are preferred. They should be sent as an email attachment, which must include captions and credits for illustrations. The editor will edit and shorten if necessary. Illustrations are very important. These can be supplied as originals, on CD or as emails, at a minimum resolution of 500 kb. More detailed *Notes for contributors* for each issue are available from the editor. Opinions expressed in *The Archaeologist* are those of the authors, and are not necessarily those of IFA.

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FROM THE FINDS TRAY

UK signs European Landscape Convention

The UK has just signed the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention Rural Affairs, which had opened for signature in October 2000. Landscape and Biodiversity Minister Jim Knight announced that 'We can be proud that the UK is a European leader in the way we look after our landscape. We believe we are already fulfilling the requirements of the Convention, which is the first to deal solely with landscape – and importantly, that covers the whole landscape: rural, urban, and peri-urban; both everyday and extraordinary. The UK is committed to conserving and enhancing our landscapes, which reflect the interaction of people and nature over many centuries'. It is now up to DEFRA to implement the Convention.

Kingship and Sacrifice: National Museum of Ireland exhibition

An exhibition entitled *Kingship and Sacrifice* centred on findings of the National Museum of Ireland's Bog Bodies Research Project opened in the National Museum of Ireland, Archaeology and History in May 2006. Following discovery of two Iron Age bog bodies the Bog Bodies Research Project was established in 2003 to examine scientifically and document the human remains in question using a multi-disciplinary team of international specialists. Analyses included CT and MRI scanning, palaeodietary analysis, fingerprinting, histological and pathological analysis. The current exhibition features other bog bodies, and their archaeological significance is presented and explored throughout. The exhibition also highlights a radical new theory based on the observation that the bog bodies were placed on significant boundaries that indicates their association with sovereignty and kingship rituals during the Iron Age. Many objects, such as kingly regalia, horse trappings, weapons, feasting utensils, textiles and boundary markers form an integral part of the exhibition.

The Museum is open from 10am to 5pm Tuesday to Saturday and from 2pm to 5pm on Sundays. Admission to the exhibition is free of charge.

For further information contact Isabella Mulhall (Coordinator Bog Bodies Research Project), imulhall@museum.ie or see www.museum.ie

British Archaeological Awards

The 2006 Awards were launched by David Lammy, Minister for Culture, at the British Museum on 22 February. The Awards, which will be presented by David Lammy, will be given at a ceremony in Birmingham on 6 November. These will include the Young Archaeologist of the Year, the Press Award, Channel 4 Awards, Keith Muckelroy Memorial Award, IFA Award, Heritage in Britain and Mick Aston Presentation Award.



David Lammy, Minister for Culture, with Don Henson, CBA, at the launch of British Archaeology Awards 2006. Photograph reproduced with thanks to the Young Archaeologists Club

Chester Archaeology

The Past Uncovered, Chester Archaeology's four-monthly newsletter, always seems to have interesting discoveries to report. The latest includes post-excavation work on the amphitheatre (this time concentrating on remains of a Tudor feast in its upper fills, featuring salmon and song birds amongst the usual carnivorous fare), reporting of a Saxon stone mould for precious metal ingots, uncovering stone footings of a legionary barrack block, plus news of Chester Archaeology Day on 22 April. The newsletter is available at www.chestercc.gov.uk, or from Gillian Dunn, Chester Archaeology, 27 Grosvenor St, Chester CH1 2DD.

FROM THE FINDS TRAY

DIG in St Saviours

DIG – An Archaeological Adventure

At the end of March York Archaeological Trust opened its newest attraction – *DIG: an Archaeological Adventure* in the medieval church of St Saviours in the centre of York. This uses innovative interactive techniques to explain the processes of archaeology through exhibitions that appeal to visitors from pre-school children to archaeological specialists. It also shows many of the collections held by YAT to explain the history of York from Roman times to the present day. DIG concentrates on examining the science of archaeology through four of YAT's most important excavations: the Roman Fortress at Blake Street, Viking settlement at Coppergate, the Gilbertine medieval priory and associated cemetery at Fishergate and an area of Victorian slum dwellings at Hungate. Outside hands-on experiment rooms, DIG gives visitors the opportunity to view real artefacts, handle objects, talk to 'archaeologists', find out more using computer databases, and watch a three-dimensional recreation of York grow from the ruins discovered in excavations. On the upper floor there are classrooms for children and a resource room for individuals who wish to pursue their own research and for teachers who want to plan their visits

DIG aims to attract about 48,000 visitors in the first year. Admission for adults is £5.50, concessions £5.00. It is open every day, 10am to 5pm. In the future the Trust also hopes to develop additional activities to enhance DIG (and JORVIK), such as new educational resources, for example loan boxes and resource packs. For further information see <http://www.digyork.co.uk>, or call 01904 543402.



The Association of Archaeological Illustrators & Surveyors (AAI&S) Annual Conference & AGM September 2006

The AAIS Annual Conference and AGM will take place 8 – 10 September 2006 at St John's College (University of Oxford). The programme will include 'Creating Popular and Academic publications', 'The Art and Archaeology of Oxford Buildings', 'English Heritage, Metric Survey Techniques' and visits to Oxford museums.

For further information contact the conference organiser, info@aais.org.uk
For booking form email bhurman@ukonline.co.uk

Stonehenge

The future of our most iconic monument came to a head with the end of a major round of public consultation of five possible options on 25 April. Probably the most useful event of the consultation period was organised by the Society of Antiquaries of London, with presentations by the leading interest groups, a model showing the options within their landscape, and 'full and free' discussion by about ninety archaeologists. The overall consensus was that the government should be pressed to go ahead with a bored tunnel because, even though it was the most expensive, it was the only option to meet World Heritage Site objectives of avoiding damage to archaeological sites and improving both the setting and public accessibility of the whole Stonehenge area. The other strong view expressed was that only minimum works to improve traffic management and presentation should be undertaken at present, in the hope that a better scheme would eventually be devised. There appeared to be no support for the other published options.



Repairs to Stonehenge in the 1950s.
This monument is still causing controversy and strong feelings

The Second MAG International Conference: *Managing the Marine Cultural Heritage: The Significance*

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, 27–28 September 2006
Building on the success of 2004 conference, IFA's Maritime Archaeology Group is organising a Second Conference on *Managing the Marine Cultural Heritage*. Proceedings of the first conference will be launched at this event. Given the international value of the event, MAG has invited speakers to present their experiences from different countries and backgrounds. Amongst these are Marnix Pieter (VIOE Flanders Marine Institute – Brussels) LN Santhakumaran (Kerala State, India), Nik Flemming (UK), Willis Stevens (Parks Canada – Canada), Ray Sutcliffe (UK), Ivana Brunenko (Dubrovnik University – Croatia), Ole Varmer (*Titanic* Team – US), Mark Staninforth (Flinders University – Australia), Marek Jasinski (Norwegian University of Science and Technology – Norway), Steven Kay and Letizia Ceccarelli (Archeomar Project – Italy).
For more information see www.magconference.org or contact info@magconference.org

Archaeological Investigations Project (AIP)

AIP have announced their searchable database of a bibliographic gazetteer of over 47,000 archaeological grey literature reports from 1982-2003. The website, <http://csweb.bournemouth.ac.uk/aip>, will soon have a bibliography of the grey literature reports produced for the 2004 season available. They would be happy to receive any constructive comments regarding the pilot version of the searchable gazetteer, contact [Ehren Milner](mailto:Ehren.Milner@bournemouth.ac.uk) emilner@bournemouth.ac.uk or see <http://csweb.bournemouth.ac.uk/aip>

Professional training placements

IFA, IHBC and English Heritage have teamed up to run five year-long professional training placements to provide work-based learning opportunities in various historic environment specialisms. The placements are provided and supervised by English Heritage and administered by IFA in partnership with IHBC. They cover archaeological investigation, architectural investigation, aerial survey, architectural graphics and Romano-British ceramics, and attracted a huge number of applications, demonstrating the demand for high quality training opportunities. As part of the project, we will be assessing the scope for running similar placements in the future.

Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum

Kelvingrove, Glasgow's magnificent Victorian museum, which attracts over a million visitors a year and is described by Neil MacGregor as 'one of the greatest civic collections in Europe', has been extensively restored, refurbished, cleaned and re-designed and will be open again from 11 July. Fine new archaeological galleries will compete with the elephants, Impressionists and Rennie Mackintosh tea rooms for which it is better known. Open: Monday to Thursday and Saturday 10am to 5pm, Friday and Sunday 11am to 5pm. Admission free.



Kelvingrove under wraps

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Tim Howard

IFA has administered an arbitration scheme with the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (now DRS-CI Arb) since 1998, but so far this has been little used by archaeologists. Together with DRS-CI Arb we are seeking to re-launch the scheme along with a new Mediation Scheme in 2006, and to organise arbitration and mediation awareness courses for IFA members. Experienced archaeologists may ultimately be able to train and act as mediators.

There are several recognised ADR procedures.

Negotiation, where parties resolve the dispute themselves, is the most common. If this fails, other forms are

Mediation, assisted by a third party. If a settlement is reached the mediator draws up an agreement that becomes legally binding

Conciliation, with the conciliator proposing a solution for parties to consider before agreement is reached

Arbitration, a formal and binding process where the dispute is resolved by the decision of a third party

Neutral Evaluation, a private and non-binding technique whereby a third party; usually a judge or somebody legally qualified, gives an opinion on the likely outcome at trial as a basis for settlement discussions

Expert Determination, a private process involving an independent expert with inquisitorial powers who gives a binding decision

Adjudication, where an expert rules on a technical issue. This is primarily used in construction disputes as set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and

Regeneration Act 1998. At the end of an interim period the parties can use other processes, such as arbitration, to achieve full and final settlement. Adjudication is becoming more commonly used to resolve consumer and other commercial disputes, as it learns from the successes within the construction industry.

Litigation limits your options. In court, your dispute will be settled by a judge who may have limited knowledge of your sector. In ADR, in the majority of cases, a single arbitrator will be appropriate who will almost certainly come from a specialist panel. Disputes will be resolved by documents only or at an agreed venue, and in private. Rules are flexible and the parties can mutually agree to change them as the process matures. Timetables are agreed to suit the needs of the parties rather than the court. In litigation, business may be put off whenever the court is overloaded, but in ADR the hearing date is set to ensure that everyone is available.

Who pays? In ADR, parties usually know in advance the likely range of costs and who will be liable to pay. Costs are almost invariably substantially lower than for litigation.

ADR is a great balancer of power between parties. It enables a small business supplying a major global buyer to resolve a dispute quickly, cost-effectively and privately. It reduces litigation costs and saves valuable management time, and is a powerful PR tool. Parties can avoid the expense, delay, stress and time in bringing cases to court, and preserve their business relationships and market reputation.

If anyone is interested in use of alternative dispute resolution in archaeology or in attending ADR awareness courses, please get in touch.

This article is based on material kindly provided by Gregory Hunt of DRS-CI Arb.

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FIXED-TERM (PREVENTION OF LESS FAVOURABLE TREATMENT) REGULATIONS 2002

Kate Geary

Roland Smith (Wessex Archaeology) and Iain Banks (GUARD) have drawn IFA's attention to the Fixed-Term (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations which came into force on 1 October 2002. These give employees on fixed term contracts the right to be no less favourably treated than comparable permanent employees. This implements the European Directive on Fixed-Term Working. Fixed term contracts are prevalent in archaeology, and *Profiling the Profession 2002/3* indicated that 29% of archaeologists were employed in this way.

Under the regulations, it is illegal to treat fixed-term employees differently from permanent employees unless this can be objectively justified. This relates to pay, conditions of service and access to benefits such as occupational pension and sick pay schemes. *They should also have the same access to training and career development opportunities* and opportunities to apply for permanent vacancies within the organisation. Fixed-term employees who think they are being treated less favourably can ask for a written statement giving the reasons for the less favourable treatment. An employer must produce the statement within 21 days.

OBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION

Less favourable treatment can be justified if shown to be necessary to achieve a legitimate objective and

is a legitimate way to achieve that objective. *This must be demonstrated on a case by case basis.* Less favourable treatment may be justified if the overall package of terms and conditions is of equal value as that of comparable permanent employees.

REDUNDANCY

Failure to renew a fixed-term contract is a dismissal and employees who have been employed for two years or more are entitled to redundancy payments. The regulations repeal the provision enabling employees to waive their rights to redundancy payments. Fixed-term employees cannot be excluded from statutory redundancy payments but may be excluded from contractual schemes where their exclusion can be objectively justified. They should not be selected for redundancy simply because they are fixed term, but if they were employed specifically to complete a particular task or cover a particular demand this is likely to be considered objective justification.

Further information and guidance can be found on the Department for Trade and Industry website www.dti.gov.uk/er/fixed/fixed-pl512.htm and on the ACAS website www.acas.org.uk.

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Kenneth Aitchison

The Professional Training Committee's remit is to keep an informed overview of training aspects of the IFA Strategic Plan, and to give advice to Council. Under the energetic chairing of Mike Bishop it is guided by the IFA Training Vision (2001), which sets out six steps which will eventually demonstrate both the skills that archaeologists need and the rewards appropriate to those skills. The six steps are to

- identify the roles and levels of responsibility that archaeologists fulfil
- recognise the skills they need to play those roles
- develop the training required to provide the skills
- install the qualifications that demonstrate learning
- recognise IFA membership grades that recognise skills and qualifications
- obtain pay and conditions that reward skilled, qualified practitioners

Step 1: Roles

Without identifying what was required of archaeologists in the workplace, progress towards a profession-wide training system would remain *ad hoc* and disjointed. Discussion with the former Cultural Heritage National Training Organisation in the late 1990s led to exploration of the relevance and application of the government's preferred route, National Occupational Standards (NOS). In order to develop these, comprehensive mapping of the working roles played by archaeologists has now been achieved. After an extensive review process, the NOS (<http://www.torc.org.uk/nos/index.asp>) have become the cornerstone of IFA training initiatives, and their use is becoming accepted as mainstream.

Step 2: Skills

The next step was to identify competencies needed for these roles. By developing the NOS, we have mapped what archaeologists do and what skills they need. This objective has been achieved, but information will continue to be updated: the *Archaeology Labour Market Intelligence: Profiling the Profession 2002/03* report brought data up to date and addressed skills issues, specifically quantifying skills gaps and shortages. The plan is to repeat this exercise every five years, keeping up to date with areas where skills gaps and shortages exist.

Step 3: Training

Training needs to be delivered in a variety of ways. PTC is working closely with the Archaeology Training Forum and, so far, considerable progress has been made – most apparently by facilitating new short courses which are currently delivered at the universities of Oxford and York, and previously also Reading and Leeds. Another project has developed a platform for recording CPD objectives and achievements against the requirements of NOS. PTC also makes recommendations to RAO committee on staff training, and there has been a training-related session at every IFA Annual Conference since 2002. The scope for graduate and post-graduate apprenticeships in archaeology has been researched and is being driven by the vocational qualifications (below), which will link in to the developing Creative Apprenticeships scheme being lead by CCSkills.

One significant development is IFA's successful bid to HLF to deliver eight to twelve fully funded workplace learning opportunities per year over the next four years. This is just beginning to roll out.

A great deal has been achieved, but there are still only limited opportunities for archaeologists to engage with standards-based training.

Step 4: Qualifications

If a qualification structure is needed it must be recognised and valued by individual archaeologists and employers alike. Through lack of this, an attempt to introduce NVQ awards in archaeology in the early 1990s failed. Development of *NOS in Archaeological Practice* has established a new framework for NVQ awards at levels 3, 4 and 5, requiring evidence of competencies that would largely be generated through work, allowing for accreditation of prior learning and through simulation in training experiences.

With the aim of establishing a vocationally relevant qualification which is understood, valued and accessible, and after a lengthy period of discussion, progress has been made towards a practice qualification. This is now tied into the ATF agenda, with a proposed qualification based upon the NVQ framework. It will also use the Online CPD tool (above), and will potentially match across to the validation requirements for individual membership of IFA.

Work towards this objective has commenced and is moving fast.

Step 5: Membership grades

Evidence required for IFA membership applications and upgrades is structured around past education and employment, combined with a commitment to ethical practices. Applications are quality assured

through peer-review via references and assessment by Validation Committee. This is by necessity a subjective process. Linking membership grades to the objective measure of competence will demonstrate that IFA membership is a real demonstration of capability. If retention of membership is linked to ongoing CPD requirements, then it will become possible to demonstrate that members have maintained that competence subsequently.

The work involved in doing this has not yet started, but will be part of rolling out the vocational qualifications.

Step 6: Pay and conditions

The IFA Business Plan 2000 (revised 2005) states

Ten years from now the Institute will have made the practice and impact of archaeology far more relevant to everyday life. Archaeologists will find their work more rewarding, intellectually, socially and financially.

As IFA members well know, pay in archaeology is notoriously lower than in comparable professions. This may be due to many reasons, but a significant factor has been the inability to demonstrate that archaeologists have professional skills that compare with those of our peers in related professions.

The vision is for archaeologists to be receiving pay and conditions that are comparable with other professionals. When we have qualifications that show our professional skills – in addition to those that demonstrate our academic understanding of human life in the past – and we are rewarded for those qualifications – we will achieve this final goal.

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Seconding archaeologists: **benefits all round?**

Roland Smith

It is a fact of life that many archaeologists are employed on fixed-term contracts to enable employers to manage the peaks and troughs of projects won and lost. This flexibility is at the expense of the employee, who suffers lack of job security and diminished opportunities for career progression and development. The concerns of 'temporary' employment in the archaeological profession are well-documented and it is a matter that IFA, Prospect and others continue to address.

Employees may lack the opportunity to accrue significant employment benefits such as sick pay, additional paid leave entitlement and joining a pension scheme, as well as statutory entitlements such as additional maternity leave, paternity leave, redundancy pay and the right to claim unfair dismissal. 'Temporary' staff may even be offered fewer training opportunities. Such disadvantages persist, despite the 2002 Regulations (p7).

One modest contribution towards ameliorating this disadvantage is through employers seconding staff during times of reduced workload, as a low point for one organisation is counterbalanced by an increased workload in another. Temporary secondment has the advantages that

- the original employer retains experienced staff
- the employee continues to accrue the benefits of longer term employment
- the organisation receiving seconded staff gains experienced staff at short notice and with reduced administration
- experienced archaeologists stay employed and remain in the profession.

Several organisations are participating in such secondments, reflecting a mature and co-operative approach. Practicalities and financial arrangements are a matter for the two organisations involved, although the major factors to be considered are differing employment terms and conditions, such as working hours, travelling time and expenses. Sick pay, line management, Health and Safety and insurance must all be addressed, though use of IFA guidelines is making such issues more standardised and thus more easily transferred.

An important issue can be the reluctance of some staff to be seconded. In some situations staff may feel de-motivated and so such arrangements are best considered for those who perceive it as an opportunity to experience different teams and projects in different locations and with different methods of working. This can aid professional development and provide some cross-fertilisation of ideas and methods between organisations for the benefit of the profession as a whole.

Secondments, of course, need not only be considered as short-term arrangements for site-based staff but also for more specialist staff for longer term roles or projects. Recruiting specialist staff with the right skills and experience for six-month or year-long projects can be problematic and larger employers may consider seconding staff to other organisations where there are benefits for all three parties.

With the right safeguards built in, such arrangements can provide excellent opportunities for professional development individually, as well as considerable benefit to the seconding organisation and the profession by raising skills levels, improving understanding of roles within different sectors, and contributing towards capacity building. IFA's Committee for Working Practices in Archaeology would be interested in hearing about the experiences of employers and employees alike.

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ARCHAEOLOGISTS *and the* *unexpected discovery of* HUMAN REMAINS

Simon Mays and Sebastian Payne

When archaeologists expect to excavate human remains during fieldwork they automatically apply for a DCA (formerly Home Office) licence or Church of England faculty in advance. However, it often happens that bones, which may be cremated, occur in a less obvious state while work is in progress and, if disturbed and fragmentary, may not even be recognised as human until the post-excavation stage. As it is not possible to issue retrospective licences, there was a worry that archaeologists could find themselves inadvertently in breach of the law. This issue was taken up with DCA by English Heritage on behalf of IFA members, and the following reassuring guidance has now been agreed.

'There has been some recent concern about the position of museums and archaeological units which hold archaeological human remains which were not recognised as such at the time of excavation and which are not therefore covered by a DCA licence. As far as we can see, museums and units and their staff are not breaking any law by holding or by continuing to hold human remains, even if their exhumation was not authorised by DCA licences, unless the human remains are less than 100 years old (in which case they would need to be licensed under the Human Tissue Act).

The people who excavated the remains and took them to the unit or museum may have committed a technical breach of the 1857 Burial Act by removing the bones from the place of burial without licence. However prosecution seems very unlikely if they were otherwise behaving responsibly and professionally.

As readers will be aware (Simon Mays in TA 59), reform of the Burial Laws is currently under consideration. Until any changes to the law are made, excavators should still apply for a DCA licence (and a Faculty where necessary) if they expect to find human remains. If they have not done so and find human remains unexpectedly, they should still stop and contact the DCA, who can issue a license very quickly when necessary. The DCA cannot issue licenses retrospectively to cover human remains recognised only after excavation has stopped; but as explained above, this should not be a problem. There has been some suggestion that excavators might cover themselves in advance by applying for a licence even if there is no strong reason to expect to find human bones. This is not necessary, and would be a waste of time and effort.

The situation arises because the Burial Act was written in 1857 mainly for public health reasons and to stop people digging up recent burials for dissection by anatomists; its application to archaeology was not thought of at the time. The current consideration of revision of the Burial Acts gives us an excellent opportunity to review things and iron out this kind of problem.'

This article has been compiled by English Heritage after consultation with the DCA.

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English Heritage



Windfarms provoke strong reactions, principally because of their visual appearance within 'natural' upland landscapes, and the resulting public debate has been difficult to ignore. But landscapes also have a cultural dimension: how are the historic qualities of the landscape affected and how can these effects be assessed within the framework of Environmental Impact Assessment?

Consultancy work on the impacts of windfarm developments on the archaeological resource has formed a growing part of Headland Archaeology's work. Initially, the cultural heritage chapters of EIAs dealt almost exclusively with direct impacts from construction of turbine bases, access tracks, cable trenches and substations. More recently, they have had to address requests for increasingly detailed assessments of impacts on the setting of cultural heritage features. There is now an urgent need for an explicit, transparent and objective approach to allow consultants and curators to discuss, and ideally reach consensus on, the significance of these impacts.

What is 'setting'?

The principle most often cited is the requirement in planning guidance to preserve sites 'in an

appropriate setting'. But how do we define a site's setting, and how do we judge what is appropriate? As Lambrick and Hind (2005, para. 7.7.26) point out, there is a 'lack of any agreed professional framework for considering issues of setting'. Colcutt (1999) argues that setting implies the intentional choice of site location in the past, and prioritises elements of the landscape that are functionally and historically, rather than just aesthetically, relevant. A narrow definition of a site's setting would restrict it to elements of topography, landuse and other sites which are functionally related. In practice, a wider definition of setting, including all intervisible features in a landscape, is being applied. In the absence of an agreed methodology, assessing the visual impact of a windfarm which can be seen from up to 35 km away becomes an open-ended exercise involving hundreds, even thousands of sites. Exhaustively documenting changes to the views from all these is becoming accepted practice, but whether this is a useful or cost-effective approach is doubtful.

Assessment criteria in EIAs

A key requirement in EIAs is for criteria that are explicit and rigorous. In our experience it is not easy to strike a balance between mechanistic reliance on matrices and scoring systems, and relying on arbitrary and inconsistent 'professional judgement'. Effects are conventionally assessed in terms of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the impact, which are combined to

give the significance of the impact. Within this framework there is room for a variety of approaches.

What criteria are relevant? At first glance it might seem that all scheduled monuments, for instance, should be considered highly sensitive, but should this apply when only distant views are affected? In methodologies developed by Headland Archaeology, the crucial factor is the people who are the 'receptors' of visual effects: how many visitors does a site attract, and how do they value its setting? We use indicators such as whether the site is well known and how accessible it is, to estimate potential levels of interest among the general public, for whom the professional archaeologist must act as a surrogate.

Assessing the magnitude of impacts on setting is equally problematic. Judging the appearance of a windfarm from wireframes and photomontages is a complex matter. Archaeologists must also decide whether predicted effects will be in keeping with a site's setting, or will detract from its relevant characteristics: depending on the type of site and the nature of its setting, the effects may not be wholly adverse.

There is perhaps a temptation for both consultants and curators to overestimate the significance of impacts on setting to compensate for uncertainty and to avoid controversy. However, when slight visual changes are assessed as major and moderate

impacts, they cannot be distinguished from much more significant changes which should be a cause for real concern, and the effectiveness of the EIA process suffers.

The way forward

Lambrick and Hind's recent strategic study of the treatment of cultural heritage in EIAs (2005) finds much room for improvement. Among the problems highlighted are needs for a clearer concept of setting, for more effective coverage of historic landscape character issues, and for better integration of cultural heritage and landscape studies. Our own experience with windfarms bears this out, and we are working towards developing the necessary concepts and methods, but wider debate is needed. A discussion paper is available at <http://headlandarchaeology.com> as a contribution to that debate. Comments and suggestions would be much appreciated.

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Ardrossan windfarm, North Ayrshire: a view from Knock Jargon fort (reproduced with permission of Airtricity and Land Use Consultants)



The Medieval Pottery Research Group

Victoria Bryant

The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) was founded in 1975 to bring together people with an interest in the pottery vessels made, traded and used in Europe between the end of the Roman period and the 16th century. It now includes pottery of the 17th and 18th centuries from both sides of the Atlantic and beyond, as well as post-Roman ceramic building materials.



MPRG

Jug from Western France,
Late 12th century, Exeter
© Exeter Archaeology



The group now has around 300 members, with a strong continental European contingent. Members range from those with a general interest to specialist researchers. The group is small enough to ensure that meetings are friendly and encouraging but large enough to provide a high standard of publications and resources. Subscribers receive the annual journal, *Medieval Ceramics*, a forum for international scholarship presenting the latest research. A newsletter keeps members updated with conferences, meetings, exhibitions and other news. Other publications include *A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms* and *Minimum standards for the processing, recording, analysis and publication of post-Roman ceramics*.

Members pay a reduced fee for our annual conference, which is held at locations all over the UK – for example, London, York, Oxford, Winchester, Aberdeen, Durham and Edinburgh – and in Europe in Belgium, Holland, Germany and Ireland.

MPRG

The website <http://www.medievalpottery.org.uk> provides access to

- online bibliography – details of published articles on medieval and post-medieval ceramics with over 12,000 references which can be searched by type of ceramic, location, site type, fieldwork type, period, or any combination
- national and regional ceramic reference collections for England, Scotland and Wales (location, contact details and periods)
- links to British and international websites on pottery and ceramic building materials, and to other groups concerned with material culture
- jobs, research posts, recent initiatives and exhibitions
- MPRG publications including content lists for *Medieval Ceramics*
- online newsletter and archive of newsletters
- forthcoming conferences and a conference gallery.

Membership is open to any person (£20) or institution (£25). For details and to join online see <http://www.medievalpottery.org.uk>.

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15th-century warbling whistles,
Belgium © John Hudson



Dutch Glazed Red Earthenware
Cauldron © John Hudson



South Somerset jug, 15th century,
Exeter © Exeter Archaeology

Inlaid floor tiles from Exeter Cathedral
c. 1280 © Exeter Archaeology



The Medieval Settlement Research Group

Mark Gardiner



Ringwork and church at Culworth (Northamptonshire). Photograph: Mark Gardiner

The British countryside still bears the stamp of the Middle Ages, when many roads and tracks were formed, fields laid out and villages and hamlets established. Understanding how these patterns of land use came into existence and evolved is the central interest of the *Medieval Settlement Research Group* (MSRG).

The Group can claim to be one of the oldest bodies for the study of a special archaeological problem or artefact. Its first meeting was held at Wharram Percy on the Yorkshire Wolds in 1952, when Maurice Beresford was joined by John Hurst and others. That year the two men set up the *Deserted Medieval Settlement Research Group*. There was considerable argument about when and why sites were deserted – was it as a result of the Black Death of 1348-49 or some other cause? The number of deserted sites was also unknown, although by 1954 Beresford was able to publish a list of about 1300 possible villages. Urban development and expansion of arable agriculture was threatening the



Maurice Beresford, John Hurst and Chris Taylor at Wharram Percy

remains of medieval settlements on a huge scale, and the Group lobbied throughout the 1960s to protect a representative number and acted as the agent for the Ministry of Works to excavate others which were going to be destroyed.

Changing names – wider interests

The word 'Deserted' was dropped in 1971 to reflect a wider interest, and the name was changed a second time in 1987 when the *Medieval Village Research Group* merged with the *Moated Sites Research Group*, as it was clear that the interests of the two overlapped so thoroughly. Wharram Percy remained central to the interests of the group and later the MSRG, with the excavations continuing for forty years until 1990. Publication of such a large study was bound to be a problem. Research had expanded beyond the boundaries of the village and into the surrounding fields, and had also looked at the church and mill. Wharram Percy volumes have continued to appear, with nine now published and four in preparation.

Village origins and forms

MSRG, however, has always had wider interests than Wharram. Recently it has been involved in the AHRC-funded five-year study of the Whittlewood area on the borders of Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. The project was initially based



A medieval landscape of field ditches and settlement sites revealed by topsoil stripping in advance of quarrying at Lydd, Romney Marsh. Photograph courtesy of Robert and Dorothy Beck

at Birmingham and later at Leicester universities. It included fieldwalking over a substantial part of the study area and examination of the medieval sources. Four seasons of work with students from a number of universities examined the areas within and around villages using test pits to determine when sites were first occupied. Chris Dyer, Richard Jones and Mark Page showed through combined archaeological and historical studies that the shape of villages was rarely static. They grew and contracted, and sometimes did both at the same time! Supporting studies were commissioned with help from English Heritage on the standing buildings and churches, and a further analysis on the place-names of the Whittlewood area continues at Nottingham University.

Medieval perceptions

The Whittlewood Project reflected the range of different disciplines required to understand the medieval landscape. MSRG is currently seeking support for a series of workshops across the UK which will examine the perception of medieval landscape, reflecting archaeologists' interest in how peoples in the past view the world in which they lived and worked. Through these we may begin to solve the problem of why in some areas people chose to live in villages and others preferred isolated farmsteads, by considering different ways people constructed communities and landscapes. We can gather a full picture of the character of the landscape in the Middle Ages and how it was manipulated by those who lived within it.



Base of a dovecot on the manorial site at Wick Hamon, excavated as part of the Whittlewood Project. Photograph: Richard Jones

Medieval settlement is a subject of interest to professional archaeologists, historians and also the wider public. Evidence of the Middle Ages can be found in most villages, in the fabric of the church or the older houses, and in the ridge and furrow of fields around. Understanding how the particular patterns of settlement evolved is a continuing challenge.

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Medieval archaeology at the Museum of London

Alison Taylor



Silver penny of Alfred, with LVNDONIA monogram

If so many of us are going to devote our professional lives to excavating and interpreting the past, shouldn't presentation to the widest public be axiomatic?

TV works well for showing processes, and good publication is the finest fruit for the seriously-interested, but easy and enjoyable access to the 'real thing', ie the artefacts themselves, is an essential window onto past lives. When archaeologists and museum curators were often the same people, and certainly expected to work as one, this was assumed to be the case, but as the professions of archaeology and museum curation pulled apart the tradition has been lost. Instead, we have tiresome heritage experiences reliant on reconstruction, text and illustration winning the money and awards, while new finds of huge importance remain boxed in unit archives or at best in museum stores.

Integration with field arm

The Museum of London has, since its creation, triumphed against this trend, thriving instead through integration with a field arm, now the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS). It has therefore always had ready access to newly-discovered artefacts and to the archaeologists who understand them, and its galleries reflect these riches. The new gallery, *Medieval London*, which

opened this winter, built on these strengths. Its project manager Hedley Swain says the re-display had three principal aims: to get good material on display; to tell London's story from the end of Roman Britain to Elizabeth I's reign; and to enable the public to engage with its past.

Abundant artefacts

So how far does it succeed, in the opinion of a passing archaeologist? Superbly for the first and last, though I'm not so sure about the middle target. The space is used to great effect, with cases designed to display abundant artefacts with elegance and clarity, and the artefacts are chosen to illustrate real life in ways that are rarely seen. There is for example an Anglo-Saxon leather whip which reminds us that slavery was common; a wicker fish trap that is near-perfectly preserved, abundant clothing of the everyday sort (including a child's vest and knitted mitten, a peaked cap and the inevitable codpiece) and of course the great collection of shoes and other leather items from London's waterfront. Toys and miniatures too are evocative finds from this area.

It is great to see the new finds from St Mary Spitalfields on show already, and display of the Billingsgate waterfront, c. 1300, restored as it was excavated in 1982. Intricate items benefit from case-design which allows them to be seen very close up, bringing us nose to nose with the glittering garnet settings of the Covent Garden brooch for example. Important discoveries from Martin Biddle's 1960s' excavations at Nonsuch Palace include materials from the looted Merton Priory, including a massive gilded and painted ceiling boss.



Leather shoes, late 1300s to late 1400s

Focus groups

Heavy use of focus groups may be criticised by purists, but well used this does help provide what an intelligent public can best appreciate. It certainly seems to be effective for targeting exhibition material for young people. Clever design of intimate but somehow open display areas, with quite small individual themed cases about which excited groups with worksheets could cluster, evidently works well. I doubt that many follow the advised routes but in fact, however much professionals emphasise themes and storylines, it is the objects, ideally with some macabre twist as many of these have, which we are there for and which create the buzz. When I visited, on an ordinary weekday morning, the exhibition was packed, mostly with children, and with just the right level of animated chatter all round. OK, an Anglo-Saxon storyteller was engaging a particularly hyper audience, but plenty were engrossed elsewhere. There are interactive video installations and simple games, all attractive for the important family-with-children market. Clearly, too, the right efforts have been made to direct-market the museum to London schools.

Labelling

As so often, labelling can be a bit of a let-down if you happen to know a bit already. It really is misleading and unhelpful to say that men and women in the Early Saxon period wore brooches on their shoulders for example, and there are other labels where a mixture of simplicity and unconventionality will rile. I would particularly object to treatment of Protestantism vs Catholicism in the 16th century purely as a 'reform', with Mary I castigated for 'bloody doings' and burning of martyrs but equally gory Protestants just interested in 'reform'. Even adjacent display of the glories of Merton Priory, smashed and looted for private gain like so many treasures of the time, is apparently no indicator of terrible damage done at this time. I have to admit to finding the special captions aimed at children, which explain what a Saxon coin could buy for example, more useful.

Nonetheless, this is an exhibition that should please any archaeologist wanting to witness medieval material firsthand, excellently displayed. The



Late Saxon whip

Saxon brooch from Floral St, Covent Garden, with gold and garnet decoration



example needs to be followed elsewhere if we are ever to claim that the public are really benefiting from material we excavate.

The Museum of London is open Monday to Saturday 10am–5.50pm, Sunday 12–5.50pm, admission free.

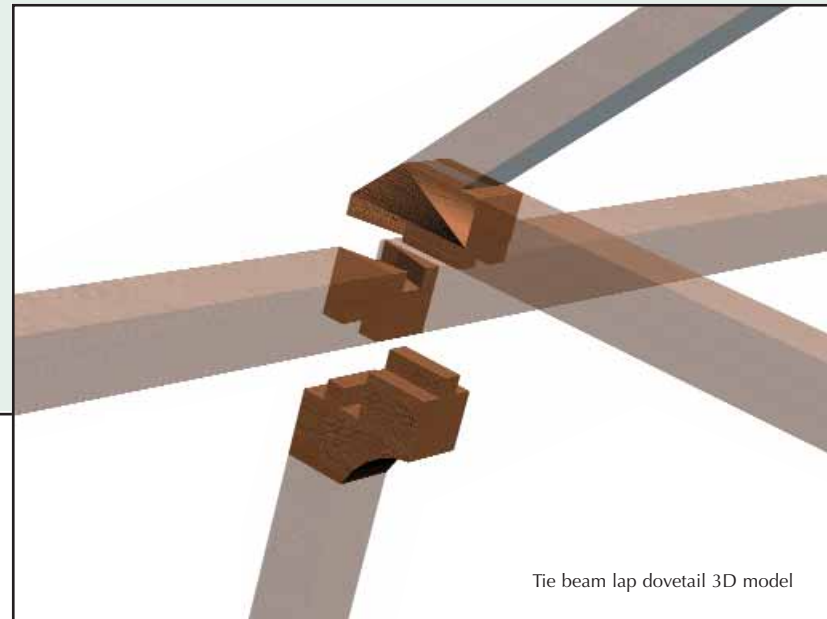
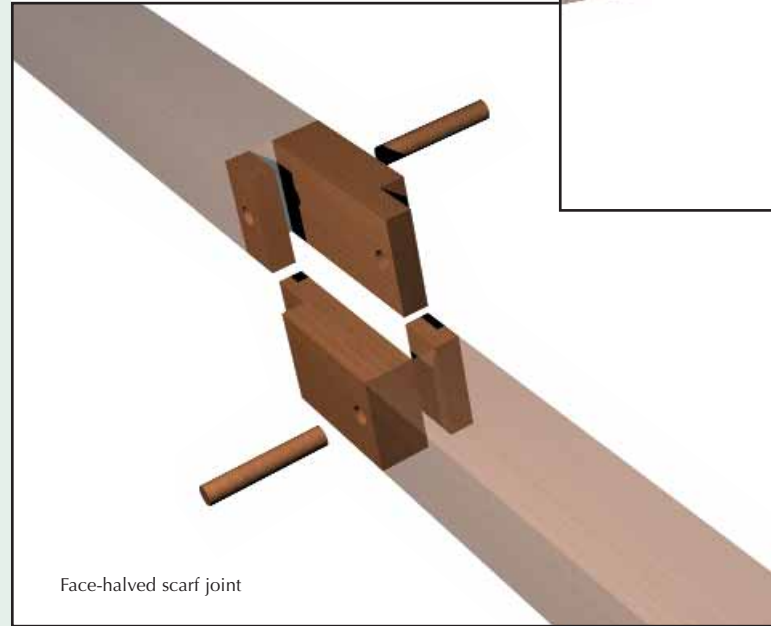
All illustrations are provided by the Museum of London



Kingston pottery, late 1200s to early 1300s

BUILDING ON FEAR: VERNACULAR CARPENTRY AND THE BLACK DEATH

Richard Haddlesey



but will differ in its methodology. I am creating three linkable databases, collating published works, by producing a) a relational database comprising building names, dendrochronological dates, national grid co-ordinates and building type; b) a geo-database using ArcGIS, to locate the building within its wider landscape and its relationship to other surviving buildings; c) a visual database using virtual reality modelling to help visualise joint typologies.

The visual database will include 3D models of joint types, such as the tie-beam lap dovetail face-halved scarf joint. These 3D models were based on 2D line drawings in existing literature. Assorted means of dissemination will be utilised throughout the research, such as making the databases accessible via the internet, depositing data with the Archaeology Data Service and providing a means of displaying images and movie clips showing the models rotating on portable devices. The movie clips provide the means to rotate the models and examine their interactions, without dependency on specialised 3D software.

I have already tested the dissemination of several joints and their interaction during my MSc, the results of which can be seen at www.medievalarchitecture.net. It is my aim to continue building this site as my PhD progresses.

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PhD research just beginning at the University of Winchester is investigating effects of the Black Death on late English medieval carpentry. Once the databases are complete they may be used in many exciting ways, questioning present social and theoretical debates and the evolution of carpentry styles and techniques within central southern England.

There are three main aims of the work:

1. analyse the possible effect of the Black Death on joints used in construction of timber buildings
2. provide a chronology and typology of the joints, to aid dating of buildings visually
3. provide a means of taking data into the field, to empower researchers, conservation officers and architects with the use of 3D models, to help understand the way buildings are constructed.

The project will build upon previous work regarding timber buildings in the Hampshire area,

Involving the public at Weobley Castle

George Nash

It is rare that professionals get a chance to work alongside volunteers and amateurs, but HLF and Local Heritage Initiative (LHI) projects such as Weobley Castle Project in Herefordshire have allowed much greater interaction.

The castle, with a history dating to the 13th century, was abandoned and robbed from the mid-17th century. Some of the fabric such as the castle's fireplaces has been found in dwellings around the castle.

A project design was put to LHI for desk-based assessment followed by earthwork, geophysical, ground penetration and buildings surveys. One aim was to understand what was going on immediately outside the castle, and each of the five non-intrusive surveys had its own distinct landscape setting. Academics from Bristol University and professionals from a locally based unit taught and assisted in the recording process, and the volunteer force was co-ordinated by the local history society. The first season attracted over 65 people from all walks of life including the retired, children and would-be archaeologists. The results can be considered spectacular, identifying fish ponds, medieval and post-medieval buildings, prehistoric corrals and an Iron Age hill enclosure.

The second phase concentrated on evaluation trenches over features recorded in Phase I, both within and outside the inner bailey. The fantasy of being an archaeologist prevailed through the foulest weather. Results were again spectacular, with buildings, associated debris and artefacts allowing construction of life in the medieval castle. Archaeological evidence was supported by in-depth historical surveys, and work was incorporated into a monograph which paints a detailed picture of medieval life in and around the castle. These results have significantly changed the way we in the West Midlands think about castles, especially the way that their archaeology extends beyond the castle wall.

The implications and organisation of a project such as this were immense, and health and safety issues for volunteers ranging in age from 9 to 80 were



complex. Events included guest speakers, progress meetings and book launches to ensure that momentum was not broken, and archaeology, as ever, proved to have an extremely popular public following.

In October 2006 LHI will cease and with it a positive legacy and persona the profession needs in order to carry the public with it. This and the other 1183 projects undertaken throughout England between 2000 and 2005, and the public hunger for archaeology, are a testimony for schemes such as Weobley Castle.

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Reconstruction of the Castle
(by Brian Byron)

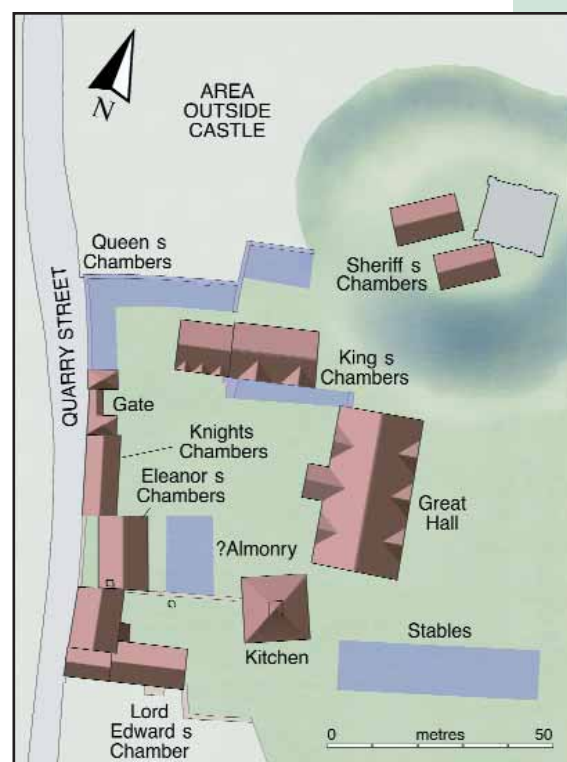




The mid-12th century great tower at Guildford.
The palace lay on the lower ground to its left

Tracing the royals at home, in Guildford Castle and Palace

Rob Poulton



Reconstruction plan of the castle and palace in the later 13th century. Flat tone indicates suggested locations for buildings known only from documents

Recent appearance of the full report on excavations at Guildford Castle and Royal Palace has brought a long campaign of work to a satisfactory close. The project began in 1990, not long after the Surrey County Archaeological Unit had come into existence, and was an unusual project for a commercial organisation, perhaps more so then than now.

Looking for a Palace

The stimulus lay in the attraction of locating and perhaps reconstructing the 13th-century royal palace within the Castle walls. Its existence was well documented but little trace remained above ground. Excavations were carried out in partnership with Surrey Archaeological Society and Guildford Museum, with support from Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council, and were intended to meet an emerging gap in opportunities for training in archaeological skills and for public participation. There was also the opportunity to use this high profile site to promote appreciation of archaeology locally and to develop an educational and tourist resource.

In the first year over 150 people participated in the excavations (and more would have done so had there been room). Far more came eagerly to view work in progress, with guided tours, school parties, and press, radio and television reports. This pattern was repeated in succeeding years with, each summer, the three-week season being heavily over subscribed. Talks, interim reports and a popular booklet spread the news more widely. Since completion of the excavations a major programme of remedial work to the great tower has been followed by much improved information for the public.

William and Henrys

Success in the outreach objectives was matched by progress in understanding the development of the castle and palace. Guildford Castle was established by William I soon after the Conquest, but it is the 12th-century great tower, standing on the motte, that is the dominant feature today. The excavations concentrated on the lower ground below the motte, and unexpectedly revealed the original bailey ditch. This was filled in and a larger bailey created and surrounded by stone walls in the later 12th century to create space for domestic royal apartments. It is clear from archaeology that a palace was being created by the reign of Henry II (1154-1189), although it is with Henry III (1216-72) that the Palace is most closely linked by documents. In his time it was a popular residence, with expenditure the fifth largest among the royal houses, and it is one of very few referred to as a palace in the Middle Ages.

A further small plot was added to the bailey in 1246 and a tile kiln that had operated within the new area was levelled over, leaving it in an excellent state for us to find. The royal buildings in the bailey

are known to have been dismantled in 1397 or soon after, and excavations indicated that decline may have set in much earlier.

Luxury and local produce

Finds from the excavations are generally unspectacular, although they include items, such as a gilded stud and a glass urinal, which hint at the wealthy lifestyle. Sadly they do not compare to the beauty indicated by documents, for example that in 1256 which ordered the ceiling of the King's chamber to be painted green, spangled with gold and silver. In general the finds suggest that supplies were drawn from the local area. Among the very large pottery assemblage, for example, there were only eight imported sherds, perhaps due to the proximity of the Surrey and Surrey/Hampshire border potteries. In contrast, faunal remains indicate that a wide variety of foodstuffs, some quite exotic, were consumed. One discovery from study of the well-preserved deer assemblage was that only carefully selected portions of these animals reached the site. Comparison with sites of similar status suggests that this reflects hunting rituals instituted by the Normans, which were adhered to for several hundred years.

This was rather longer than the king's houses at Guildford survived, but the excavations mean that we can now appreciate its character and importance, and it has become a key site for understanding the medieval English royal palace.

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Poulton, R 1998 *The Royal Castle and Palace at Guildford*

Poulton, R 2005 *A Medieval Royal Complex at Guildford*, Surrey Archaeological Society Research Volume



Volunteering at the castle

Hartshill Castle and an issue of trust

Martin Wilson

Who are we to entrust with the guardianship of our built heritage?

The case of Hartshill Castle, Warwickshire is a curious one indeed, for its programme of grant-aided repairs under the guidance of English Heritage negated a scheme of archaeological building investigation and recording. The consequence of not employing a standard against which performance may be measured led to the advisory body's decision being challenged by the monument's owner, and a year-long unresolved disagreement. The case reinforces the worth of IFA's *Standard and guidance* but demonstrates that its usefulness extends only as far as it is accepted by the regulatory organisations.

Stemming dilapidation

Preservation of Hartshill Castle, an 11th-century motte and bailey with 13th-century curtain wall, is the initiative of a retired local teacher. Bought in 2000, after a few years on the market, the ruin was placed in the care of the Harold Lapworth Charitable Trust. The Trust's objectives are to stem the rate of dilapidation which has been accelerated by vandalism and stone robbing, and to generate public appreciation of the monument, which is set within an industrial legacy. Purchase came with the understanding that any maintenance and repair programme would require consultation with English Heritage. A 50% matched grant was agreed

for repair works – a total of £80k, which would be administered according to a specification of works in two yearly phases.

Carved stones for revetments

As the repair works advanced, the trustees were alarmed to discover that, in agreement with EH representatives, excavations were being executed without archaeological supervision. Banked-up earth against the outer curtain wall was dug out to locate the foundations, and a small inner corner

cell, perhaps an access to a tower or wall-walk, had been similarly emptied to expose the wall's internal face. The cell was subsequently infilled with cement-mortared rubble. Carved feature stones, such as window sills, mullions and pieces of fallen embrasures, were stacked along the berm as a revetment for upcast material. Within months, vegetation would take hold and add to the many earthwork features of the monument. Despite unfamiliarity with modern archaeological approaches the owner's instinct told her that these methods were questionable and appealed. The architect upheld the integrity of the works under the premise that they were as advised, and ultimately approved, by EH.

Archaeological loss

Aside from the irrecoverable loss of archaeological information, substantial repairs to the curtain wall were more cause for consternation. Astonishingly, large breaches in wall caused by collapse had been plugged with vertical crazy paving in the style of a 19th-century farm building without regard for the medieval block coursing technique, which is a major feature of the castle. Elsewhere, two arrow slit stones had been acquired from a loose, albeit *in situ*



Hartshill east curtain wall

Hartshill Castle



A filled-in cell in the north-east wall



An embrasure in the south curtain wall

Hartshill castle bailey



context on the far side of the castle, in order to replace missing stones of an embrasure that is in public view.

EH said that it had not considered that a building recording exercise was required. It claims that it generally approved repairs in a 'like for like' way, and only too late agreed that the mason had failed to replicate the dominant horizontal pattern (ie the block coursework). Mutilation of the corner cell could not be accounted for, nor the 'enhanced' embrasure, which they said would be reversed during the next phase. In response to the below-ground works EH pointed out that grant-aided projects do not require scheduled monument consent and, in view of the limited funds available they had decided it was unnecessary to engage an archaeologist.

Does automatic provision of consent remove the protection that a monument enjoys under the 1979 Archaeological Areas Act? And what of the codes

and standards that would be normally required for ancient monuments and buildings – such as implementation of a written scheme of archaeological works beforehand?

Better no repair than bad

The Trust is thus faced with a dilemma. Centuries of maturing vegetation had provided at least some protection to the castle wall and, inevitably, since its removal one is more aware of the castle's vulnerability to the elements. Nonetheless, the Trust remains true to its constitution, upholding both its belief of what should comprise preservation, and its adversity to the application of present day transformations. As is said in the world of antiques, it is better to have no repair than a bad repair.

The castle's owner and guardian have appealed to DCMS via the House of Commons in order to get a satisfactory response.

Martin Wilson

AN URBAN MEDIEVAL POPULATION FROM ST PETER'S, LEICESTER

Tony Gnanaratnam

University of Leicester Archaeological Services are investigating a number of areas in the north-east quarter of the medieval walled town of Leicester, one of which, on the site of St Margaret's Baths, is focused on the medieval church and cemetery of St Peter's. This is one of the four 'lost' churches of Leicester and is of early Norman date. Borough records show that it was being dismantled in 1573 to provide building materials for the nearby Free Grammar School, and it is likely that the cemetery went out of use at this time. Its skeletons are already providing valuable data for the pathologies afflicting this large urban population.

Church building and surrounding structures

Most of the ground plan of the church was revealed. Starting as a simple two-celled building, the nave was later extended and by the late 12th century a western bell tower had been added, within which was found a bell-casting pit. Aisles were added, the chancel extended, and a sunken-floored charnel house built. In its final phase it was 32m long. Medieval features, including pits, building remains and an oven, were sealed beneath the expanding cemetery. To the north, other medieval buildings included a robbed-out undercroft indicating a high-status building, and there was a mud-walled building adjacent to the cemetery and further building remains buried beneath it.

Medieval burial practices and a mass grave

The church acquired burial rights in the 12th century, and some 1340 burials were recovered. A number of different burial practices were seen, including charcoal burials and variations on the use of stones as linings and supports within the grave. Twenty-five coffined burials were revealed inside the church, including some with a thin layer of ash within the wooden coffin. One of these included a *bull* of Pope Innocent VI (1352-62) perhaps originally attached to an Indulgence. In one corner of the graveyard a mass grave was uncovered, which, stratigraphically, appears to pre-date the Black Death. As analysis of the site progresses the nature and date of this feature should become clearer.

The size of the cemetery means that this is a rare opportunity to examine the population of a single medieval parish. Although many burials were intercutting, survival and completeness seem good enough to suggest prevalence rates for different pathologies, and to begin reconstruction of meaningful demographic data. This is enhanced by the number of higher status individuals buried within the church.

Obesity, vitamin deficiency and broken limbs

Initial on-site inspection of skeletal remains by the project osteologist Harriet Jacklin indicates a number of interesting pathologies and evidence of trauma. These include vitamin deficiencies such as anaemia (cribra orbitalia and porotic hyperostosis), scurvy and possibly rickets. Osteoarthritis of the spine was prevalent but osteoarthritis of the hands and knees was also seen. Many older adults exhibited signs of Schmorl's nodes, possibly the result of heavy lifting, and other evidence of vertebral trauma has been seen in the form of scoliosis. DISH (Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis), associated with obesity and diabetes, was mostly seen in older individuals. Two individuals suffered from dislocations of hip or shoulder, whilst others had evidence of fractures (predominately of the lower arm but also of the clavicle). Most had healed well, although some were misaligned. Evidence of tuberculosis and meningitis has been seen and also non-specific infections in the form of osteomyelitis, which was often very advanced.

Detailed scientific analysis of the St Peter's skeletal assemblage will complement the skeletal analysis. Stable Isotope analysis can give a general impression of diet. Ancient human DNA analysis may be used to investigate family relationships and to identify infectious disease. The urban medieval population of Leicester will be understood as never before.

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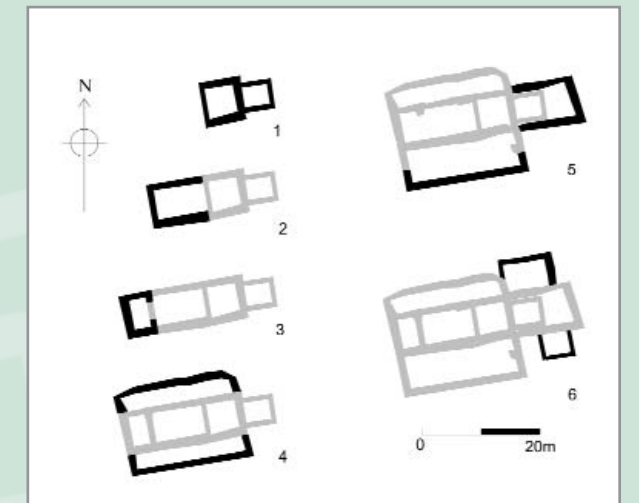
A mass grave



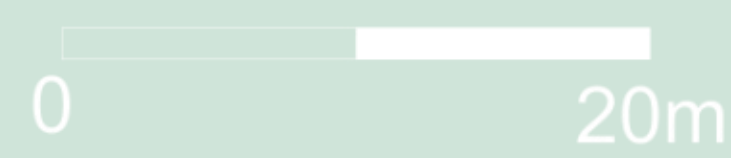
Burial with papal bulla of Innocent VI (1352-62), perhaps originally attached to an Indulgence



Excavation in progress of the charnel house, following removal of robbed walls



Provisional sequence of development for St Peter's Church, Leicester. 1) two-celled building 2) the nave is extended 3) the bell tower is added 4) aisles are added 5) the south aisle is extended and the chancel is extended 6) the chapel is added to the north and the charnel house added to the south of the chancel

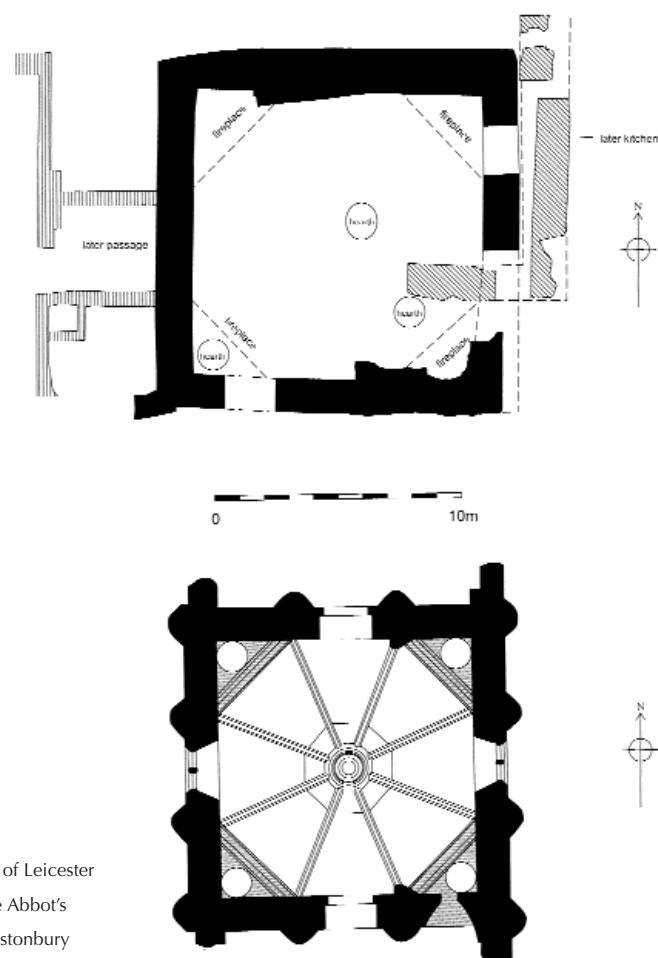




South facade of the gatehouse, showing foundations of one of the gate hall turrets

Only the precinct walls and a few fragments of monastic barns survive above ground today from Leicester Abbey, the rest of this wealthy Augustinian abbey being swept away shortly after the Dissolution. Only the gatehouse survived as the core of the mansion of the Hastings and Cavendish families, but this too disappeared at the end of the 18th century. Excavations in the 19th century and in 1929–32 led to the construction of low walls to mark out the plans of the principal buildings as a means of improving public understanding and enjoyment of the site when the abbey grounds became a public park.

Since 2000, University of Leicester Archaeological Services has run a training excavation here for undergraduates of the School of Archaeology and Ancient History at the University of Leicester. As it is a scheduled monument, damage to buried archaeological remains is minimised, with excavations usually just exposing the uppermost archaeological deposits and removing modern



Comparison of Leicester (top) and the Abbot's Kitchen, Glastonbury

Leicester Abbey: *Augustinians in a public park*

Richard Buckley

intrusions to provide a window into underlying stratification, plus limited sampling of discrete features.

Gatehouse, chambers and kitchen

A survey at the time of the Dissolution of Leicester Abbey in 1538 describes 'a square lodging on either side of the gatehouse in which are five chambers with chimneys and large glazed windows, the walls being of stone and covered with lead, and with four stone turrets at the corners of the same'. This tallies with an engraving of 1730. Excavations in this area showed that in its latest phase the gatehouse was a rectangular building, with polygonal turrets and a possible kitchen attached. The closest parallel is the gatehouse of Thornton Abbey, Lincolnshire.

Octagonal kitchen?

Trenches excavated between 2002 and 2005 have confirmed the presence of the kitchen and that it was a substantial building approximately 11.88m square internally with walls c. 1.4m thick. There are indications of corner fireplaces, a circular oven and a complex of ovens or hearths. Evidence for possible fireplace arch abutments adds weight to the suggestion that the kitchen was octagonal internally, similar to the kitchen at Fontevault (Maine et Loire) and the Abbot's Kitchen at Glastonbury.

Fish, meat and fruit

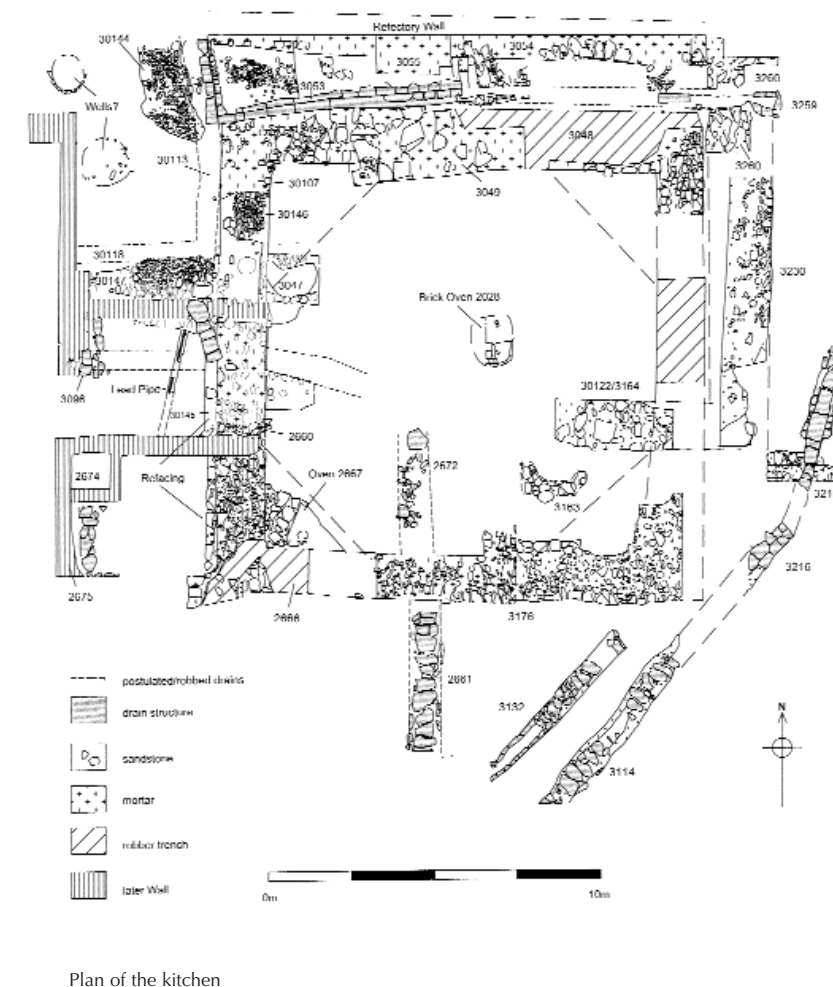
Investigations in 2003–4 provided archaeological evidence for construction of passageways and pentices linking the kitchen with neighbouring buildings, and alterations to the associated water management systems. Modifications and built-up floor levels inside the kitchen were evident, creating stratified deposits c. 0.50m deep. Environmental samples provided evidence for food preparation and cooking. Samples from fireplaces contained abundant charcoal and ash together with charred cereal grains, weed seeds and occasional chaff fragments, probably representing waste sorted from the cereals before use and accidentally spilled cereal grains. Uncharred fish remains suggest the deposit includes general kitchen waste. Environmental samples from drains contained numerous fragments of fish scales and bones from eels, perch and carp, and sea fish such as plaice, cod and herring. Although fish was particularly important in the Augustinian diet, evidence from animal bones

indicates that beef, mutton, pork and chicken were also consumed; domestic birds may have contributed to the diet, together with venison (indicated by a single deer bone). The drains and ovens included abundant charcoal with small numbers of charred cereal grains and weed seeds, peas, beans, fruit-stones of sloe or cherry and bramble.

In the centre of the kitchen, a brick hearth dated to the 16th or early 17th century was revealed and therefore belongs to the post-Dissolution use of the building. Environmental evidence included charred peas, a small variety of bean and hazelnut shell, probably waste or spillage from preparing meals.

Another season for first year undergraduates is to be undertaken in summer 2006. Results from 2000–2005 were published in May 2006 in a special 'Leicester Abbey' volume produced by the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

Richard Buckley
University of Leicester Archaeology Services



Plan of the kitchen

Finding the lost church of St Stephen, Fishergate, York

Jane McComish



Early this year York Archaeological Trust investigated land where the church of St Stephen, Fishergate, and its associated burial ground were thought to stand before demolition in the Middle Ages. It is mentioned in documents of late 11th century to 14th century date, but may have been abandoned as early as 1331 when it was annexed to St Martin-le-Grand's. Earlier trial excavations indicated that all burials and medieval structures had been removed by construction of a brewery on the site in the 19th century, but work rapidly changed from a watching brief to full excavation when inhumations and a large number of pre-cemetery features were discovered.

Site location. Plan prepared by Lesley Collett, YAT

Rich Roman finds

Post-excavation work is in its early stages but already it is clear that there was a channel running across the northern portion of the site, with a higher ridge, probably of glacial origin, to the south, which had been a focus for settlement from Roman times. The earliest man-made features consisted of a mass of rubbish pits, possible clay-extraction pits, postholes, stakeholes, gullies and ditches. These clearly represent intensive landuse, probably from the Roman to Anglo-Scandinavian period. Among the Roman finds were a beautiful gold finger ring, a jet pendant in the shape of a bear and a small shale bracelet.

Broken bones

Sealing these early settlement features was the cemetery of St Stephen's church. In total 117 burials were recovered. As with other medieval parish church cemeteries the burials were heavily intercut, and many had slumped into the earlier rubbish pits on the site. All burials were fully extended, with the arms in a variety of positions including folded over the abdomen, hands by the sides and hands on the pelvis. Only a small proportion of the burials were associated with iron coffin nails. The skeletons are currently being cleaned in preparation for detailed analysis but already some interesting features have been recorded. One individual had a badly healed broken leg, one a broken collar bone and leg, another had a broken pelvis. One burial had non-specific infection of virtually all the long bones.

Analysis will no doubt reveal further examples of injuries and diseases. The cemetery represents a typical population, having both sexes and a wide variety of ages present. Two ditches which follow the natural ridge may represent some kind of cemetery or parish boundary. Nearly all of the burials on the site occurred south of these ditches, though a few of the later burials were directly above them. Maybe the cemetery became overcrowded and the ditches were infilled to provide additional space for burials.

The only portion of the site where archaeological features did not exist was the brewery site; precisely where the 1990 trial trenches had been excavated.

The excavation was undertaken on behalf of Evans Property Group, who not only funded the excavation, but showed tremendous interest and support throughout the dig.

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A Roman gold finger ring.
Photograph: Michael Andrews, YAT



Excavation of pre-cemetery features.
Photograph: Michael Andrews, YAT



Roman jet pendant in the form of a bear. Photograph: Michael Andrews, YAT

Friars and tanners at BRISTOL BROADMEAD

Simon Cox

Excavations will soon be coming to an end within the Bristol suburb of Broadmead. This work is in advance of major development and extension of the city's main retail centre into an area where medieval town life saw fine religious buildings alongside noxious industrial processes. In later centuries the buildings and burial ground of Dominican friars passed to Quaker religious use, tanning and related industries persisted, and well documented medieval tenements can be traced through to their busy 20th-century life, which included tragic loss of life during bombing raids in 1942.

These stone-built tanning pits are typical of industrial activity in the area adjacent to the Frome from the 17th century

■ A 12th-century suburb

The suburb was probably first laid out in the 12th century, just outside the medieval walled town and directly north of the castle. One trench lies outside a precinct wall of the Dominican

Friary of Bristol, founded in 1227, the time when many religious orders were established around the edge of the medieval town. This trench includes the site of a public house called

the Old Crown in the 19th century, part of the culverted branch of the River Frome or Back Ditch and buildings aligned on it, and the southern precinct wall of the Friary.

The Dominican Friary had a double cloister, with two surviving elements which are now known as Cutler's and Baker's Halls. Both buildings have fine medieval roofs: that in Cutler's Hall may be of 15th-century date, and Baker's Hall perhaps of late 13th- or early 14th-century date. Recent evaluation north of Cutler's Hall by Oxford Archaeology revealed walls of both the church and cloister buildings, including what may have been part of the Chapter House.

The Friary was dissolved in 1538. Dennis Hollister, a prominent member of the early Quaker movement in Bristol whose family had acquired the land, sold the Blackfriars precinct to the Society of Friends, who built their meeting house on foundations of some of the monastic buildings in 1670. The Friary burial ground was reused as a burial ground by the Quakers from 1700, with the meeting house subsequently rebuilt in the mid-18th century.

■ Tanners and whittawers

The earliest documentary references describing properties in this area date from the 14th century,

and the suburb around Broad Weir was well developed when depicted on a map of 1568. Documentary evidence reveals that tenements were sold at this time to tanner Nicholas Wodhouse and to burgess Roger Cooke. By the time of Millerd's map of the city (1673), the north side of Broad Weir was fully built up, with tenements stretching back from the street frontage to the River Frome. The tenements on the Weare were subsequently bought by a tanner and a whittawer (whittawers prepared leather with salt, alum, eggs, lime etc make supple 'white leather', ie its natural colour not tanned. This was usually done to the hides of sheep, goats, calves and pigs, rather than cattle, and the white leather was used for saddles, gloves, garments, shoe uppers, laces, etc).

We are now starting to understand how the area was used for tanning from as early as the 15th century. The area closest to Broad Weir was occupied specifically by whittawers in the 17th century, and subsequently by tanners. The rears of these properties were occupied by the skinner's yards, and there were also lime pits, drying lofts and stables.

■ Preserved timbers

Excavations have so far revealed substantial medieval walls, defining the early tenements, and 18th-century tanning pits within which the remains of wooden barrels can be seen. The pits were filled with lime and ground oak bark, which was used to transform animal hides into leather. The medieval

buildings were founded upon organic debris which had been dumped into the river to reclaim land prior to initial settlement. The waterlogged nature of this material has ensured excellent preservation of artefacts and several timber structures have been recorded.

■ Bomb damage

By the 19th century Broad Weir street front was occupied by bakeries, eating houses and pubs, including the Old Crown, and many artefacts of this date have come to light. In the 20th century the site was occupied by timber yards and Taylors' printing works. The buildings fronting this side of Broad Weir were demolished after a 500lb bomb tragically set fire to three double-decker buses packed with people in August 1942.

An open day this March attracted over 1000 people on a freezing day. Those wishing to follow developments in more comfort can see regular updates on the Cotswold Archaeology website www.cotswoldarch.org.uk. Information about the development can also be found on Bristol City Council's website, www.bristol-city.gov.uk/archaeology.

Excavations are being undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology and Pre-Construct Archaeology on behalf of the Bristol Alliance.

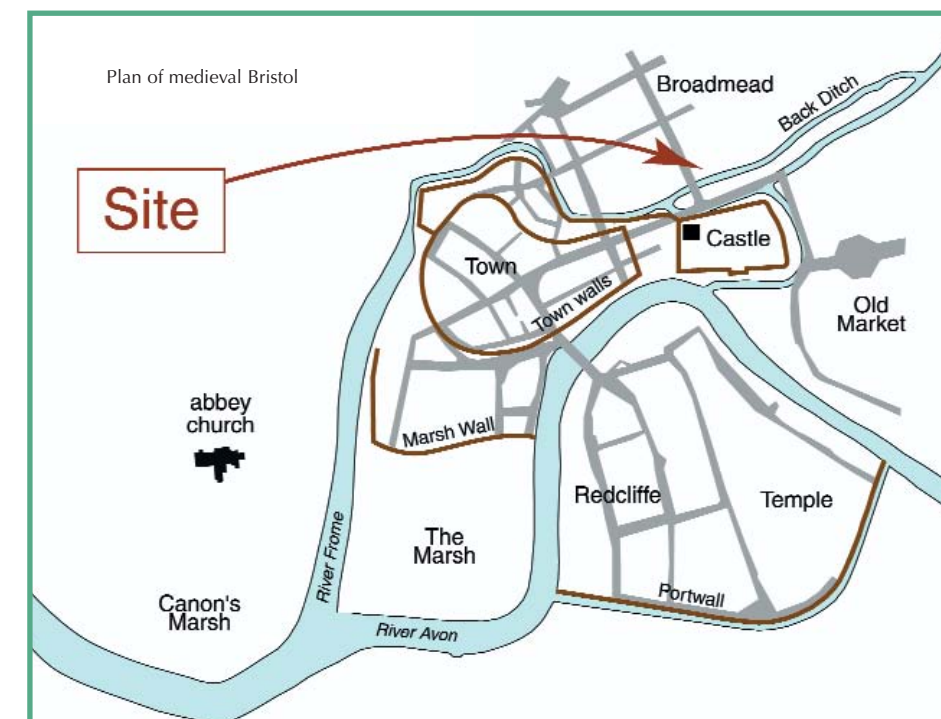
Simon Cox
Cotswold Archaeology



19th-century Bristol stoneware flat bottle, for spirits



An early (12th/13th century) timber construction platform found at the end of the dig. This extended out into the river channel, ostensibly to reclaim land on which to extend a tenement plot rearwards, and had substantial stone foundations built against it.





Laser scanning at Rosslyn Chapel

Murray Cook

Rosslyn chapel, near Edinburgh, one of the finest surviving late collegiate churches in Scotland, is renowned for the intricacy of its carved stonework – most famously and spectacularly the Apprentice Pillar: an exceptional work of spiralling foliate carving, interweaving Christian and Scandinavian traditional iconography. Founded in 1446 by Sir William Clair, the chapel is one of the finest examples of pre-Reformation ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland, incorporating a range of structural features regarded as iconic of the Scottish late medieval style. Recent historical research indicates that it was built around the same time as Glasgow Cathedral, perhaps by the same stonemasons and architects.

Knights Templar and the Holy Grail

Its architectural significance has long attracted visitors and in recent years their numbers have been augmented by those interested in its putative

associations with the Knights Templar and the Holy Grail. The chapel's popularity is unlikely to diminish, given its appearance in the Da Vinci Code. Increased visitor pressure is one of the threats to the structural integrity of the chapel.

Settlement and erosion

The chapel is sited immediately adjacent to the edge of Rosslyn Glen, one exit from the crypt now opening out on the glen side. The strata on which it is built comprise alternating layers of sands, silts and gravels with one thick band of clay. These strata dip towards the glen, and survey reveals that the chapel has moved slightly since its construction. Settlement, erosion of its fabric and erosion of the mortar beds have contributed to the ingress of water, endangering the site. An external canopy was erected to protect the chapel while its problems could be studied and cured.

As part of the conservation plan, AOC Archaeology Group undertook a detailed survey of the interior and exterior of the chapel, producing CAD drawings which will act as a baseline for the measurement of change, anthropic or natural, and provide the first full record of the site.

Laser scanning

With the view impeded by the canopy, recording of Rosslyn and all its extravagantly three-dimensional

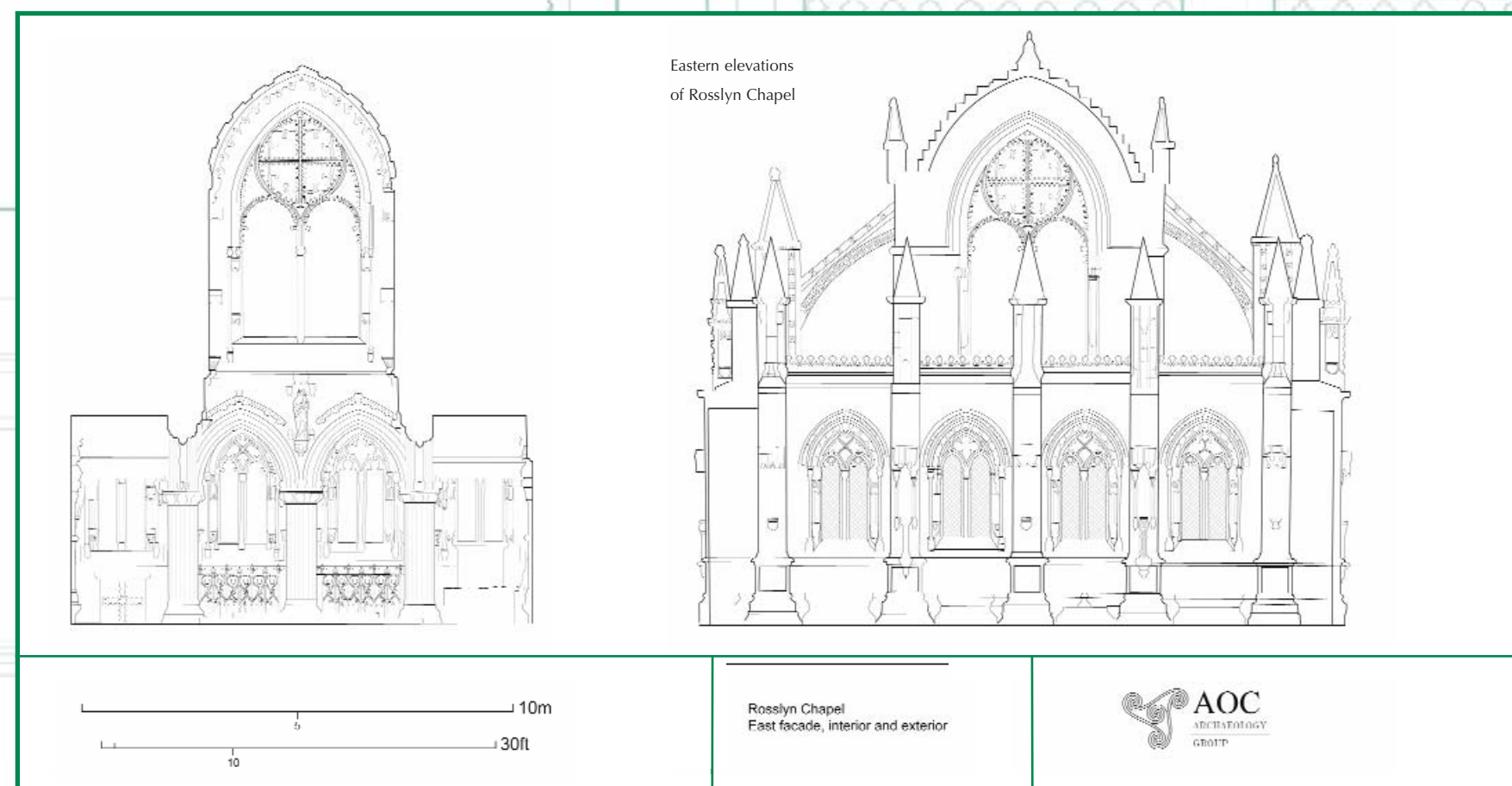
carvings presented a considerable challenge for normal EDM survey or photogrammetry techniques. The solution was to employ laser scanning. AOC's Mensi GS100 scanner is ideally suited to the detailed medium range building survey required. As such, a detailed 3-dimensional record could be taken of the building, with millimetre-density scans taken of more intricately carved areas. By scanning from numerous angles inside and outside the building, full coverage of the structure of the chapel could be achieved, while the scaffolding canopy and other obstructions to the survey could be edited out in the post-processing stage.

The point clouds produced by the scanning work were imported into a CAD environment for the production of 2D elevations. The result was a series of scaled, detailed AutoCAD drawings of all of the interior and exterior elevations of the building.

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The Apprentice Pillar



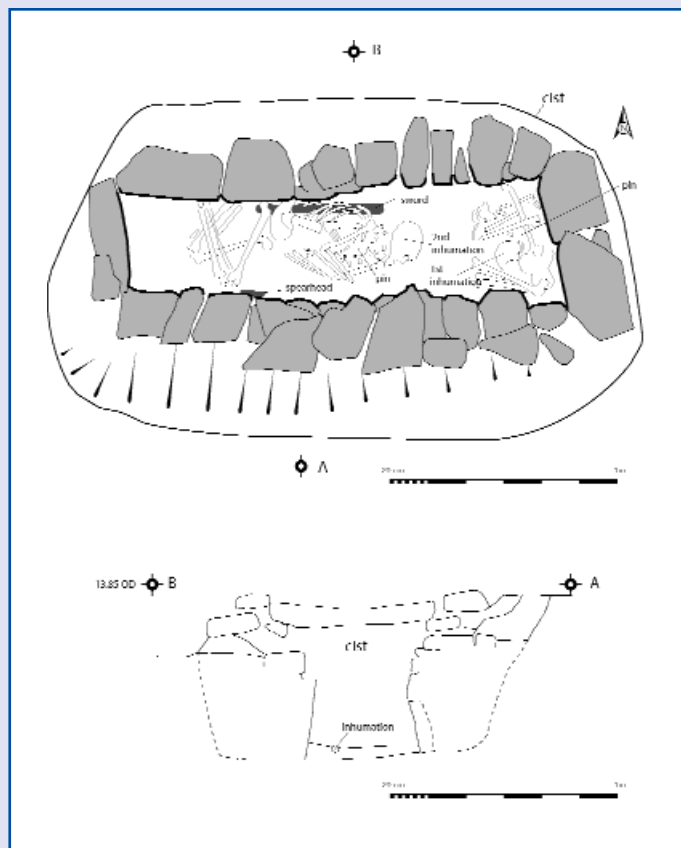
Eastern elevations of Rosslyn Chapel

Rosslyn Chapel East facade, interior and exterior



Tales of the Unexpected: an Iron Age warrior in medieval Dunbar

Mike Roy



Plan and section of the Iron Age Warrior Burial, Dunbar

It is a truism that the findings of archaeological fieldwork cannot be stated in advance, and this was startlingly demonstrated by AOC Archaeology Group in the centre of Dunbar. The site consisted of two plots running back from the High Street to the boundary of the medieval town. Evaluation works had identified medieval and early post-medieval pit features and stone walls and possible robber trenches interpreted as medieval burghage plot boundaries. In the western end of the site a deep layer of imported soil (up to 2.5 m deep) had been used to level the site in the late medieval or early post-medieval period.

This soil was opened by machine, revealing, as expected, post-medieval and medieval remains. However, underlying the levelling layer was a dark

compact silt layer that produced no finds but was truncated by a pit feature, which had apparently been in-filled with sandstone boulders and flat slabs.

Cist survival

This feature proved to be a stone-lined cist, covered by three flat sandstone slabs (each around 1 m square). This was apparently an isolated feature and its preservation was probably aided by the medieval levelling material, which shielded it from the extensive post-medieval drainage features and disturbance during the construction of the cinema that overlay the site during the 20th century. However, its survival during earlier centuries, including the setting out of medieval plot boundary walls and cutting of drainage ditches, a well and backland features, is remarkable. It is possible that the covering slabs of the cist were visible during the period between its construction and that the setting out of the medieval burgh perhaps respected it as a grave site.

Warrior grave goods

Excavation of the cist revealed two adult inhumations, the primary burial pushed to the east of the cist to make room for a secondary burial, which was accompanied by the remains of an iron sword, spearhead and a pin. Such Iron Age warrior burials are extremely rare in Scotland, and the example at Dunbar is one of the best preserved.

Prehistory in medieval burghs

Excavation in Scottish urban contexts normally reveals evidence only for the establishment and development of medieval burghs. Stray isolated finds from prehistoric, Roman or Dark Age times are uncommon but occasionally not simply artefacts but *in situ* prehistoric remains are discovered during excavations of medieval towns, such as Bronze Age cist burials at Kirkcaldy and Mesolithic and Neolithic remains at Dumfries. The Dunbar excavation demonstrated that medieval remains overlay Iron Age remains far earlier than the town's founding. Although there are many Iron Age sites in the vicinity of Dunbar, the nearest examples of



Primary inhumation within the Iron Age Cist, Dunbar



Secondary inhumation (warrior) within the Iron Age Cist, Dunbar

similar burial monuments are to be found in Clackmannanshire, Fife and Falkirk, many miles to the north and west.

This site demonstrated that neither intrusive evaluation nor knowledge of the date and types of remains encountered in nearby sites can lead to a certainty that the unexpected will not appear. It leads to the imperative that the field archaeologist be aware that remains of unusual date and type may survive the disturbance of medieval urban development.

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Baldred's Auldhame: a medieval chapel and cemetery in East Lothian

Erlend Hindmarsh and Melissa Melikian



In contrast to Iron Age burials in medieval Dunbar human remains unearthed by ploughing near Auldhame, East Lothian, excavated under the Historic Scotland Call-off Contract, revealed an extensive medieval burial ground and multi-phased chapel within an Iron Age promontory fort, the ditch of which came to define the boundary of the later cemetery.

The area is associated with the 7th-century St Baldred, who founded a monastery at nearby Tynningham and lived a life of solitude on the Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth, visible from the site. The chapel may date from the 9th century, based on

Baldred's Auldhame



The promontory fort, with the excavated chapel clearly visible. The ditch of the fort is visible as a broad band of slightly darker soil. Photo: Crown copyright: RCAHMS



A stone-lined grave with pillow stones to support the head. Photograph: Erlend Hindmarch

preliminary comparative evidence, but there are burials which clearly pre-date the chapel and which, together with other partial structural remains, may be contemporary with the saint. The graveyard went out of use in the 17th century.

Burial alignments

Within the burial ground some 240 individuals were recovered and a further 66 burials were deemed 'safe' from ploughing and therefore left *in situ*. At least three phases of burial activity are clear from alignment of the graves. The majority lay west to east on the alignment of the chapel, including those

which predate the chapel. A distinct group toward the west end of the chapel consisted almost entirely of juveniles and were orientated on an axis closer to southwest to northeast. This suggests that there may have been at least two earlier chapels.

Cists, coffins and shell cairns

The type of burial also varied across the site. The majority were simple earth-cut graves but distinctive cists and coffin burials were present. Grouping of graves with regard to demography has yet to be analysed but a significant number of neonates had been buried very close to the central south wall of the chapel – perhaps a way of sanctifying unbaptised burials. A deposit rich in beach shells was identified over part of the site. One theory is that it is the spread remains of grave markers in the form of cairns of shells which have been ploughed away. Finds include Iron Age and medieval pottery, brooches and other metal objects. Very few grave goods were found but of particular note are an iron blade, two strap ends and possible stirrups from a single burial. Analysis of the artefacts and the shell-rich deposits will form part of the post-excavation programme.

Disease and trauma

Post-excavation assessment of the human bone has just been completed. The assemblage of 240 individuals is one of the largest recovered from this early date in the area. There are 30 neonate/infants, 44 juveniles and 166 adults. Within the adult assemblage there are 62 females and 65 males or probable males, an approximate ratio of 1:1. Generally the remains displayed good or moderate surface preservation and were relatively complete. Pathologies include fractures, klippel-feil syndrome, osteoarthritis, rotator cuff disease, intervertebral disc disease and periostitis.

Due to its size, date and the association with St Baldred the assemblage is considered of local, regional and national significance. The material will undergo population-based, detailed osteological analysis following BABAO & IFA guidelines and further studies are proposed, in particular isotope analyses to examine issues of diet and population origins. We hope that the data from this assemblage will contribute to a number of current osteological research projects.

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Excavation in progress, with Tantallon Castle and the Firth of Forth in the background. The foundations of the chapel can be seen to the right. Photograph: Erlend Hindmarch



Foundations of the chapel. The earliest building lies in the foreground with a more substantial later addition beyond. Bamboo canes mark burials.

Stenhouse and the Knights of St John: pottery kilns and sugar refining in medieval Scotland

Derek W Hall

Fragment of a redware jug from Stenhouse with depiction of a Green man?



The most interesting thing about the Stenhouse pottery is the distinctive styles of decoration. Two vessels are incised with Maltese crosses, suggesting a link with the Knights Hospitaller at Torphichen. Use of the saltire also hints at another chivalric link, perhaps reflecting the late 15th-century revival of the cult of St Andrew. Or the use of this cross on jugs with face masks may suggest that these anthropomorphic vessels represented a figure wearing a tabard with a cross on its front. If this is supposed to represent a crusader, then decoration on Stenhouse vessels reflects the 16th-century Scottish revival of the crusading movement, which the preceptory of Torphichen was heavily involved in.

There may be another link, as this assemblage includes three vessels with no Scottish parallel. These are from one kiln and appear to be connected with the sugar refining process. However the first reference to sugar refining in Scotland is in 1619 and it is not until between 1667 and 1701 that it really takes off in Glasgow and Leith. As the Knights of Malta were planting sugar cane at Acre when it fell to the Saracens in 1291, and European sugar production was developed as a result of the Crusades, is it possible that if this industry was taking place at Stenhouse, specifically for the Knights of St John at Torphichen?

Although the start and finish date of these kilns is not known, vessel form and style suggest there was no material earlier than the late 15th century. The kilns ceased production prior to the introduction of Reduced Greyware fabrics like those made at Throsk. Stenhouse is important as it represents one of only two redware kiln sites investigated in Scotland. Now it is catalogued, we need to identify its products from other excavated assemblages.

A link between the pottery production centre at Stenhouse and the Knights at Torphichen is an intriguing subject for further exploration

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Part of a jug from Stenhouse decorated with a saltire cross



Pottery kilns at Stenhousemuir that were first exposed by sand quarrying in the mid-1950s and were further investigated in 1978 have been re-examined and published by SUAT Ltd, commissioned by Historic Scotland, in *Medieval Archaeology* 45. The kilns resemble those from Rattray, Aberdeenshire and Colstoun, East Lothian, and may have held up to 50 vessels at a firing. Field notes suggest that these kilns had clay 'pottery floors', and fired daub present in this assemblage may actually be from such surfaces.

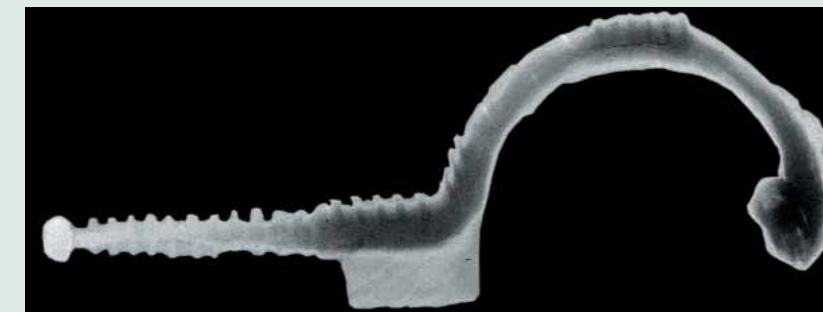
A VISIGOTH IN KENT?

Jörn Schuster, Phil Andrews and Rachael Seager Smith

Springhead in Kent is best known for its Roman temples, and work in advance of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link added tremendously to our understanding of Roman settlement there. Less prominent were two small Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and a single sunken featured building. But a new find poses new questions about cross-Channel links in the early medieval period.

Amongst pottery and bone in an isolated early Saxon pit was an unremarkable fragment of iron – until X-ray photography showed that it was a very exciting discovery, a 5–6th century iron brooch decorated with silver. The type, known as Estagel, is of Visigothic design, and is the only one yet known from Britain. The Visigoths were a Germanic tribe which settled near the Black Sea in the 3rd century but by the 6th century had migrated west and established a kingdom in southern France and Spain.

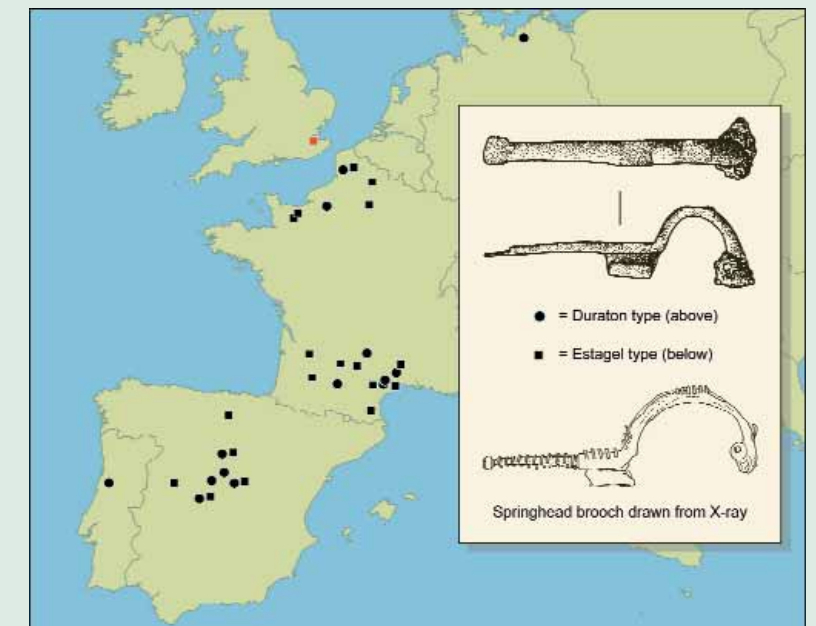
Springhead brooch before conservation



Kent was probably the most cosmopolitan region in Britain at this time, and in the last thirty years a number of objects of Visigothic design have come to light. Now the Springhead brooch, its importance transformed by the X-ray, adds to the evidence for links between the peoples of Kent and the small number of Visigothic groups known to have lived in northern France at the time.

Jörn Schuster, Phil Andrews and Rachael Seager Smith
Wessex Archaeology

This piece is published by kind permission of Union Railways (North) Ltd and Rail Link Engineering



Distribution of Estagel brooches. After Schulze-Dörrlamm and Koch

Life & chess in medieval

COVENTRY

Kevin Colls and Paul Thompson

Excavations in Coventry by Birmingham Archaeology have identified interesting glimpses into the city's varied past. The site, located within the city centre on Bayley Lane, close to the medieval cathedral and to the site of a castle founded between 1088 and 1147, is under development as an extension to the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. The excavation uncovered occupation dating at least to the 12th century, maybe earlier. As well as stone foundations for several medieval buildings, the excavations recovered some unusual finds including a rare, intricately carved bone chess piece. Jumping forward several centuries, the site also gave a personal insight into life in Coventry during the horrors of the Second World War.

■ Growth and decline

By the 12th century the town that grew up around the Benedictine priory (which had become Coventry's first cathedral) had gained considerable commercial importance. The excavation area lies just outside the original priory precinct. Dissolution of the monasteries and the decline in the wool trade during the 16th century caused economic stagnation in the city from this time up until long after the Civil War. It was not until the early 19th century that the city saw real economic growth again. Lack of growth at this time has been a factor in the survival of many medieval buildings within the city, along with good preservation of below ground archaeology, a point illustrated by this excavation, which uncovered remains of buildings probably dating to the 14th century, including an intact medieval cellar. One of the most unique finds recovered was that of a carved bone chess piece.

■ A medieval chess piece

The piece, most probably a King or Queen, is the first artefact of its kind to be found in Coventry. It was recovered from a small shallow pit that also contained pottery dated to the 14th century. The piece is 40 mm in height by 40 mm in diameter and is carved in Islamic style with ring-and-dot decoration forming crosses repeated three times around the sides. The inverted 'V' shaped motif indicates a throne stylistically. Chess pieces are

difficult to date and medieval examples range from the 11th to 14th century. The location of this find, in the heart of the medieval city, reflects the importance of the wealthy who had time to indulge in board games in the 14th century. There are comparable examples of Kings or Queens from London, two from Milton Keynes, one from Habrough, South Humberside and two from Salisbury.

■ And a medieval cellar

The remains of a number of 19th century buildings were identified, some incorporating the foundations of medieval structures. One medieval cellar was retained and reused during construction of new properties, and survived intact. Coventry, and in particular this area, was heavily bombed during raids in 1940 and 1941, and the cellar was backfilled with debris from the bomb-damaged house above. Within this debris was a host of household objects and personal effects lost during the bombings.

■ Savings under the bed and other relics of bomb damage

The most interesting collection was recovered from the decaying remains of a tin box. Contained within were not only the internal workings of a clock and remains of a wristwatch, but also hundreds of pre-war pennies. It was also noticed during excavation that the box was beneath a number of bed springs. Close by, 1930s bottles were recovered together with a small porcelain sink from a dolls' house. After investigation into the electoral role of 1939-1940, ownership of the house was traced to Albert and Elsie Radford. Happily, they survived the war and moved to another street in Coventry. To complete the story, relatives of Albert and Elsie visited the site and climbed down into the cellar, as they may have done as small children.

The excavation was sponsored by Coventry City Council, through the Herbert Museum, and the chess piece and the wartime memorabilia will be key objects on display in the new History Galleries of the Herbert Museum in Coventry, due to open in 2008.

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Museum Archaeology Officer,



The 14th-century chess piece. Photograph: Graham Norrie



Excavating the medieval cellar



Excavating Bayley Lane - 19th houses over medieval buildings



Excavating Bayley Lane, heart of medieval Coventry. Photograph: Mike Hodder

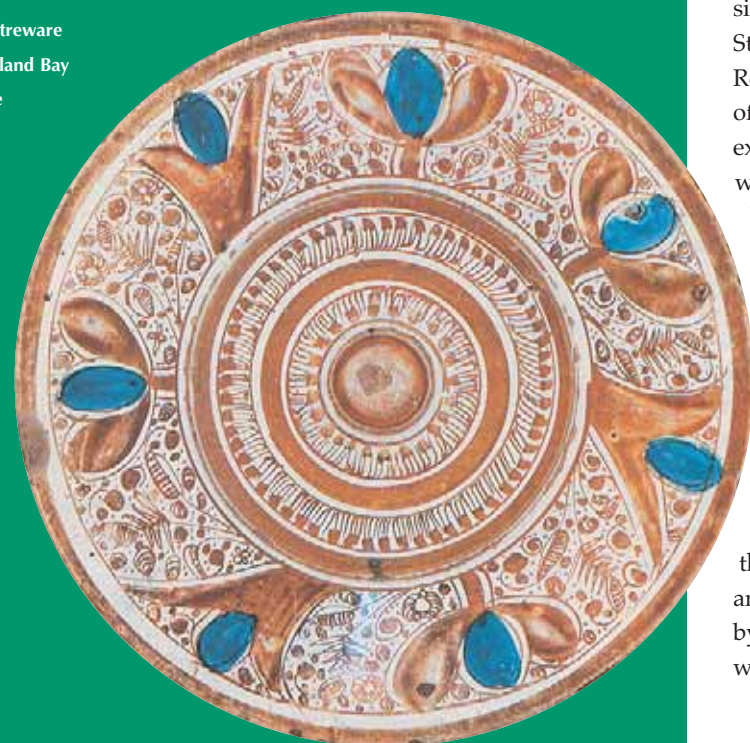
Medieval wrecks and maritime assemblages: *new responses to old problems*

Jesse Ransley and Julie Satchell



Lifting a wrought iron gun from the Studland Bay wreck (Poole Museums)

Seville lustreware from Studland Bay site (Poole Museums)



Maritime archaeology's past, its somewhat outsider status and the familiar vagaries of funding streams have affected work on many medieval shipwreck sites and assemblages. Two prime examples are Studland Bay (off Poole in Dorset) and Yarmouth Roads sites (off the Isle of Wight). Both were centres of significant and productive underwater excavation projects in the 1980s and early 1990s which stopped abruptly when funding dried up, leaving archives and assemblages vulnerable.

Progress at Studland

Studland Bay wreck has recently become something of a success story. Identified in 1984 and reported to Poole Museum, the wreck is believed to be a lightly armed, carvel-built, Spanish merchantman dated around 1520–1530, and has unusually good preservation of both finds and hull structure (at more than 22m long this is one of the largest surviving hull sections of an early oceanic vessel). Volunteer groups guided by Poole Museums' staff undertook collaborative work on the site. Finds included the earliest

wrought iron gun from an archaeological context in the UK, breech blocks, the walnut foot and leather flapper of a pump, welted shoes, rare examples of straw matting, boxwood combs, an ointment canister, beech book cover and pottery including Seville lustreware. Nevertheless, nine years of excavation ended in 1992 when Poole Museums' funding was reduced and plans for publication ended in 1998 when project funding ceased altogether. The wrought iron gun was stranded at the Royal Armouries in passive storage and all work on the site looked as if it would be undeveloped. However, in 2003 English Heritage commissioned Bournemouth University, with Poole Museums, to undertake archive assessment in advance of full publication. The monograph is due early in 2008.

A Spanish merchant vessel?

In contrast, the archive from the Yarmouth Roads wreck is in limbo. Discovered in 1984, fieldwork was sustained and rewarding until funding ceased abruptly in 1989. Among artefacts were intact pottery jugs, pewter plates, a bone comb, bronze pestle and cannon, all of which dated the wreck to the 16th century and suggest a Mediterranean origin. Large for the period, at c. 30m long, the site may be the Spanish merchant vessel *Santa Lucia* wrecked in 1567. The assemblage has been curated by the Isle of Wight Museums Service, whose willingness to accept maritime archives is quite a rare occurrence. However, the material and documentary archive has not been fully interpreted, publication has not been completed and the potential of the 1980s work remain unfulfilled.

Shipwrecks and museums

Though work on the Studland Bay archive is proving a valuable model, there is a need for new responses to old problems. These shipwrecks, two of only 42 sites designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act (1973), are indicative of larger problems facing medieval maritime finds, assemblages and archives. There are currently no formal procedures that provide a route for such material to be deposited in a museum, and assemblages are dealt with on an ad-hoc basis. To provide parity with excavated terrestrial collections would require identification of a recipient museum and dialogue between archaeologists and curators to set standards and conditions of acceptance prior to excavation.

In addition, there is a vast, largely unquantifiable, source of information from maritime finds recovered by divers or trawled from the seabed by fisherman and reported to the Receiver of Wreck. This situation has parallels with chance discoveries and metal detector collections on land. However, marine



Bronze pestle from the Yarmouth Road wreck (Isle of Wight Council – Island Heritage Service)

material is often hard to accession appropriately, and there can be a distinct lack of archives related to these finds. Even when a receiving museum can be identified, information has no natural route to archaeological researchers or a maritime HER.

Maritime collections policies?

There is a need for a coherent approach to maritime collections policies and to question the current tendency to 'cherry-pick' maritime assemblages as if they were unrelated collections of curiosities. Of course, where there is a maritime collections policy, museums will only take representative samples – there are only so many musket shot that any museum can sustain. However, the underlying problems of splitting collections prior to interpretative work, lack of archival records and apparent inertia about engaging with maritime sites at all, remain.

As more sites are discovered through development control and increased awareness of the marine historic environment, it is vital that archaeological, curatorial and museums professions engage in this debate. Without a sound, long-term strategy, maritime collections will continue to slip through the net.

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Imported pottery found inland: a discarded assemblage from Oxford, dating to the early 17th century. Anglo-Netherlandish dish, Rhenish stoneware beer mug, tankard and a rare flagon with 'cut glass' decoration, Surrey Border wares for serving at table, a north Italian Ligurian maiolica bowl and the neck of a Rhenish stoneware flagon. Ligurian products are almost unknown from excavations away from ports. Photograph: Jane Inskipp and Anne Holly © Maureen Mellor and University of Oxford, Ashmolean Museum

Medieval pottery – Europe-wide

Clive Orton

A principal recommendation of the Mellor Report (*Medieval Ceramic Studies in England: a review for English Heritage* 1994) was 'to establish a national list of production centres, recording the whereabouts of the finds, references to publications, or the current state of work'. A project to do just that was set up at King Alfred's College Winchester (now University of Winchester), designed and managed by Chris Gerrard, undertaken by Phil Marter and funded by English Heritage. For details see <http://www2.winchester.ac.uk/mppc/>.

Working across Europe

This project aroused much interest, not only in England but across Europe, and it was felt that, since ceramics do not respect national boundaries, a similar project on a pan-European scale would be extremely useful. A working party was inaugurated at the European Association of Archaeologists conference in St Petersburg (2003), followed by round-tables in Lyon (2004), Cork (2005) and hopefully Krakow (2006). A workshop in Oxford in 2005, with participants from 15 countries, agreed the structure of a research design for the project.

The Consortium furthering the project is led by the Medieval Pottery Research Group under the aegis of the European Association of Archaeologists, and includes UCL Institute of Archaeology and the Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford. I submitted a bid to the EU's *eContentplus* programme for a two-year project, *Ceramic Production Centres in Europe (CPCE)*. Belgium, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Scotland and Wales are partners in the bid, and Albania, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Russia, and Spain have expressed interest and may join later if the bid is successful.



Imported pottery found in ports: a range from Southampton dating to the late 15th century. Low Countries tripod cooking pot, north Italian maiolica jug, jug in Beauvais double-slipped sgraffito, Saintonge chafing dish, Florentine maiolica dish, Raeren stoneware beer mug, cup in Tudor Green ware, Beauvais green-glazed dish and a bowl in Valencian lustreware. Photograph: John Lawrence © Southampton City Museums, Southampton City Council

This was my first experience of bidding for EU money, and not one that I would like to repeat. As well as a large master application, I coordinated partners in each country completing their paperwork. A blank box anywhere would have meant instant rejection for the entire project, and some potential partners had to withdraw because they could not get their information together in time. They will be able to join later, but without EU funding.

Five-language database

The aim is to create a five-language (English, French, German, Italian and Spanish) web-based database of pottery production centres across Europe, for AD 400 to 2000, linked to a suite of maps. The data will be extracted from records held digitally across Europe, with limited new collection to fill gaps. They will be entered into a field structure already established and tested in England. This prototype format provides a research resource of pottery production from domestic to industrial, and by expanding the geographical spread it will log the distribution of similar products on a Europe-wide canvas, and thereby chart continent-wide historic patterns of trade, as well as of crafts people, techniques and ideas. The database will be illuminated by country-specific narrative texts, highlighting recent discoveries and research.

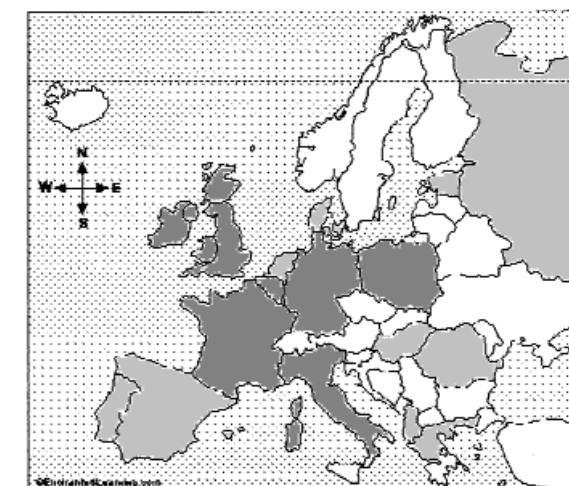
and pottery thesaurus

Data-collection will create one research post in the UK (based in Oxford and managed from UCL), and one in each partner country. The data structure is open-ended, so the project can offer a welcome to new partners. A secondary but vital objective is to create a five-language thesaurus of archaeological ceramic terms relating to production centres. The resource will be aimed at social and economic historians, students

and teachers of design and technology, practising potters, collectors, arts professionals, social scientists and the informed public, as well as the core audiences of archaeologists.

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Delegates at the Oxford workshop 2005: Thanasis Vionis (Greece), Koen Degroote (Flanders), Marta Caroscio (Italy), Elvana Metalla (Albania) and Dries Tys (Belgium). Photograph: Marta Caroscio



Partner countries (dark shading) and prospective partners (light shading) (map courtesy of www.enchantedlearning.com)



A Saxon pitcher puzzle

Lorraine Mephram



A late Saxon wheel-made pitcher from Michelmersh, Hants. Photograph: Elaine Wakefield, Wessex Archaeology

Discovery of a late Saxon pottery kiln with part of its last firing still in place has prompted new work on one of the most common medieval finds.

Archaeomagnetic dating of the clamp kiln at Michelmersh, Hampshire shows that the last firings took place in the late 10th or early 11th century. Its products, after chemical analysis by Alan Vince and review of finds from a kiln excavated in the village in the 1960s, suggest that 'Michelmersh ware' was a ceramic tradition with a lifespan of two or even three centuries. Distribution of these wheelthrown pots is centred around Winchester and extends at least into Wiltshire and West Sussex. Well made jars, bowls and elaborately decorated pitchers were all produced. The jars and bowls were multi-purpose vessels, but the pitchers are something of an enigma. They have a capacity of over five litres, but their small narrow spouts were unsuitable for pouring. The small looped handles were simply stuck on to the vessel wall, leaving an obvious point of weakness. This would have rendered them largely impractical: their contents, if the pots were not just ornamental, are a puzzle.

Lorraine Mephram
Wessex Archaeology



Requiem: the medieval monastic cemetery in Britain

Roberta Gilchrist and Barney Sloane 2005

Museum of London Archaeology Service 273 pp £29.95

In *Requiem* we have a ground breaking work that must surely be followed by comparable analyses of other aspects of human burial. Through study of some 8000 British graves, most of them monastic, from 76 cemeteries dating between 1050 and 1600, with intensive use of art historical and written sources alongside straight archaeology, the authors set out to challenge assumptions around medieval burial. They examine cemetery organisation, preparation of the corpse, coffins, grave goods and furnishings, construction of the grave, associated burial rites, and visible monuments. Jewish burials are included, but not parish churchyards, except in passing or for comparison. There is discussion of present approaches to recording medieval graves and how they could be improved and simplified (eg by digital planning), and criticism of the lack of a national standard for allocating age categories at death.

The data is enlightening for the overall complex picture which proceeds, and fascinating for minutiae which is often contradictory to the perceived normality of Christian graves. There were complex rules governing entitlement to burial in consecrated land, with murderers, unrepentant adulterers, suicides and the unbaptised prohibited. Sometimes they use a distinct marginal area within the cemetery or are buried in an unorthodox position, eg prone or incorrectly oriented. Fear of the unquiet dead rising from the grave often governed strange behaviour. In one case people wanted to dig up and burn a body (as was apparently commonly done), but the bishop insisted a letter of absolution be placed on the chest instead, which worked as well. Tension between popular and official attitudes might also lead to more humane unofficial treatment, such as ignoring instruction to burying separately a baby and mother who died in childbirth.

Use of grave goods, mainly in monastic burials, is a surprising element. The 10th-century *Regularis Concordia* describes how monks should be buried in their habits and priests also with stoles, and

archaeology occasionally bears this out. One example was a monk excavated with a black woollen habit over linen, with a cowl and leather shoes. Nuns have been found with greenish stains on skulls, from pins holding a headdress. The Bishop of Lincoln's will specified full episcopal dress but, interestingly, a plain version he had kept specially for burial. This economic use of symbolism can be seen in chalices accompanying priests, for these were usually pewter (forbidden in church), or even of wax. Lay people also, especially royalty, could wear rich clothing and regalia like any prehistoric potentate. Artefacts with healing or amuletic properties included jet and amber, crosses, shells, pebbles, staves and papal bullae.

There is an online database organised by ADS associated with this volume, and a printed gazetteer of the 76 cemeteries studied. All in all, *Requiem* is essential reading for anyone involved with medieval burials, and is thought-provoking too for those dealing with other periods.



Stained glass roundel from Leicester. Note the small cross that will be buried with the shrouded body, and the disturbed bones from an earlier grave

THE LONDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVE AND RESEARCH CENTRE

Roy Stephenson



Work experience students changing silica gel

The London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) was created at a time when the Museum of London was swamped by ongoing storage and curation crises. Our store was packed with non-standard storage containers, inaccessible by archaeology staff, curators or researchers. Visionary thinking by John Shepherd and Hedley Swain and huge effort by staff, plus Heritage Lottery Fund money, created the LAARC as it is today.

Part of the Museum of London's Department of Early London Collections, LAARC holds the finds and records from over 5000 archaeological interventions from Greater London. There are four main but interlinked foundations blocks to its endeavours, linked to the MoL Group strategic objectives.

■ ACCESS AND LEARNING

Open days are always linked to other events, 'piggy backing' existing marketing arrangements such as National Archaeology Day, London Open House or Heritage Open days. LAARC has participated in A-level archaeology days, schools outreach and most importantly the Shoreditch Park community excavation. This excavation and LAARC went

naturally hand in hand. The location, staff drive and enthusiasm created an opportunity for the local community to take a pride in its place, and opinions from visitors rarely were other than astonishment or excitement. The Shoreditch template will be used in summer 2006 both in Shoreditch Park and at a site in Tottenham, in partnership with Bruce Castle Museum.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is also funding an Archive Volunteer Learning Programme, an opportunity for potentially socially excluded people in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham to volunteer for a variety of tasks, in return being equipped with skills which can be applied to job seeking in general, even to beginning non-typical entry into the heritage job market.

■ RESEARCH

Although LAARC staff are not currently engaged in in-depth research of the collections, they facilitate research for a variety of students, and links have been established with many colleges. New dialogues are underway with Sheffield University, Queen Mary's College, and the University of Hertfordshire, in addition to arrangements with the Institute of Archaeology, Birkbeck College, Kings College and Royal Holloway College in London. The HEFCE funded 'Archive Archaeology' project based at the Institute of Archaeology is an essential conduit to undergraduates, and attendance at LAARC sessions became a core portion of the archaeology course in 2005/06. The overarching 'London Biographies' project continues to raise interest in academic quarters, and LAARC deals with over 500 enquiries a year, from primary school projects to post-doctoral research.

■ COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Collections management and curation are core to LAARC's well-being. Issuing in the region of 300 site codes per annum should mean deposition of 300 archives per annum, but currently this is not the case and archaeological contractors need to increase their quantity and quality of deposition. The quality issue is addressed by deposition guidelines, with a greater emphasis on the curation of digital archives. Ultimately LAARC will seek Digital Preservation Coalition Certification.

Rationalisation of the collections is essential to the long term viability of the archive, and the London archaeology community needs to consider getting away from the current preservation by record and moving towards preservation by sample. In addition we need debate about how and when data is deposited, as new technology impacts on the working lives of archaeologists. This brings LAARC around to its role as a leader in archaeology, within the professional sphere and to local museums and archaeological and historical societies.

Sustainability should also become a new watchword – sustainability in terms of preserving data produced by archaeologists in London, and the knowledge acquired by specialists over the years. Due regard too will be made to environmental sustainability, with full compliance to the Museum's environmental policy.

■ LEADERSHIP

Pragmatic cost effective solutions are required in many parts of the country to cope with the increasing archives being collected. The Museum of London's solution is LAARC, a regional depository but moving beyond a box store to a centre for academic research and ultimately an agency for social change. The concepts and methods are there for others to emulate or adapt. Archaeologists and museum professionals across the UK and abroad seek inspiration here.

Major issues therefore are to

- make collections and archival information more accessible to a wider audience through a 'digital warehouse'
- review and redefine archaeological research frameworks and enhance research opportunities
- rationalise the extant collection, resolve issues associated with deposition of archives, and manage existing and potential backlog issues
- recast the public benefits of archaeology, bringing a stronger multi-disciplinary approach to interpreting and communicating knowledge about the archaeological heritage.

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Engaging local schools in excavations at Shoreditch Park



Range of ages washing finds together on an open day



Volunteers repacking artefacts

OBITUARY

John Wymer MA, DSc, FBA, FSA, MIFA 129, who died in February aged 78, was a world renowned expert on Lower Palaeolithic archaeology. During a lifetime dedicated to the study of the earliest human traces, he made innumerable important discoveries in England and abroad. Equally at home with academics or those with little knowledge of the subject, he generated a huge interest in the most remote episodes of human history. His interest began when he accompanied his parents on visits to gravel pits where, amongst the Quaternary sediments, flint implements and the bones of extinct animals were found. At the age of 27, at Swanscombe, he found part of the skull of a fossil hominin, a discovery which remains the oldest human cranium from Britain. In 1956 he was appointed to the staff of Reading Museum, continuing his search for Palaeolithic implements in the Quaternary sediments of the Thames. The research led to *Lower Palaeolithic Archaeology in Britain as represented by the Thames Valley*, 1968. In 1965, he was recruited to direct excavations in South Africa, including Klasies River Mouth, where a stratigraphic sequence more than 25m thick spanned the entire Middle and Late Stone Age. Amongst more than 250,000 stone tools there were human bones. One of these, 100,000 years old, was at the time the World's oldest specimen of *Homo sapiens sapiens*.

John returned to England in 1968 to excavate key Palaeolithic sites, including Clacton, Hoxne and Ipswich. In 1979–80, as Senior Research Associate at the University of East Anglia, a brief period allowed for research resulted in *The Palaeolithic Age* (1982) and another monumental regional survey, *Palaeolithic Sites in East Anglia* (1985). As funding for the university posts finished John turned to digging sites of later periods in Essex and then Norfolk, working for Norfolk Archaeological Unit until 1990.

From 1991 he began a hugely ambitious project to relate every Palaeolithic discovery in Britain to its relevant geological deposit, and on the basis of these relationships to interpret the early presence of people in Britain. The project was sponsored by English Heritage and organised through Wessex Archaeology. In six years John amassed the requisite details and with help from Wessex Archaeology, notably Phil Harding, visited almost every site and significant museum collection in the country. The



John Wymer and a hand axe, during his country-wide study of Palaeolithic sites and collections. Photograph: Elaine Wakefield, Wessex Archaeology

output comprised detailed regional reports which could be used by mineral operators and planning authorities to tell them of the potential importance for Palaeolithic archaeology of different Quaternary sediments. In 1998 the work was distilled into *The Lower Palaeolithic Occupation of Britain*.

Well past retirement age John was actively involved in fieldwork and its publication, with examples of his work appearing in *Current Archaeology* and *British Archaeology* even in the month he died. Throughout his career he was also a lecturer, secretary or editor for many archaeological societies. He had been President of the Quaternary Research Association, Chairman of the Lithic Studies Society, Vice-President and President of the Prehistoric Society. He was one of the great archaeologists who will be much missed.

Andrew Lawson

Members news

David Jordan MIFA 1995 has now joined the staff of the Institute of Archaeology at the University of Bern to develop research and teaching in geoarchaeology. He hopes to maintain the core of his research in Britain while helping the Institute develop a new focus on archaeological science. David has been a



David Jordan

geoarchaeology consultant for more than twenty years, including three years peering down holes in Scotland and six working on geophysics and radiocarbon dating at English Heritage. He is looking forward to getting to grips with some of the key questions which commercial practice kept on throwing up but never allowed the time to address. He will be delighted to collaborate in research with colleagues in Britain where the opportunity arises and can still be contacted through terra@terra.plus.com

Paul Wheelhouse MIFA 2553 has recently joined Golder Associates (UK), specialist in ground engineering and environmental services, as their Senior Archaeologist. He will be responsible for co-ordination and project management of archaeological work, principally in the UK and Europe. Before joining Golder, Paul worked for twelve years for Archaeological Services WYAS (Senior Manager), co-ordinating projects

throughout the UK. He was co-director of archaeological excavations at the A1(M) Holmfield Interchange at Ferrybridge and co-author of the recently published monograph.



Paul Wheelhouse

RAO News

IFA's latest Registered Archaeological Organisation is **WSP Environmental**, part of the WSP Group, one of the world's leading environmental consultancies. The archaeology team, led by Sally Randell in the Basingstoke office, is involved in projects throughout the UK and internationally. A current and major project is Northstowe New Town at the former RAF Oakington in Cambridgeshire. WSP Environmental prepared the Environmental Statement in support of a planning application and has been managing the phases of geophysical survey (Oxford Archaeotechnics) and trial trenching (Cambridge Archaeological Unit) since 2004. The 2005 evaluation revealed a significant number of archaeological sites largely dating from the Iron Age/Romano-British period. Another phase of evaluation is planned for this year.

For further information contact Sally Randell, Principal Consultant, WSP Environmental Ltd, Mountbatten House, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 4HJ sally.randell@wspgroup.com.



Sally Randell

LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I agree with Andy Howard that the English Heritage Geoarchaeology guidelines are an excellent addition to the series but I think his review raises an important question. How much do we expect the professional archaeologist to know about the soil?

Many excavation staff tell me they know too little about the soil they dig. This isn't good for archaeology. In particular it means that sites are recorded too mechanically, without sufficient interrogation of deposits and with too little insight into the processes by which they form. The result is that our records are less rich and informative than they should be. It also weakens the rest of the profession. A knowledge of geoarchaeology provides a key context for other disciplines, from pollen analysis and artefact conservation to geophysics and air-photo interpretation. Almost every archaeological specialist has reasons to know about the soil. Some professional units employ specialist geoarchaeologists, to very good effect, but this isn't a gap that such specialists alone can hope to fill. While geoarchaeologists can pass on their knowledge in the field there are still far too few of them to make much difference. There is so much soil and so little time.

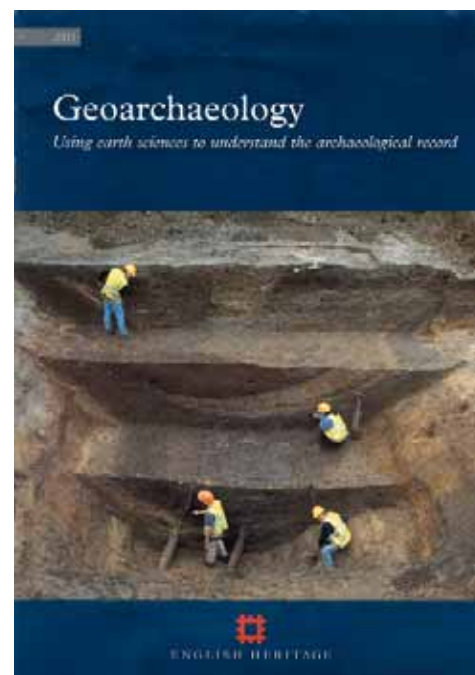
I've been concerned about this for many years so last autumn I contacted the departments teaching single honours archaeology and asked how many hours of geoarchaeology teaching their undergraduates attend. Of the sixteen I managed to get hold of four teach none at all, six teach two hours or less, four teach up to six hours and only two substantially more. Some departments provide longer courses for those who choose but these are a small minority. Thus nearly all our graduates – the core of our profession – have less than a day to be taught about the intricacies of landscapes and soil which many will then be expected to spend years trying to unravel. No wonder they feel ill prepared.

I have no doubt that every specialist will consider inadequate the amount that undergraduates learn about their own discipline – but the soil is everybody's business and a few hours looking in a lecture theatre is hardly preparation for a working life spent immersed in the stuff.

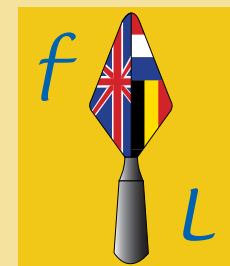
So I agree with Andy that the EH guidelines must

not become a substitute for real skills and experience. Until every archaeologist is armed with a working knowledge of our landscape and its soils our records will remain impoverished. The national agencies, IFA, CBA and universities have a duty to raise our expectations and promote the professional training which this will require every excavator to receive.

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EH geoarchaeological guidelines: an excellent addition to the series, but no substitute to full understanding



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