

Antiquity

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Editorial

THE present and past Editors of ANTIQUITY have often said sharply critical things about provincial museums in France and elsewhere, and it was pleasant and gratifying on a recent brief visit to western France to see how good the museum at Les Eyzies now is, and to be able to report the complete transformation of the Musée of the Société Polymathique du Morbihan at Vannes. We once described this as a disgraceful charnel-house. Now it is entirely rearranged with new cases and new lighting and M. Rollando and his associates are to be warmly congratulated. The labelling still remains to be brought into the contexts of contemporary archaeology, but the material, at least, can now be very well seen: and what a renewed excitement it is to see grouped together the magnificent polished stone axes of rare materials—rare objects of rare stone to accompany the ceremonial life and the special burial of rare people. We thought of those rare people as we embarked at Larmor-Baden on a French coastguard cutter with MM. Giot and L'Helgouach. We are unlikely to visit Gavrinis again in a French naval vessel, particularly one flying the Union Jack, but we record for the benefit of ordinary travellers that there is now built a special quay on the south side of the island so that it is easy to get to this superb and magnificently decorated megalithic tomb either from Larmor-Baden or Locmariaquer. We looked, sadly, as we passed, at Ile Longue: privately owned, inaccessible even to specialists, and falling into decay. The French *must* take steps to stop this decay, make the monument public, restore it. It could be another great

tourist attraction in the Morbihan: but that is unimportant; what is important is that this privately owned, collapsing monument is, or was, on a par with New Grange.

And it was a special pleasure to see Font de Gaume again. It has been, and there is only the French word for it, *amenagé*. The whole place has been cleaned up and re-lit in a most imaginative and interesting way, and in the process of this work many new prehistoric paintings and engravings have been found, including some remarkable bison. Lascaux is still closed and there are rumours that it may never be open again to the general public. Rouffignac however remains open and is a specialist tourist attraction, what with its little trains and the varying views held about the authenticity of its art.

There can be few serious prehistorians alive today who have any doubts about the false nature of Glozel. This was of course not so in the twenties and for a while the archaeological world was divided, as it now is about Rouffignac. Professor Dorothy Garrod was one of those involved in quarrels over Glozel in 1927 and we print here her recollections of the affair (p. 172). The *Encyclopédie des Farces et Attrapes et des Mystifications*, edited by F. Caradez (Président-Général of the A.F.E.E.F.A.) and N. Arnaud (Chancellor of the I.F.F.A.) is a most entertaining and valuable book (Paris, Pauvert, 1964) with a good section on archaeological *farces* and *attrapes*, ranging from the Cardiff Giant through Glozel and the Tiara of Saitaphernes to the Kensington Stone, Bill Stump's Stone in the Grave Creek Mound, and the

Ateliers FRADIN & C^o
 SOCIÉTÉ A RESPONSABILITÉ TRÈS LIMITÉE

REPRODUCTION D'ANCIEN
 Spécialité de Préhistorique Paléo & Néolithique

CÉRAMIQUE AVEC OU SANS INSCRIPTIONS
 GRAVURE EN TOUS GENRES, PIERRE ET OS
 (Cupules, Signes rupestres, Plaques, Bâtons de Commandement, etc.)

ORGANISATION DE FOUILLES
 CRÉATION DE STATIONS & DE FONDS DE CABANES
 INSTALLATION D'ABRIS & DE GROTTES
 MISE AU POINT

...⇒ GLOZEL (Allier) ⇐...

portable dolmen sold in the Lorient tombola. The Glozel section is full of interest and records the touristic exploitation of the site by hoteliers who built a *Restaurant des Fouilles* and served *un Thé de l'homme des cavernes*, and by Felix Potin who made 'briques néolithiques' in marzipan. It also records the fact that on 25th September 1927, M. Vergne, director of the museum at Villeneuve-sur-Lot, surprised by a storm at Glozel, took refuge in a disused stable on the farm, and there discovered the tools used by the sculptor, and half-carved schist pebbles. The article reprints a prospectus circulated by E. Miguet and we are happy to give further circulation to this brilliant satire by reprinting it here.



There is never anything which refreshes a European prehistorian so much and so confirms him in his purpose of studying the pre-Roman past of Europe as a visit to any Scandinavian country: here one feels that however old-fashioned the display may be in some museums—and the National Museum in Copenhagen is in need of radical reform from the point of view of display—the spirit of the proper study of the material remains of the past is everywhere manifest. The main Aarhus Museum is moving

out to the new centre of prehistoric and proto-historic research at Moesgaard, a ten-minute drive from the centre of the city; but there will remain in the centre, a stone's throw from the magnificent cathedral, the excellent museum built under a Bank to perpetuate and preserve and illustrate the excavations made in the centre of the city after the war. This is a model of what should be done in the centre of a city to explain to all what was found and how it relates to the present day.

The Roskilde ship museum is going to be one of the finest of the many fine museums in Scandinavia. It is on the edge of the harbour and the windows look out into the sea: the five ships are being assembled there now and the museum will be opened in December. Looking at what is being done at Roskilde, and visiting the Ladby Ship near Odense, we wonder, as every visitor to these sites must wonder, whether the right decision was taken about Sutton Hoo. Might it not have been wiser, immediately after the war, to rediscover Sutton Hoo, and encase it in a glass box such as had happened at Ladby? Had this been done in 1946-8 we would have had Sutton Hoo as a permanent tourist attraction which might well have produced visitors in very great numbers and money from admission fees, guide book and postcard sales

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which would have produced monies enough to subsidize the publication of the excavation report, now considerably delayed, and fresh research on the whole area.



Fieldwork in Denmark has its pleasures and difficulties, its hazards and its compensations. After a day of climbing in and out of most of the remarkable collection of megalithic tombs on the Rosenfeldt estate in South Sjaelland, we were taken by our hostess, Hofdam Kontessa Waby Armfelt, to the far western end of this lovely estate to see the enclosure where live two bison and their friend and mentor, an old cow called Olga. Countess Armfelt had not been to see them for 18 months, when she had found them charming and tame. We climbed the 6 ft.-high palisade and wandered around looking for these creatures. On the crest of a hill some 300 metres from the fence we paused and saw in the distance Olga and two bison. The bison looked large. They were: they were now fully grown. 'Are they friendly?' we asked in a tentative way. The bison provided the answer: heads down, they began to charge us. No one said, 'Stand your ground: they are only curious.' We ran for the fence, protecting ourselves for brief moments in clumps of trees, the bison waiting on the other side. The Production Editor of *ANTIQUITY* wanted to climb a tree but was urged on to the fence: when she was only a few yards away from it she heard heavy stertorous breathing and the tramp of pounding feet and thought that the bison had caught her up. There was nothing to do, she said, but turn round and open her umbrella in the face of the beasts who, surprised, might give her a moment to make the fence. She turned—only to find that it was the Editor who was responsible for the breathing and heavy tramping; the bison were a few yards behind. The gate was made, but looking back through the fence at the bison now only a few inches away, and Olga, laughing naughtily in the background, one was able to recollect, in that moment of post-action tranquillity, what brilliant artists Palaeolithic men were.

We have recovered from the bison chase,

but we will never recover from our visit to the holy rag tree. It was a particularly good/bad day to visit it. A cold rain blew across the roads, the sky was dark, and what was needed was schnapps and an Elephant or FF Festival in a warm *kro*: but no—inexorably the car was driven into a muddy lane which led into a dark wood. When the road ceased to be *carrossable* we walked on and on: the wood became darker, the track muddier and the air colder. The trees joined overhead and we were overwhelmed by the sense that comes in an ordinary wood, a sense of being surrounded and out of the world. But this was no ordinary wood. We turned up a side-track—one not indicated in any way as special among many side-tracks—and, not having been informed of the nature of the exercise, wondered what was happening. In a sudden moment there was a clearing in the trees, and there, in the middle of the clearing, was a very tall tree with a hole in the middle, and everywhere were offerings of rags—and rags varying from dirty handkerchiefs to silk stockings. We were, it might be said, in the presence of a mystery. We were actually in the presence of heathendom, of pre-Christian religion and magic. We realized as one cannot realize when looking at a dolmen or a rune-stone that we were suddenly, only a few miles from a main road, in pagan Scandinavia, and that the present was the past. We glanced nervously around the circle of wet dripping fir-trees and out of the gloom for a brief moment the faces of Iorwerth Peate and Estyn Evans and Hadrian Allcroft and Hilda Ellis Davidson seemed to come and go, while the day-owls that hooted distantly were certainly Du Chaillu and Hector Chadwick. Here surely, alive in Denmark, is the sacred clearing in the trees which must lie behind those archaeological manifestations of this magico-religious life which in Britain we call our henge monuments. When we try to make alive sites like Arminghall, Avebury and Stonehenge, let us remember the dark Danish woods.

Dr Thorkild Ramskou mentioned the South Sjaelland 'holy tree' in an article in *Skalk* several years ago (*Skalk*, No. 2, 1960, 18) when he

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drew attention to the fact that heathendom was still alive in spite of the great words of Harald Blue Tooth a thousand years ago that he had 'made the Danes Christian'. In his article, Ramskou compared the Danish tree with La Pierre de Saint-Martin at Pitres, a holy stone from heathendom adopted by the Church. Here a wooden cross is erected in front of the stone as a special support for the rags and bits of cloth. Ramskou adds that at Pitres there is also a money box for the benefit of the parish church. What a brilliant symbiotic relationship of pre-Christian and Christian religions (see Jean Fournée, *Enquête sur le culte populaire de St-Martin en Normandie* (Paris, 1963, 182)).

Two years ago the Copenhagen newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* published an article on the holy rag tree, and a few days later (the date of the issue was 13th June 1966) published an interview with a woman 90 years old. She said: 'When I was a little girl I began to be crooked. I could neither walk nor stay upright, and I was given up by the doctors. But, fortunately, my mother, who was a courageous woman, did not give up hope. She went to a wizard, who read an incantation over me, and then advised her to take me to the "rag oak". We were living in a poor house not far from the tree. The wizard thought that someone had wished me bad luck when, playing with other children, I had passed through a window without going back the same way. My mother took me to the oak, and drew me through the hole in it, and we left behind some of my clothes on the branches. Once we were back home my mother plaited a string as the wizard had told her to do and, for the next few days, I spat through it every morning while my mother read incantations over me. I remained in bed for some while after our visit to the wood. Then I began to crawl and, in one sudden moment, I found I could walk. I am still a crooked person, but ever since that moment I can jump about like a cat. I have no doubt it was because of my visit to the holy rag oak.'

The living past must not be destroyed so neither *Skalk* nor *Berlingske Tidende* (and certainly not ANTIQUITY) will reveal the whereabouts of this living prehistoric shrine. Indeed

we could not find it again without the expert guidance of one of the five Danish archaeologists who know where it is. Its existence poses the same problem as was revealed recently in a broadcast by the Opies on children's tag-rhymes. Some are in the standard books, others are the earthier ones sung only in the playgrounds ('Eni, Meni, Mina, Mo; Put the baby on the po . . .'), while a third group, among other things, count in Celtic like the shepherds count. To explain this is to kill it. Long may the country folk of Denmark go to their rag oaks in a clearing in a dark forest as their ancestors, and ours, went to circular clearings in non-existent woods like Woodhenge. Long may the country children of southern England count in ancient British.



Mr David Butler, who, in addition to being accountant to the Antiquity Trust and Antiquity Publications Ltd, has a keen interest in the Isles of Scilly and their archaeology, sends us this note on the new museum at St Mary's opened in July 1967 and containing collections illustrating the history of the islands from Neolithic times to the present day:

The need of a museum to reflect the history of the Islands had been recognized for some time as much material had, of necessity, gone to museums on the mainland.

In 1962 it became of greater urgency following the discovery of a Romano-British site on the island of Nornour. The finds from the excavation, many of which are now displayed in the museum, included nearly 300 bronze and bronze/enamel brooches of the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, pipe-clay figurines and Roman coins and beads.

The Isles of Scilly Museum Association was formed in the same year and organized summer exhibitions of local archaeological and historical material, in temporary quarters, from 1963-6.

The museum, built by the Council of the Isles of Scilly, is leased to the Museum Association, who have equipped it and who organize its running by voluntary staff. Considerable help and encouragement in establishing the venture has been given by the Duchy of Cornwall, the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, the Area Museum Council for the South-West and a generous benefactor—Mr K. Leach.

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To those interested in the life and history of the Isles of Scilly there is much in the museum to study; the exhibits cover a wide range of items in chronological order of a geological, archaeological and historical nature, including reference, of course, to the most recent finds by divers, probably from the 1707 wreck of *The Association*, last year. Two interesting private collections have also been lent. First, the Bird Collection from Tresco Abbey, and second, various 'folk' items from the Gibson collection. There is also a collection of shipwreck photographs of great interest, dating back to the last century.

The centre-piece of the museum, and in fact the building was designed with this item in view, is a fully rigged six-oared pilot gig built in St Mary's in 1877, which underlines to the visitor the hardiness of the Islanders in times when the title 'Fortunate Islands' was perhaps not as appropriate as it is today.



A history of the Ordnance Survey is being prepared at the moment. Anyone who has any special information or documents relevant to this history is asked to write to Mr R. A. Skelton of the Department of Manuscripts and Maps in the British Museum. The chapter in the history on the Survey in relation to Archaeology and History is being written by C. W. Phillips. Incidentally it is to be noted that the Survey has moved, and that from the latter part of June its address is: *Ordnance Survey, Romsey Road, Maybush, Southampton, SO9 4DH.*



From the Scandinavian Section of the Department of Germanic Languages in the University of California, Los Angeles, Professor Erik Wahlgren writes, apropos of what we wrote (ANTIQUITY, 1968, 2) about the new finds of allegedly genuine Runic stones in America:

Thank you for your flattering reference to my Kensington effort of ten years ago. . . . As for Harrek and Tollik or whatever, one would dearly love to encounter them in some authentic habitat. But I fear that Scandinavian philology will not hasten to legitimize them. Landsverk

promises to show us presently that the Vikings reach Yucatan. We may hope that he has cryptograms to prove it. Cryptograms are the final court of authority for all problems of world history. . . . The names Harrek and Tollik are drab compared with Landsverk's *tour de force*, the runemaster OIRVAR VALRSLETHN. I have proof mathematical that O.V. was a man from Mars. A Scandinavian he most certainly was not. The much delayed March number of the *American-Scandinavian Review* contains a review of the cryptogram book by David Kaplan, author of the recent book, *The Codebreakers*. Kaplan's key sentence is 'In my view the work is utterly without value. . . .'



ANTIQUITY notes with pleasure the honours which have been given to two of its Advisory Editors and three members of the Antiquity Trust. In the last few months Sir Mortimer Wheeler has been made a Companion of Honour and a Fellow of the Royal Society, Professor Max Mallowan has been knighted, and Elsie Clifford awarded an OBE. One of these well-deserved honours prompts a question. When was there last an archaeologist, *sensu stricto*, who was a Fellow both of the Royal Society and the British Academy? Is the answer Sir Arthur Evans?



A correction we are happy to make. We said in the last number that the Celtic Art exhibition proposed for the Edinburgh Festival had been cancelled. That was true when we wrote, but now is not. The Celtic Art exhibition has been reinstated and will be part of the 1970 Edinburgh Festival. This is indeed excellent news.



At the annual meeting in June of the Council for British Archaeology, Mr Paul Johnstone, Head of the BBC's Archaeological and Historical Unit, gave a clear and cogent statement of the benefits which archaeology can get from television and the benefits which television gets from archaeology. This symbiotic relationship can do nothing but good if it has sensible, informed people working together from both

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sides. Mr Johnstone spoke sharply of the ill-informed and irresponsible attacks made by Mr Ian Blake in *The Guardian* and *The Irish Times* which culminated in his pompous declaration that 'the action of the Ancient Monuments Board in advising the Minister to agree to the Silbury dig is irresponsible. It appears to have shown insufficient regard both for the monument and for the proper archaeological education of the viewer . . . it has acquiesced in setting a bad example to the nation . . . the Silbury decision seems a very proper subject for a question in the House of Commons.' It is clear that Silbury is going to bring out all the odd boys from their lunatic fringes. Recently we received the following:

To Publishers Producers & Journalists.

The following announcement will appear very shortly in the Personal column of the *TIMES*:

Is SILBURY HILL the tomb of BELGIUS
Keltic Commander in Macedonia, 280 BC?

Are STONEHENGE/WOODHENGE Mace-
donian Peg-Calendars? Detailed evidence.
zs. 6d. R. M. Twist, St. Anthony, Portscatho.

The BBC is to spend £20,000 and take three years to excavate SILBURY HILL. The Professor in charge thinks it to be of 'Bronze Age' date.

Millions will follow the programmes: thousands will already have seen my announcement: some bought my synopsis.

Are you interested in my proof of 3rd cent date?

Of Great Historical Importance.

The BBC, which is spending £20,000 on the excavation of Silbury Hill, itself printed an air photograph of it (*The Listener*, 27th June 1968, 823) captioned: 'Flying saucer view of Silbury Hill. BBC-2 is busy digging there for archaeological treasure, but John Michell doubts whether they will find anything in what is for him not a burial place but "an obvious sighting mound" dedicated to the gods of the air.' This illustrates an extraordinary article by Michell on flying saucers, discussion of which seems to embrace every archaeological lunacy there ever was from the sacred tracks of Ireland to Mrs Maltwood at Glastonbury and

Alfred Watkins riding along his straight tracks in Herefordshire. John Michell's book *The Flying Saucer Vision* (London, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1967, 25s)—the subtitle is 'The Holy Grail Restored', should be read by all who find the comforts of unreason so comforting, and when they have finished it they should pause, drink a stiff Bloody William, and ask themselves whether their fringe activities are really archaeology.

When we have written off as crosspatch curmudgeons and cranks and crackpots the many who are writing rubbish about Silbury, we are left with the sad fact that it is far more difficult than many of us thought to educate the world to a fair and reasonable view of antiquity. Television helps, but often its existence merely highlights the horrors of failed communication. Recently in the middle of the North Sea an otherwise intelligent and informed man who was engaged in selling British goods to Denmark, and, apparently, very successfully, congratulated the Editor of *ANTIQUITY* on the excellent television programme he had done the previous night on Stonehenge. 'Yes', his wife joined in, and at this moment she was only on her second Dry Martini, 'it was lovely. All so clear.' The Editor drew himself up to his full five foot seven and a half inches, and said 'But it was a programme about Silbury Hill and I did not appear in it.'

Even our official tourist organizations let us down. France this spring and summer is full of gay coloured advertisements telling people to travel to Britain. The legend says, 'En Angleterre vous pourrez croire que la machine à remonter le temps existe réellement: vous verrez d'authentiques ducs vivre dans leurs châteaux (entrée 3 F environ), vous assisterez à Stonehenge aux cérémonies des Druides (entrée 1 F environ), vous entendrez le bruit des calèches roulant sur des pavés du 17e siècle (château de York, entrée 1.50 F environ)'; and the caption to the coloured photograph of Stonehenge says 'L'âge de bronze: à Stonehenge, ces pierres fantastiques, vieilles de 3,800 ans, représentent les vestiges des temples Druides.'

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Those horrid bogus Druids are always with us. Again this year with the connivance of the Ministry of Public Building and Works they cavorted in the midsummer dawn at Stonehenge before crowds of British journalists and American tourists who ought still to have been abed. Recently the students who so wickedly daubed Stonehenge with paint were heavily fined: not, in our opinion, heavily enough. But what about fining the Druids who annually daub Stonehenge with their confusion, and the Ministry of Public Building and Works which lets them go there?

But there is worse than bogus Druids. Towards the end of June when being interviewed by the BBC on the value of honey, Barbara Cartland declared that when the Phoenicians got to Britain they found the island inhabited by natives who were both handsome and all 10 ft. high and that it was well known that both conditions were due to their diet of honey! What fantastic nonsense, even far surpassing the extravagant claims of John Twyne, Samuel Bochart and Aylett Sammes, and they were writing 300 years ago and more.



Our comments on the Durrington Walls affair (ANTIQUITY, 1968, 86) have brought in much correspondence, all sympathetic. We quote from one, a letter from Mr Grant King of Little Cheverell, near Devizes:

Thank you for your vigorous comment on Durrington Walls. Many of us who live in Wiltshire and Wessex are shocked and dismayed at the lengths to which public servants—the ‘barbarians’ as you justly call them—will go in destroying our national heritage. This dismay is shared not only by local archaeologists, but by ordinary people who value the cultural and aesthetic qualities of our countryside.

Those of your readers who have not visited Wiltshire in recent months may be surprised to learn that a broad white embankment, perhaps 20 to 30 ft. high, has already been constructed across the middle of Durrington Walls, covering

two henge monuments and other ancient features, blocking the eastern entrance, and completely ruining the aspect of thecombe in which this unique Scheduled Monument rests. The Ministry boys and the planning officers have been enjoying themselves at our expense. The public will have to pay very dearly for very dubious advantages introduced stealthily, without warning, and without public comment, criticism, or consultation. It is a *fait accompli* and you will have to put up with it!

You may imagine that some vast new road system has been initiated at this point to feed the great M4 motorway in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, and Berkshire. We must be prepared to sacrifice something for the sake of the national drive to improve the transportation of our manufactures, and thus save our desperate, national economy.

But this surmise is not true. Enquiries made by the writer have elicited the fact that these ‘improvements’ in the Amesbury-Upavon road (the A.345) are not designed for so grandiose a scheme. The really important trunk road is being planned on the *east* side of the River Avon. The Wiltshire County Council, ably supported by the Ministry, propose mere ‘improvements’ on the *west* bank of the river to canalize some of the ‘commercial, industrial’ and other traffic going north into a quiet ‘Area of Outstanding Beauty’, namely, the Vale of Pewsey.

Three bodies, the Council for British Archaeology (Group XII: Wessex), the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, and the Newbury and District Field Club, have recently passed resolutions condemning the construction of the new road through Durrington Walls, and deploring the failure of public authorities (local and national) to consult independent scholars before taking such drastic measures. Amenity and other societies are considering similar protests.

The whole affair is outrageous: we have a privately hired ANTIQUITY tumbrel waiting for some of the shamateurs in the Ministries concerned. The centre of Durrington Walls might be a good place for the guillotine, except that it is a long drive from London. One doesn’t want to do all that knitting.