

Antiquity

VOL. XXXIX No. 154

JUNE 1965

Editorial

THIS is a year of many archaeological centenaries. 1865 saw the publication of Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times* (in which the words Palaeolithic and Neolithic were used for the first time), Tylor's *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, and Bonstetten's *Essai sur les Dolmens*. It saw Pengelly begin his work at Kent's Cavern, and the foundation of the Congrès International d'Anthropologie et d'Archéologie Préhistorique at Spezzia. Some of these centennial matters will be referred to in later issues of this journal this year; one centenary needs immediate discussion as the British Museum are arranging a special exhibition to commemorate it. It was in 1865 that Henry Christy died and that there was published the first part of *Reliquiae Aquitanicae*.

Christy was born in 1810, the son of William Miller Christy, who was joint founder of the hat-making firm of Christy and Co., and also of one of the earliest joint-stock banks. He went into the family business and in 1850 began to visit foreign countries by way of commerce and business reconnaissance. He began to collect textiles, and among them a piece of Turkish towelling which he saw being woven in the Sultan's palace in Constantinople. He thought this far superior to the towels then existing in England: Christys began weaving Turkish towels; they were exhibited in the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace in 1851, and Queen Victoria ordered some.

His interests in ethnography began to extend beyond textiles: he travelled in Scandinavia and in America, and it was in the spring

of 1856, as E. B. Tylor wrote in the first sentence of *Anahuac*, that the future Professor of Anthropology in Oxford 'met with Mr Christy accidentally in an omnibus in Havana'. It was a meeting fraught with great importance for the development of anthropology and archaeology. They travelled together in Mexico: and Tylor became imbued with a lifelong passion for anthropology. Christy became interested in the researches of Boucher de Perthes in the Somme; he travelled in France and met Edouard Lartet (1801-71), a magistrate in the district of Gers in the Pyrenees who abandoned the study of law for that of palaeontology, and through palaeontology came to prehistoric archaeology. He was digging in Pyrenean caves in 1860 and 1861 and Christy supported these excavations financially. In 1863 Lartet transferred his activities to the Dordogne, and here Henry Christy again supported him and worked with him. The major reconnaissance work in the Dordogne was carried out during the last five months of 1863 at sites in the valley of the Vézère such as Gorge d'Enfer, Laugerie Haute, La Madeleine, Le Moustier, and Les Eyzies—all now household words in archaeology. The results of the Lartet-Christy collaboration were published in articles in 1864, notably that on the Caverns of Périgord in the *Revue Archéologique* for that year.

They planned together a large and complete work on what they called 'the aborigines of Périgord' but were to meet with disaster in their project. Christy died in the following year. Edouard Lartet went on with the work

ANTIQUITY

alone; in his preface we find him writing: This work was commenced under circumstances very different from those under which it is to be carried on. The results of the researches in the Valley of the Dordogne, which the late Henry Christy ardently prosecuted, liberally providing for the cost, and combining his own active exertions and experience with the labours and counsels of friends, must now be almost wholly described by another pen than his own. He was carried off in the midst of his self-imposed and well-directed work, by acute illness, brought on by over-exertion on a visit to the Belgian Bone caves. . . . On his friend and fellow-worker, M. E. Lartet, falls therefore the labour of preparing a very much greater portion of this Work than was already contemplated. . . . A desire to fulfil the earnest wishes of his departed friend, and a true appreciation of the value of Mr Christy's researches and their results, urge M. Lartet to persevere in carrying on as far as is now possible the original intentions regarding this book. In this he is supported by the goodwill and aid of friends, glad to join him in carrying on a useful work which, though not so largely comprehensive as was once intended, will be a fitting and lasting memorial to the Energy, Liberality and Love of Science which originated its design, collected its materials, and furnished the means for its completion.

But Lartet himself was not to finish the work, which, as Professor T. Rupert Jones says in his preface to it,

again met with a sad and unexpected interruption from the death of M. Lartet and the Troubles of the French War. . . . Conscientiously and with loving care he fulfilled this melancholy, but congenial task, though much interrupted by ill-health and family affliction—until seriously invalided, and deeply afflicted by the disasters of his country, he retired from Paris in the dismal autumn of 1870 and was struck by Apoplexy at Seissan (Gers), January 28, 1871. Far too much of his great store of knowledge has gone with him!

Professor Rupert Jones took over the publication and it came out in 1875 under the title of *Reliquiae Aquitanicae; being contributions to the Archaeology and Palaeontology of Périgord and the adjoining provinces of southern France*. This great work which had been issued serially over a period of ten years contained a full publication

of the Lartet–Christy finds and general papers by several authors. John Evans assisted in the editing. It was not complete; Rupert Jones wrote, 'owing to the melancholy events above referred to, there will be fewer parts published than originally contemplated'.

The British Museum received Henry Christy's collections after his death, and now, from May onwards for three months, the Trustees have arranged an exhibition of part of this collection. The Christy Exhibition is in two parts: the Department of Ethnography are exhibiting mainly Mexican material relating to the publication of *Anahuac*, and the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities material from the Dordogne. We quote from a joint memoir on the exhibition produced by these departments:

Christy therefore may be called the godfather of the subject (*Modern Anthropology*) as he was also to some extent of Prehistoric Archaeology. . . . It . . . seemed best in the limited space available combining small displays to illustrate the two books of which he was, as it were, the midwife, Tylor's *Anahuac*, the first milestone in modern anthropology, and his and Lartet's *Reliquiae Aquitanicae*, an early milestone in Prehistoric Archaeology.

We are grateful to Mr Adrian Digby and Mr Gale Sieveking for allowing us to see a copy of this very interesting memoir in advance of publication, and to Mr John Christie-Miller for supplying us with information about his family and the Worshipful Company of Feltnakers of London, of which he was Master in 1956–7.



Lascaux is only a few miles from where Lartet and Christy were working in the Dordogne, but of course none of the painted and engraved caves had been found in their time. Font-de-Gaume and Les Combarelles were discovered over a quarter of a century after Lartet's death, and Lascaux only a quarter of a century ago. Now it begins to look as though this and perhaps other of the great relics of prehistoric Aquitania may disappear from public view.

EDITORIAL

Lascaux is closed and it may well have closed its doors to the general public for ever. We have already described some of the events in the history of this remarkable site which the Abbé Breuil called 'La Chapelle Sixtine de la préhistoire' (ANTIQUITY, 1963, 172). The site was discovered by accident in 1940 and after the end of the 1939–45 War was put in order so that it could be visited by the public. The public poured in to the extent of between 120,000 and 130,000 a year. To make conditions in the cave easier for the crowds—450 a day in the high season—air-conditioning was introduced in 1957. Three years later it was observed that a green mildew was appearing on some of the paintings: this *étrange moisissure* began to spread—and Lascaux was closed to the public. After 28 months of agonizing and intensive research the march of the algae, fungi, and lichens has been halted, and Lascaux is again free of its green mildew.

This story is vividly told in a brilliantly illustrated article in *Paris Match* for 2nd January 1965: here are colour photographs of the green growth on the 'Chinese' horse, and three photographs showing the progressive clearing away of the mildew, which was mainly by means of powerful antibiotics including the special 'Pochon cocktail' made of penicillin, streptomycin, and kerranycline. We must salute the painstaking, dangerous, and successful work of the Commission under its president, Monsieur de Segonzac.

And what next? It seems certain that there will never be again unrestricted access for the interested thousands. It has been suggested that a transparent tunnel of glass or some synthetic substance should be built through the cave, from which the public could see the paintings, illuminated for a very few minutes at a time. Another suggestion is to build a complete replica of Lascaux in the hillside nearby; people go to waxworks, but would they go to authenticated copies of cave paintings? The real interest of these two schemes for the future of Lascaux, both seriously proposed and canvassed, is that they are an indicator of the present difficulties felt about the preservation of the art we can now see which was made by

the Upper Palaeolithic hunters of from 30,000 to 15,000 years ago. For the trouble at Lascaux was not only the mildew which has been diagnosed and controlled; it was also calcification (the exudation of white crystals on to the surface of the rock), and the fading of the colours. *These dangers menace all surviving examples of Palaeolithic art.* No one now disputes that the paintings at Font-de-Gaume, discovered in 1901, are fading from year to year. *La maladie de Lascaux*, as the French Press calls it, has taught us to face a new and a widespread problem, namely, how to preserve Palaeolithic painting as it was seen when first discovered. It would be a curious tragedy if, in discovering Upper Palaeolithic cave paintings in the last century, we have arranged for their disappearance. We have faith that, just as the Segonzac Commission dealt with the *étrange moisissure* at Lascaux, the problem of fading can be dealt with in all painted caves. The last three generations discovered our most ancient artistic heritage, and we must preserve it—even if it means no public in any site at any time.



We publish in this issue an article by Professor MacNeish on Agricultural Origins in America. His article was commissioned some while ago, and we have been eagerly looking forward to it. Our expectations have been more than fulfilled. Of course many of his detailed facts have been published in specialist literature before, some of which he refers to in his notes, and many will have read his previous general account in *Science*. The value of the survey he has given us here is not only the factual and dated picture of the development of agriculture in the New World, but his clear statement of the concept of Neolithic Evolution rather than a Neolithic Revolution. Gordon Childe invented the phrase 'the Neolithic Revolution' in his *Man Makes Himself*, first published in 1936 and now reissued for what it was and is—a classic of archaeological literature. Childe was not much interested in the problem of American cultural origins, and it must be insisted that what we know about this problem

ANTIQUITY

now is vastly different from what Childe or anyone knew in the 1930s.

The prehistorians of the '30s and '40s were working to a model of the past which was, in its essentials, based on monogenesis and diffusion. It was not set in the extravagant terms made ridiculous by the excessive Egyptian claims of Elliot Smith and Perry or the excessive Mesopotamian claims of Raglan; but, for all that, it was based on the idea that the development of higher cultures, i.e. agriculture and city life and literacy, was something that happened once and probably in the most ancient near east of Europe, the most ancient southwest of Asia. Generalized in this way, the ideas so cogently argued by Childe were not so far away from the monogenetic ideas of cultural origins and diffusion adumbrated by 19th-century students of antiquity from Worsaae and Lubbock onwards. It was a modern, well-documented, well-argued version of the doctrine of *ex oriente lux*.

And as a model it served well. Its day is over. There must be few thoughtful archaeologists these days who believe that the problem of cultural origins is a simple (though it was never easy) choice between diffusion and independent origins. The 'Neolithic' in the Old World is a long and complex period of evolution with independent origins in many areas. This is the new model of thought that must replace our old unitary revolution. The great value of MacNeish's paper is that it shows us the multiple and independent origins of 'the Neolithic' in America. The great value of modern American archaeological studies is that they provide us with a new, accurate and well-dated framework for cultural origins in one hemisphere with theoretical implications that demand rethinking of all our accepted notions for cultural origins in the other. In reviewing, in our last issue (ANTIQUITY, 1965, 76), *Prehistoric Man in the New World*, Geoffrey Bushnell wrote: 'Some deductions . . . lead up to thoughts on whether civilization arose one or more times in the Old World, one or more in the New World, or perhaps once in the whole world.' It looks to us as though agriculture was invented many times independently in the world, and

that civilization came into existence several times—thrice in the New World, and perhaps three or four times in the Old: that it was not a discovery but a process of cultural evolution. This at least is a new model of thought which we hope to develop fully elsewhere later this year. The demonstration of the—at least—fourfold independent origins of what we conceptualize as 'agriculture' in America is one of the most important new facts in man's ancient history.



We welcome another new archaeological journal: *Analecta Praehistorica Leidensia*, produced by the Leiden University Press and a publication of the Institute for Prehistory of the University of Leiden. The first number (1964) is a slim 24 pages of calendered paper with in-text plans, diagrams and photographs. It is very attractively produced, and the first issue is entirely in English.* In his preface Professor P. J. R. Modderman writes:

Every institution concerned with archaeological fieldwork has the desire to inform its colleagues and others interested in such work about its investigations. Almost every excavation yields new information which can only fulfil its complete scientific purpose after it has appeared in print and become generally available. The Institute for Prehistory of the University of Leiden also proposes to make its contribution to the published sources. . . . The results of two excavations carried out under the auspices of this Institute are published in the first issue of the *Analecta Praehistorica Leidensia*. . . . To the *Analecta* . . . we extend our best wishes, with the hope that it will contribute to the improvement of

* In answer to a query from the Editor, Professor Modderman writes: 'The distribution to all foreign countries is by Martinus Nijhoff in the Hague, as has been arranged by the University Press of Leiden for all its publications. It is not my intention to make a new journal out of the *Analecta*, but it will be a means of publishing quickly everything ready for print. This will mean that it will be very irregular in time and in size. Sometimes one or more offprints will form a copy . . . As to language I can only say for the moment that it will not be in Dutch but as a rule in one of the three so-called modern languages. The price of the first copy is 4 Dutch florins, that is to say about 8 shillings at the moment.'

archaeological research and to cooperation among all those concerned with prehistorical studies.

We warmly applaud these sentiments. This first issue contains two papers, one by Professor Modderman himself, 'The Neolithic Burial Vault at Stein', and the other by G. J. Verwers, 'A Veluvian bell-beaker with remains of a cremation in a tumulus near Meerlo'. Both excavations resulted directly from the activities of Modderman as Conservator of the State Service for Archaeological Investigations in the Netherlands (the R.O.B.) at Amersfoort. Both are of great interest; we comment on the Stein burial vault because we believe it is of the very greatest importance. The site of Stein is in the province of Limburg and was excavated in June 1963 by the Institute for Prehistory of the University of Leiden. During the excavation of a Danubian settlement there was found the stone floor of an oblong burial vault 5.5 m. long by 1.75 m. wide, cut in the loess soil. It was thought to have been roofed by wooden beams set across the top of the trench; four post-holes found in the central section of this long grave defined a wooden structure of later date, but still within the main cultural context of the original burial vault. The human remains found in the tomb, now being studied in detail, consist entirely of cremations. The grave-goods included a collared flask, a coarse pot, numerous transverse flint arrowheads, bone arrowheads, bone points, animal remains and a flint axehead.

Professor Modderman dates this burial vault to the 26th century B.C.: no direct C14 dating was possible because of the contamination of the site with waste from the Danubian settlement. He, very properly, compares it with the similar find made by Madame Basse de Ménorval at Bonnières-sur-Seine (Seine-et-Oise). Bonnières-sur-Seine is one of the easiest prehistoric sites to visit; it is in the middle of the main street of the small town of Bonnières-sur-Seine, half-way between Mantes and Vernon, 71 kilometres from Paris on N.13. The site is a collective burial vault with no stone walls; it was published by Madame Basse de Ménorval in the *Bulletin de la Société archéologique, historique et scientifique de Bonnières-sur-Seine*,

1953, 17ff, and it has, we think, not been sufficiently appreciated for what it was and is—for all to see who stop and ask for the key in the fire-station. Modderman sets Stein and Bonnières in a general context, with the *allées couvertes* of northern France, and the *westfälisch-hessische Steinkisten*. 'Regional differences do indeed appear', he writes, 'but if they are not over-emphasised it is clear that our find as a whole forms an integral part of the cultural pattern of the peoples who inhabited Northern France, Belgium, South-Netherlands and Western Germany before the rise of the beaker cultures.'

But this pattern surely includes Denmark, the north German plain, and Poland on one side, and the British Isles and Brittany on the other. Professor Modderman's references to the Clyde-Carlingford tombs and to southern Britain can be revised and strengthened in terms of our new knowledge of the 'unchambered' or, rather, 'non-stone-chambered' long barrows of Britain. This new knowledge was summarized by Professor Piggott in the Second Atlantic Colloquium at Groningen in March 1963, when we heard for the first time an account of the Stein burial vault from Professor Modderman himself. This new knowledge must also be related to what has been published in these pages recently about non-megalithic long barrows (e.g. ANTIQUITY, 1965, 49), and to the discoveries at Wayland's Smithy, summarized, prior to full publication, by Professor Atkinson in this number (pp. 126-33). Here, in Wayland's Smithy I, in many of our 'unchambered long barrows', at Bonnières, and at Stein, we have a pattern of a funeral antiquity which has been hitherto neglected or not understood. This is why Modderman's Stein paper must be read and pondered by all interested in the spread of culture and the development of burial customs in the period 3500 to 2000 B.C. in Europe.

There was a time when we, in the British Isles, sought for the origin of our stone circles outside ourselves. We could not find it, and we now see, probably correctly, that the development of stone circles, culminating in that *hors de série* monument Stonehenge III, is something which was indigenous and started with

ANTIQUITY

wooden circles, or even with clearings in woods. Megalithic circles may be versions of megalylic circles. But if this is so, and with Stein and Bonnières in our minds, what about megalithic tombs? We have already referred in this Editorial to the doctrine *ex oriente lux* which was a model of thought that conditioned so many of us for so long. Let us throw away our models. Could it not be that there existed in prehistoric Europe between 3500 and 2500 B.C. a tradition of burial in long trenches with stone floors and wooden roofs, which, in areas where stone was available, turned into the stone-lined trenches of the Paris Basin and the surface *allées couvertes* of Brittany and Normandy, and was the tradition underlying the long barrows of the British Isles and Brittany? Here we should reread Mr Powell's comments in our pages in discussing the Dyffryn site (ANTIQUITY, 1963, 19).

But if this is so, if some of our long megalithic tombs in northern Europe are lithic versions of xylic tombs, what about the rest of them? If the Gallery Graves, the *allées couvertes*, are stone versions of long pit-graves roofed with wood (and they could be), what about the so-called classic European Passage Graves? Might they not also be lithic funerary versions of wooden dwelling houses, and was Oscar Montelius not so wrong (as we have all said he was), when, long ago (*Der Orient den Europa*), he published a plan of an Eskimo igloo in his discussion of the origin of Passage Graves? Could he have been right in a suggestion which he himself did not pursue? Could all our north European stone monuments be lithic versions of pre-lithic forms and owe nothing to the Mediterranean and the Ancient Orient? Could this be the reason why there are corbel-vaulted Passage Graves in Brittany dating from before 3000 B.C.?—a date well before any reasonable parallels can be found in the west or western Mediterranean.

It is a sobering thought, particularly in this centenary year of the Baron de Bonstetten's *Essai sur les Dolmens*. As these words appear in print we shall be pursuing the Baron in

Geneva: it would be nice if we could report on what his ghost, and for that matter the ghosts of James Fergusson and Montelius, think of us with our diffusionist model and our carbon-14.



Finally, news of a very interesting development in the training of workers in museums. The University of Leicester has decided to establish a Graduate Certificate in Museum Studies: the first of its kind in this country. In structure, the course will be similar to those that already exist in a number of universities for the training of archivists and librarians. It will be open to graduates of any university, will last one year, and will comprise three elements: the academic study of a main subject, instruction in the elements of museum administration, and a period of practical work in a museum. It is hoped to admit the first students in October 1966. Archaeology and geology will be the main subjects offered to begin with; but it is intended that others should be added before long, such as biology and the history of art.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation has made a grant of £15,000 to assist in the launching of the scheme, and the University has been closely in touch with the Museums Association in preparing its plans. A Director of Museum Studies is to be appointed forthwith. He will be responsible for the detailed planning of the course and for running it, in collaboration with the appropriate University Departments. It is hoped that he may also be able to stimulate a wider discussion of museums and the part they can play in education, in the broadest sense of the term; and that he will add to the literature of the subject.

This seems to us an admirable scheme and we give it our warmest support. The University of Leicester is to be congratulated on its initiative and enterprise, and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on its encouragement of another new project.