



BEWCASTLE CROSS: NORTH FACE. (See p. 436)
Ph. O. G. S. Crawford, 1936

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Editorial Notes

THIS is the 40th number of ANTIQUITY, which has now completed the first ten years of its career. It is an event of which we are justly proud, and we propose to celebrate it by describing how ANTIQUITY came into existence. Although there are still quite a large number of the original subscribers of 1927 left, there are also many others of more recent date. All, we think, will like to be told the inner history of a venture which has succeeded so well. It is necessary to do so mainly in the first person, since the idea originated in the brain of the founder (Crawford), though he was closely associated with his colleague (Austin) from the very outset, and it was Austin who suggested the title ANTIQUITY.



On 19 December 1925, I set down the main facts in the following words:— 'If the scheme to found an archaeological quarterly should succeed, it will some day be of interest to know its inception. The idea was my own, and was suggested by the excellence of the old ARCHAEOLOGICAL REVIEW published during the 80's and edited by G. L. Gomme. This contained, amongst other good things, Sir Arthur Evans's article on Stonehenge (1885), and it was to consult this that I referred to the Review. The idea, vaguely formed about the middle of November 1925, took more definite shape in discussing it (for the first time) with Dr Clay, with whom I was staying at Fovant

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19 to 25 November'. Further discussions with other friends took place during the weeks following. It is curious that at this early stage, though the need and functions of such a journal were quite apparent to me, I did not then see myself as the Editor, and even wrote that 'the question of an editor is the crucial one and as yet undecided'.



At Christmas I discussed the project with a non-archaeological friend who confirmed me in my opinion that I should not only have to edit but also to publish the journal myself. Neither publishers nor booksellers could offer, in return for a heavy commission, anything that I could not equally well obtain for myself. Moreover, I could concentrate my publicity efforts upon the archaeological public, which a publisher, with all his varied interests, could not be expected to do. On the other hand, if I were to take on this heavy responsibility, I must have a collaborator, who would have to be resident in the town where the journal was printed. By good fortune Gloucester contained both the man and the firm, both now well-known to readers of ANTIQUITY. On 8 February 1926 I discussed the project with Roland Austin and William Bellows at Gloucester. We each proposed titles, but without coming to any definite decision. Shortly after this, however, in a letter to me dated 14 February 1926, Austin suggested ANTIQUITY. This title fairly covered all the subjects I had jotted down in a list of projected articles; it was not exclusive and would cover those of historical and anthropological interest. The scope of the journal was to be the whole field of human history from palaeolithic times down to the modern period. Among the rejected titles were 'Origins' and 'The Archaeological Review'.



What I had in mind was to found a journal which would raise the general status of archaeology, and would popularize its achievements without vulgarizing them—in a word, which would take a place equivalent (both in form and content) to that already occupied by the monthlies and quarterlies in regard to public affairs generally. The main outlines of the evolution of human culture are now firmly established, and it was time that this knowledge should become diffused. But it seemed nobody's business to diffuse it. Here was a demand without a supply. I decided to meet it.

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Of the purely business aspect it is obviously impossible to give full details. The preliminary publicity required the expenditure of a comparatively small sum which was forthcoming. (This debt was repaid within a short time of publication, when future prospects were bright, and I take this opportunity of publicly expressing my gratitude to the generous—and by his wish anonymous—friend responsible). On 29 September 1926 another meeting took place at Gloucester, when definite decisions were reached, and 15 March 1927 was fixed as the date when the first number would appear.



Early in January 1927, twenty thousand prospectuses were posted, and on returning from abroad on the morning of Sunday, 16 January, six hundred postcards awaited me, each representing a subscriber! To carry out the project on the minimum scale then envisaged, it was estimated that at least 600 subscribers were necessary. Thus at one bound the objective had been reached. But it was clear that many more subscribers would be obtained during the next few weeks, both from abroad and from those who had not decided at once to subscribe. By the time the first number went out the 600 subscribers had more than doubled, for new ones were coming in daily. These figures, then so unexpectedly high, have long been surpassed, and now look small. Actually, on perceiving that the venture was going to succeed beyond my most sanguine expectations, its scope was at once enlarged accordingly, for plainly it would be possible to carry out a more ambitious scheme. What I had in mind at first was rather a *review* of current activities than a journal which would publish first-hand accounts of those activities. ANTIQUITY was to be critical rather than descriptive. But now it seemed possible to combine both functions. In fact, though the element of criticism has constantly been represented, chiefly in the form of review-articles, purely descriptive matter tends to predominate.



There was never much doubt about being able to get and keep my readers, once I was given a chance of showing them, by the publication of a few numbers, what could be done; but one of the chief difficulties I foresaw, and one which has never been entirely overcome, was to obtain the right sort of article. This difficulty was naturally greatest before Number 1 had appeared. The first number was not

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all that we could have wished, though it contained some good things. In actual fact we had to print every article then in hand, and when this was done nothing was left but promises to rely upon for Number 2. Since then, it has often happened that there have been only one or two articles in reserve after the publication of any given number. This causes occasional anxiety, but helps to keep the contents fresh and up to date, and never yet has the post failed to bring the necessary manuscripts.



Thus ANTIQUITY has the merit, if such it be, of not having overreached itself in the first number, like so many new journals which appear with a blaze of talent and die down rapidly to a feeble flicker of second-rate stuff. It would be very easy, but most invidious, to name the authors of those which the Editors consider the ideal articles! Nearly all have been asked for (most articles in ANTIQUITY have originated in a special request). The writing of some has initiated research that otherwise would never have been undertaken. Sometimes that research has ended in the production of an article admirable in every way, but too learned or too long for ANTIQUITY. Some proposed articles have eventually appeared as books! One of my first steps was to write out a list of suitable articles. It is in front of me now, and is headed 'Subjects for the Archaeological Review' and is dated 18 December 1925. There are 107 titles; of these 32 have been completely published at the end of our first decade. Several of the remainder have been printed elsewhere in a modified form or in another journal. The first title is 'Descriptive list of the earliest Iron Objects found'. The article which substantially deals with this subject was published under another title in the present volume. Patience and importunity are among the many qualities necessary in editing, and we still hope to obtain some of the seventy articles which we should like to print.



At first ANTIQUITY was published on the fifteenth of the month of issue, but we found that people thought it was always exactly a fortnight late, so we changed the date to the first of the month. Actually ANTIQUITY has always, without a single exception, appeared punctually on the appointed day, which must constitute a record. It is one for which all the credit must be given to my co-editor; what it has cost to

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achieve this, he and he alone knows, though echoes of the struggle sometimes reach Nursling. There are times when I wonder whether it would really matter, in comparison with the efforts involved, if we were a day or two late ; but I have held my peace, and the seemingly impossible has always happened. Long may it continue to do so.



Difficult as it has often been to obtain the right kind of article, we have somehow kept up the standard, and we shall endeavour to do so if in the years to come we are as well supported by archaeologists as we have been in the past. Here we will take the opportunity of asking them to send in more NOTES. These are popular with readers, but very hard to get. They should be about two or three pages (1500–2000 words) in length.



Our illustrations are, we know, famous both for their number and quality. Some are supplied by the authors of articles, though not always in a form suitable for reproduction. However, so long as we get *good* illustrations, we are content, if it must be, to go through the processes necessary to achieve that end. It is no exaggeration to say that, in a scientific journal, plans and illustrations are often more important than the text.



Finally, a word about circulation, the life-blood of every journal. Only by constant and unremitting work can the circulation of ANTIQUITY be maintained. The inevitable wastage that every journal has to face is a serious and ever-present anxiety. We have to get new subscribers by our own efforts, though we owe much to those of our friends, who have been extraordinarily helpful in this way (we have one such particularly in mind). We beg of them to continue so. We have achieved our ambition of ten volumes, but we do not intend to rest upon our laurels. Until the day comes, as inevitably it must, to hand over the control to another generation, we shall do our best to produce ANTIQUITY on the same level of achievement as in the past decade. We welcome criticism, but we also ask for the help that can so easily be given—help in the form of additional subscribers ; of prompt fulfilment of promises of articles and reviews ; the early return

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of proofs, and payment of subscriptions. The onerous duty of editing can be greatly lessened by such small things as these. Neither of us can give his whole time to the work ; if we could, we should perhaps be able to improve its quality. But we must not end with a petition, but rather with an expression of sincere and heartfelt thanks to all our readers and contributors—including the faithful band of Reviewers who have given ANTIQUITY a very high standing in this respect—without whose willing cooperation it would never have been possible to reach the FORTIETH NUMBER.



In deference to the feelings of our subscribers we refrain on this special occasion from adding the usual annual exhortation, and content ourselves with the insertion of the form which gives the information so necessary for our existence.