

ERAS News

EAST RIDING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY,

No. 95 APRIL 2021



Multiple earthworks at Wan Dale, East Yorkshire Photo: Alison Spencer

*Local News ~ Prehistoric Soc. Notes ~ Wolds Entrenchments ~ Book Page ~ FFWAP Award
E. Yorkshire Geopark ~ Obituary ~ Museum Curating in Lockdown ~ Mesolithic in the NW~*

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>Local News</i> | 3 |
| <i>Prehistoric Society Zoom Conference Summary</i> | 4 |
| <i>The Work of a Curator in Lockdown</i> | 7 |
| <i>'Entrenchments' at Wan Dale</i> | 8 |
| <i>FFWAP, Winner of the Marsh Award</i> | 10 |
| <i>Obituary for Val Hebblewhite</i> | 11 |
| <i>Book Pages</i> | 12 |
| <i>Membership Renewals</i> | 13 |
| <i>Odds and Ends from the editor</i> | 13 |
| <i>New Mesolithic Sites in the North West</i> | 15 |

Comments or contributions are always welcome.

Send to Newsletter Editor, Kate Dennett,
455 Chanterlands Ave. Hull. HU5 4AY
Tel. 01482 445232 katedennett@katedennett.karoo.co.uk

Other enquiries to the secretary
Richard Coates
8 Chestnut Ave. Beverley HU17 9RB
coates8@coates8.karoo.co.uk

To join or renew membership see form on last page, or go to the website.

To enquire about your subscription status contact
Colin Parr, 32 Woodgate Rd, Hull. cparrateras@outlook.com

www.eras.org.uk

Follow us on facebook

Send us a tweet @eastridingarch

ERAS is REGISTERED CHARITY No. 500878

ERAS LOCAL NEWS . . .

Virtual lectures

We are pleased that we have been getting 60+ people viewing each of the monthly on-line lectures and many more have linked up via our website. We even have new members in the USA. We do want to return to having real lectures at the university as soon as possible, but the committee is looking at the possibility of live recording these in the future, as it would seem to be very popular.

Excavations at Kipling House Farm and Brough

Peter Halkon is hoping to do a fourth and final excavation at Kipling House Farm in August this year, all things being well. Hopefully, there will also be a further dig at The Burrs in Brough in July, where a Roman Festival is planned, with all sorts of events, including an ERAS stall. If you are interested in taking part in either excavation, contact Peter on a.p.halkon@hull.ac.uk

Obituary - Enid Waudby

Friends and acquaintances of Enid Waudby, a staunch supporter of ERAS will be sad to hear of her death, from cancer, in late 2020 after a relatively short illness. Enid was brought up, with her sister, on a farm near South Cave, before launching on a teaching career which took her to Germany and then to the south of England. She specialised in teaching and caring for children with special needs and maintained an interest in her pupils' progress and welfare long after they had left school. When Enid retired and returned to the area to live with her parents, who had by then moved to Beverley, she joined ERAS and volunteered on surveys and occasionally on excavations. I noticed that she never resented the fact that she couldn't commit to volunteering full time, because she was caring for her elderly and blind mother, but simply gave of her time, cheerfully and efficiently, as and when she could.

Because there was no opportunity to assemble for a funeral, friends have said they would perhaps like to get together on Beverley Westwood, later in the summer (or whenever it is Covid-safe) just to walk, and talk for a short while, in Enid's memory. Contact me if you are interested in joining us.

New committee members

We have several members interested in joining the committee and pushing ERAS on into the future. It's great that younger people are wanting to be involved and we hope to be able to hold an AGM

in September, even if it has to be by Zoom. In the meantime, John Deverell and Nathan Berry have been co-opted onto the committee so they can be part of planning for the future.

Toward a GeoPark for East Yorkshire

ERAS member Richard Myerscough is the geology specialist chairing a campaign looking at the possibility of gaining UNESCO Global Geopark status for East Yorkshire; he supplied the following information. A large interdisciplinary working party consisting of local authorities, regional universities, societies (including ERAS) trusts and individuals has already been established and is researching in a wider context about how best to proceed. The uniqueness of the area is based primarily on its classical geology as the most northerly outcrop of chalk overlying the famous Mkt. Weighton Axis, but it also includes an internationally significant archaeology, varied landscapes and associations with the Doggerland area. The working party is cooperating with those already seeking to designate the area as one of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Richard is wanting to enrol a treasurer/fundraiser and a Webmaster to set up a website.

Our Next Publication

As notified in our previous newsletter, Vol. 18 of our major journal series *East Riding Archaeologist* is still in preparation and will be a monograph.

Rod Mackey Prize for Archaeology Fieldwork

As Hull University is no longer offering archaeology as a degree option, the committee is considering what to do about the annual award ERAS had established in memory of Rod Mackey, for the best fieldwork project in the second year of the BA course. Various options are being considered, including offering it to another Yorkshire University, offering it to a wider group, or offering an annual grant for a non university-based fieldwork project. The main object of the prize was to encourage high quality of fieldwork, rather than written work, but standards need to be monitored without creating too much work for the committee. Watch this space.

Book sales

Remember that joyous pastime of mulling through the bargain book stall at lectures?— yes, real lectures! The treasurer has reported that our online sales of ERAS volumes are doing well but we have a build up of second hand history/archaeology books donated by members and we will get back to running the bookstall at lectures as soon as we can.

Editor

Prehistoric Society Conference by Zoom
Danes Graves: a story of two antiquarians on the Wolds

Dr Melanie Giles, University of Manchester

Summarised by Valerie Fairhurst

Most ERAS members will have heard of the Mortimer brothers and Canon Greenwell: sometimes collaborators, often rivals. Melanie Giles' talk made a suitable introduction to a recent online conference about the barrows of the Yorkshire Wolds, particularly the 'Danes Graves'.

There were investigators of mounds on the Wolds even before Greenwell and Mortimer: by Thomas Dawson and Thomas Kendal in 1849-50 (and possibly by others in 1721, see Stead. I. 1979. *Arras Culture*. Yorkshire Philosophical Society: York) though no records of findings survive. Members of the YAC had recognized the importance of 'square' barrows at Arras, Skipwith and Thorganby Common by 1855 (Harrison, S. 2010. *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 20(1): 38-48). Originally, the 'Danes' Graves were thought to be of Scandinavian origin, confirmed by an unidentified 'learned Norwegian'.

It was Canon William Greenwell who started the major series of excavations in 1864 with 14 barrows at Danes Graves, followed by at least a further 125 in East Yorkshire between 1865 and 1870, and in the late 1880s, but he failed to uncover many finds. The Mortimers visited the Danes Graves excavations and John Mortimer criticised Greenwell's methods, arguing that his own techniques were more methodical. This started a long-running conflict between the two: Canon William Greenwell, the well-connected scholar; and John Mortimer, the agricultural merchant of humble birth and little education. Greenwell described Mortimer as a scoundrel and a rascal, which encouraged further public criticism, countered by a letter from Mortimer in 1867, complaining of Greenwell's lack of skill and his inefficiency.

John Mortimer, assisted by his brother, Robert, re-excavated Danes Graves and continued to survey and dig upstanding field monuments. By 1869 Greenwell was no longer active in the immediate region, but between 1863 and 1911, the Mortimers excavated at least 296 Neolithic and Bronze Age barrows and a number of Romano-British and

Anglo-Saxon cemeteries. John Mortimer's work was carefully organised and advanced for its time and, unlike others, he left detailed notes and drawings, at least some of the latter made by his sister, Mary (until her early death) and later by his daughter, Agnes.

The chariot burial at Danes Grave is the only double burial with a chariot and included other features that we now see as common in Iron Age burials. Contrasting concepts of a civilised Iron Age culture and an invading Arras culture grew. The famous Lady's/Queen's burial at Arras, excavated in 1876, and including a mirror and chariot furniture, some of which has been described as 'dainty', perhaps spoke of peaceful settlers, though Mortimer considered the Arras culture as an invasion and would doubtless have been encouraged in this belief by the later discovery of an iron sword.

In 1887 John Mortimer became bankrupt, partly because of the agricultural decline and partly due to self-funding his many archaeological investigations. In 1892 John's brother, Robert, died. There was something of a reconciliation between John Mortimer and Canon Greenwell and, with the death of the landowner in 1897, permission for excavation was again granted, though Mortimer became more reliant on others for funding.

Mortimer's collection of around 66,000 well-documented items from barrow excavations, plus thousands of surface artefacts was housed in the Driffield Museum, which he funded, but with his bankruptcy, it had to be sold. A question at the end of the talk asked what became of the collection. Melanie Giles replied that the sale was never resolved in Mortimer's lifetime, but the collection was eventually bought by the acquisitive Thomas Sheppard of Hull Museums.

A question was also asked about the significance of the presence of iron pyrites. Melanie said that iron pyrites could be carried as a 'strike-a-light', but it may also have had some importance locally..

Melanie Giles gave the followings references:

Graves, C.P. 2005. Canon Greenwell and his contemporaries: the history of British archaeology in the 19th and early 20th century.

Harrison, S. 2011. John Robert Mortimer, the Life of a 19th century East Yorkshire Archaeologist. Blackthorn Press, Pickering

In writing up this talk I have been helped by:

Harrison, S. 2009. *A Local Hero: John Robert Mortimer and the Birth of Archaeology in East Yorkshire*, *Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* 19(1)

V. J Fairhurst

Tracing Mobility at the Edge of the Wolds

Derek Hamilton (Glasgow University)

Summarised by Valerie Fairhurst

Derek Hamilton spoke about the use of stable isotope dating, with particular reference to the recent Iron Age finds in and near Pocklington.

This is complex science and more detail can be found in *ERAS News No. 54*, where you will find an explanatory article by Paul Brayford and a summary of an ERAS lecture given by Dr Mandy Jay. I also used: Jay, M. and Montgomery, J., (2019) 'Isotopes and chariots: diet, subsistence and origins of Iron Age people from Yorkshire.', in *The Arras Culture of Eastern Yorkshire - Celebrating the Iron Age*. edited by Peter Halkon, published by Oxbow Books and Durham Research Online

There are a number of chemical elements which can be analysed in skeletal remains and which have isotopes whose relative values may tell us something about the diet of the individual or where they lived. For example, strontium ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) relates to the age of rocks on which food plants were growing and this is often combined with oxygen isotope ($^{18}\text{O}/^{16}\text{O}$) data, which are related to water sources and climate. $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ values can indicate food groups with different positions in the food chain: plants, fish, herbivores and omnivores. Different rocks have different $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ levels, but they cover a wide range of values. (A point about terminology: it is the ratio between the rarer isotope and the common form that is measured: for sulphur this is $^{34}\text{S}/^{32}\text{S}$, and is usually expressed in parts per thousand. This ratio would be written as $\delta^{34}\text{S}$).

It is important to analyse animal bone from the burial location in order to produce a baseline for the environment, and this was possible at the recently excavated Pocklington Iron Age burial site.

Derek Hamilton explained that different parts of the skeleton give results for different parts of the human life cycle and not all parts can be assayed for all isotopes: strontium and oxygen can be

obtained from tooth enamel, which is formed during childhood, and therefore take their isotope ratios from food and drink consumed within that period, whereas the collagen in bone marrow is renewed during a lifetime, though to a different degree in different bones. This can be very useful for discovering if an individual has lived in more than one region. The collagen from a femur will reflect an averaged lifetime diet, though probably influenced more by adolescent years, whereas rib collagen is turned over more frequently, so the isotope data from a rib bone could give evidence for the geology on which food was grown and consumed at the end of the person's life.

The Burnby Lane site at Pocklington is located on the Triassic rocks of Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone, whereas Wetwang Slack is on the chalk. When different bone and tooth samples from individual skeletons on the Burnby Lane site and 'The Mile' were analysed, the results clearly indicated that people had moved between the chalk of the Wolds to Pocklington and vice versa. Derek Hamilton showed the $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ results in a graphical form for a number of individuals. One male, for example, aged as between 18 and 35, spent his childhood on the Pocklington geology, but moved away, probably in his mid-teens. He potentially returned to the Pocklington geology in the decade prior to his death, as the femur has a $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ value considerably different from the tooth while the tibia appear to have equilibrated to the values of the local geology.

A possible difficulty with the Pocklington site is that the very feature which makes geologically affected isotopes useful in determining mobility - that it is so close to a boundary between two rock types - also introduces the possibility that food animals could be moved from one region to the other, thus giving an incorrect location for the consumer. The speaker said that this was unlikely in the Iron Age, but there are indications that the situation was different in the early Medieval period, though that research is yet to be completed.

Valerie Fairhurst

There were more than 240 participants at this online conference, from which two of the presentations have been summarised (above). It was well chaired, with the opportunity to comment or ask questions, but of course those personal contacts which are so useful and valuable at a traditional conference were missing, especially as delegates were not on camera. I have attempted, below, to pick out a few relevant points from the other presentations K. Dennett (editor)

Dominic Powlesland stressed the huge and alarming increase in plough damage which was now occurring. Always meticulous in traditional recording, yet also at the forefront of IT and digital recording, it was interesting to hear Dominic's support of photogrammetry software to aid archaeological excavation recording. In 3D scanning, the large amount of data produced may sometimes be unmanageable to process, but with care the optimum can be worked out. It is very useful to be able to print out an image on drawing-film, to be annotated later on site, combining traditional and modern methods. Dominic also commented on the high quality of records produced by drone photography.

Alex Gibson, who carried out a 'paperless' digitally recorded excavation of Duggleby Howe in 2009, commented on problems with the records from Mortimer's researches. Some of the labelling is not precise and in the local archives there are boxes of cremated bone deposits, labelled simply '*from the Wolds*'. One of Mortimer's favourite section drawings never existed as a physical section, in the ground, but was constructed from notes taken during the excavations. So although Mortimer was a much better record keeper than many of his day, there are still problems. Discussing those Wolds barrows which had a deep pit at the centre, which may have taken over 100 years to fill up, Alex pointed out that we can never know how many times these barrows were dug into and what or how much was removed, every time something was added.

Prof. Duncan Sayer, in a well illustrated talk, asked whether the Anglo-Saxons, in reusing ancient burial mounds, were aware of the earlier central burial. He thinks, on balance, that they were, as many of the AS burials were in an approximately circular formation pointing in towards the centre. He considered the possibility that Anglo Saxons were also making their own small burial mounds which have not survived in the landscape. By categorising, diagrammatically, by sex and date, what appear to be flat cemetery burials, some appear to be arranged in circles, possibly indicative of placement in a small mound. Professor Sayer also showed ongoing work on diagrammatic analysis of the position of weapons within a grave. In summary, he favoured locally varied traditions of burial ritual, with possible gender groupings.

Sophie Adams

In a talk titled *Up Close and Personal with the People of the Wolds*, Sophie Adams looked at the classification and dating of Iron Age brooches and

showed some spectacular photographs. She is currently working specifically on brooches associated with skeletons which have been ¹⁴C dated, particularly from the recent excavations at Pocklington. Also using stable isotope data, she found that a female from the Pocklington site, buried with a brooch of later type, had always lived in the area, but her brother in the same cemetery appeared to have lived elsewhere and moved back later in life. The cross-headed design of a rivet used to repair one of the Pocklington brooches could indicate a connection with other parts of the UK where this design is also seen. The question of the position of a brooch in a grave and its relationship to its purpose was also considered. Most of the Pocklington brooches were on the upper body, but those in other positions might suggest use as a shroud fastener. Commenting on the lack of wear evidence on some examples, Sophie speculated that brooches might not necessarily have been subject to everyday handling. For example if a brooch was holding a cloak together, the cloak could have been pulled over the head without undoing the brooch.

Other talks were given by Dr. Peter Halkon, Neil Redfern (Director of CBA) and archaeologist and artist, Rose Ferraby. It is only the patchy quality of my own notes and Valerie Fairhurst's notes which dictated my choice of the summaries given above. Many thanks to Valerie for her help with this article.

Overall, this was a good conference and well worth the effort of mastering Zoom procedures. At the end of the day, I would have liked a summing up of the key points of information which we are still lacking in studies of the Yorkshire Wolds as an archaeological landscape. I might add that there are some linear features which can be followed for several miles across the landscape, and look very much like archaeological features, but which are, in fact, natural geological faults. It is hoped that if the initiative for establishing Global Geopark status for the area (see page 3) is successful, more publicity might be given to the origin of these linear features of the Yorkshire Wolds.

A Curator's Life in Lockdown

Paula Gentil, Curator of Archaeology, Hull Museums

The Hull and East Riding Museum has been closed since the start of the initial Covid lockdown in March 2020. But behind-the-scenes work has continued apace.

Our 2020 Festival of Archaeology was all planned and the re-enactors booked for July, but of course, this had to be cancelled. Undaunted everyone rallied round and produced a brilliant series of films for us. Alison and Hugh's Handmade Things created videos about spinning and dyeing, leather-working and wood-working; Graham Taylor of Potted History gave us a film about medieval potting techniques, while Dante Ferrara played a series of medieval songs and tunes on various replica instruments. The crafting content was augmented by a series of curator talks, by Alice Rose and myself, on subjects such as medieval timber buildings, shoes, pilgrim badges and pottery from the displays.



Alison, of Alison and Hugh's Handmade Things, demonstrating drop-spinning

Consequently we were able to deliver a full 'Medieval Festival' online through our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube channels as well as the Humber Museums Partnership website. These channels reached a far wider audience than the normal on-site events – a Facebook post about the medieval dye vat from Eastgate, Beverley receiving an incredible 17,328 views! Crafting videos are

clearly very popular, and received rave reviews while the video of Dante playing the hurdy-gurdy was the most popular on Youtube!



Dante Ferrara and his hurdy-gurdy

Although an online experience can never match the chance to chat to a re-enactor in person, they proved a boon during the early days of what was to become a very long lock-down.

As part of Hull Museums Curator's Choice programme, I recorded a series of audios on medieval highlights from the gallery and have recently branched out into Egyptology with a film about the 4000 year-old model boat from Beni Hasan on display in Hands on History. Together with children's craft activities, re-enactor videos and Curator's Choice segments from around the Museum Service these can all be accessed at www.youtube.com/hull_museums.

As well as creating content for various online strands I have also been working on the re-display of the Medieval Gallery. Researching and writing text panels and labels for this re-vamp has filled my lockdown summer! With restrictions easing, we will be allowing access for contractors to start work in the gallery very soon. New interpretation, digital content and properly clearer object displays will hopefully enable us to highlight these incredible collections.

Keeping up with enquiries, from both the general public and from archaeological researchers, while working from home, has been a challenge. With only occasional visits allowed to the museum stores, my memory of the archives has been tested as never before. But at least the enforced home-working has allowed me the time to read a lot of excavation reports!

Paula Gentil

In response to my appeal to various people for material for this newsletter, several came up trumps and I have a promised article on Oxford Archaeology North's excavations on Hull's Castle Street, for the September issue. We are all wanting to know what is going on under that gigantic tent.

Alison Spencer also sent me the article, below, in which she looks at one of her favourite dales of the Yorkshire Wolds, not far from her home patch.

Wan Dale, East Yorkshire

By Alison Spencer

The solid, mainly chalk geology of the Yorkshire Wolds is the most northerly outcrop of chalk in Britain. (Yorkshire Wolds Heritage Trust, June 2020). The deep, dry valleys were formed during the ice ages as melt-waters carved their way through the chalk.

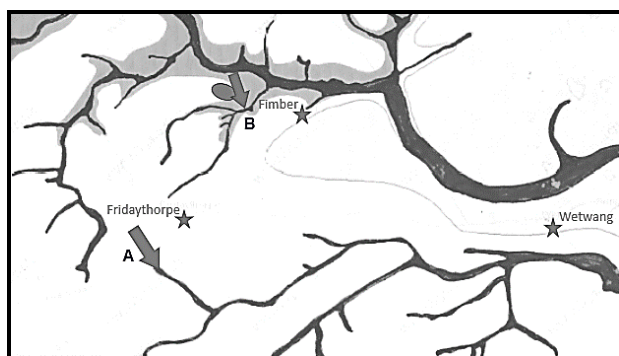


Fig. 1. Geology of the High Wolds (dry valleys in dark grey, superficial deposits in mid grey). This geological map is based upon data, with the permission of the British Geological Survey and contains BGS materials© UKRI 2021

To appreciate the magnitude of these valleys, Figure 2, below, is a view from location A. This is looking south-east down Holm Dale, south of Fridaythorpe.



Fig. 2 Holm Dale (Arrow A of Fig. 1 - looking south-east)

For me there is little to rival the beauty of Wan Dale. As the cover photograph shows – blue sky, a plethora of buttercups (in spring) and lush grass. The added bonus is that many extant archaeological features can be seen in this locality.

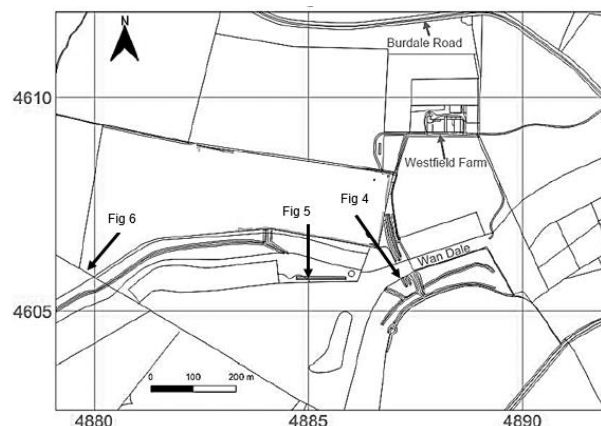


Fig. 3. Location and illustration references

Wan Dale is one such classic location (see Figure 4). At this single site there are multi-phased earthworks still to be seen on the dale side. Without evidence (for at present there is no compelling dating) we can only speculate as to their phasing and function. The first major divisions of the landscape on the Wolds were the pit alignments, enigmatic monuments which criss-crossed the rolling hills and dales. At Wan Dale there are indications that the central ditch of the main triple earthwork began life as a pit alignment (Ehrenburg and Caple, 1982/1983).

Pit alignments are lines of individual pits (which can be single or double lines in parallel). At some stage, possibly later in the Bronze Age, many of the pit alignments were 'converted' into ditches with banks, known on the Wolds as entrenchments. Some of the alignments were never turned into entrenchments, and some had entrenchments placed next to them, a sort of hybrid type. It may have been at this stage that the elaboration of the entrenchments occurred, where double or triple entrenchments were created, although this process could well have continued into the Iron Age. Certainly the entrenchments were maintained throughout this later period, and may well have been added to.

There are at least two sets of earthworks at Wan Dale. A double line extends around the crest of the dale, with a single entrenchment apparently extending from the lower of these to the north-west. The eastern bank of the triple ditch extends northwards from them appearing to overlie the southern east-west aligned ditch.



Fig. 4. Wan Dale in the snow. (Arrow B on Fig. 1) Looking south.

Photo: Alison. Spencer

Victorian antiquarian John Robert Mortimer believed what he termed the 'hollow-ways' to be older than the entrenchments. He comments, on page 381 of his major 1905 publication *'Forty Years' Researches In British And Saxon Burial Mounds Of East Yorkshire'* that

'Their present appearance is that of a very shallow hollow, 5 to 8 feet in width, running mainly along the steep and untilled hill-sides. These are the results of the filling-in of a V-shaped ditch on sloping ground'.

It may be that his 'hollow ways' were a different phase of entrenchment.

Mortimer examines and quotes the different and sometimes conflicting views of his contemporaries on the function and origins of entrenchments. When his book was published in 1905 no definitive conclusions had been reached and this remains largely the case today, nearly 120 years later. There are two quotations which are somewhat amusing:

'As to the date of their construction, and the

purpose they served, there is more uncertainty than there is about any other class of ancient earthworks'.

(Mortimer, J.R., 1905. p 365).

'Were the entrenchments on the Wolds the work of the Britons or the Romans? I have no hesitation in saying of the former, for one reason, and that is a good one, that there is not a straight line amongst the whole lot. They may look straight on paper, but not on the ground itself'.

(Cole, Rev. E.M., 1888. *Yorkshire Geological and Polytechnic Society's Proceedings*, p. 45)

Since the Victorian period, much debate has taken place regarding the function of linear earthworks, together with the similar earthworks known as dykes on the moors to the north. An interim report by Ehrenberg and Caple on a first season of investigations at Fimber appeared in a 1983 *Yorkshire Archaeological Society Prehistoric Research Section bulletin* (Now *Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society*). Peter



Fig. 6. From this view, it is not too difficult to imagine that the valley bottom was once a fast-flowing river of meltwater.

Halkon, in Chapter 3 of his 2013 publication, *The Parisi: Britons and Romans in Eastern Yorkshire* gives a summary of other relevant work, including more recent commercial excavation work which casts some light on these enigmatic divisions in the landscape.

I would like to thank John Deverell and James Lyall for their assistance in providing me with a greater understanding of this very complex archaeological landscape.

Alison Spencer



Fig. 5. Entrenchment clearly defined as a very thin white line across the centre of the image.

Further investigation of this area is required to elucidate the complex nature and sequence of these features. At the present time we have no absolute dating evidence for any of the extant features visible at Wan Dale.

FFWAP

2020 Marsh Award Winner

Congratulations to the Fridaythorpe Fimber Wetwang Archaeological Project, better known as FFWAP. This group, set up by ERAS member Alison Spencer, won in the category for the best volunteer-led project in 2020. The Marsh Awards are run in partnership with the CBA with the support of the Marsh Christian Trust. The FFWAP project included the excavation of a double ditched Bronze Age linear earthwork at Lady Graves, Westfield Farm. Winners receive £1000 to be used to support their future work. Well-done to all involved and good luck for the future.

Editor

Obituary

Val Hebblewhite



Photo supplied by Ann Dawson

Val's daughter Ann Dawson has asked us to pass on the sad news that Val died in hospital in March this year, after being ill for a number of weeks with a very serious non-Covid infection. Val had her 85th birthday on 14th February, 2021.

With her husband Brian, Val lived at Southburn farm for around forty years from the late 1950s during which time Brian worked on the farm and spent much of his spare time discovering and documenting the archaeology of the farm supported by Val and Ann. They were encouraged and advised in their work by Tony Brewster who was one of the most well known local archaeologists of the day and became a firm friend of the family.

Val was a keen member of the East Riding Archaeological Society, frequently attended talks at Hull University and went on several ERAS trips and holidays. She got to know many more archaeologists including Peter Halkon and Dominic Powlesland. Away from the farm, Val was always a keen swimmer and she became a qualified

swimming instructor, teaching many young people in Driffild and other schools.

Brian accumulated a large number of finds covering some 6,000 years of the history of Southburn and district and John Rymer, founder of JSR Farms, provided some old pig farrowing buildings in which to store and display his collection. After Brian sadly died, Val brought groups of people to look at the collection and it was one of these visits that inspired Margaret Coultard and others to make a joint approach with Val to Tim Rymer about starting the project which became Southburn Archaeological Museum (SAM). Tim and JSR have been very supportive ever since.

For several years Val was active with SAM including being Treasurer and securing some important funding. When she stepped down from the Committee, Val was elected as Honorary Life President in recognition of her contribution to the Museum. In later years, she still enjoyed field walking and became adept at the use of a metal detector.

When Southburn Archaeological Museum moved from Southburn to Green Lane, York Archaeological Trust helped us have an exhibition at 'The DIG' in York which included oral history recorded and broadcast as part of the exhibition. Val and Ann contributed their memories of Southburn and their work with Brian.

Val had arranged that when she died, her body would be donated for medical science research but unfortunately that was not possible in the circumstances. There will not be any public funeral or ceremony, but we trust the family will know that she will be sadly missed by us all.

Bill Coultard

Book Pages

Life, Death and Rubbish Disposal in Roman Norton, North Yorkshire. Excavations at Brooklyn House 2015-16

Janet Phillips and Pete Wilson

Archaeopress Publications Ltd. Paperback, colour throughout, 296pp, 209 figures, 54 tables.

RRP £48 Special offer £36

This volume reports on excavations in advance of development of a site in Norton-on-Derwent, North Yorkshire, close to the line of the main Roman road running from the crossing point of the River Derwent near Malton Roman fort to York (*Eboracum*) (Margary 1973, road 81a). Located in the vicinity of previous Roman-period discoveries the Brooklyn House site provided much additional information on aspects of the poorly understood 'small town' of *Delgovicia*.



Bustum Burial

Photo: J B Archaeology Ltd

Against a background of pre-Roman and earlier Roman evidence, including field systems set perpendicularly to the major Roman road, the area came to be used for apparently widely-dispersed burials in the mid-3rd century A.D. Amongst the burials was the *bustum*-type burial of a soldier, or former soldier, which produced a well-preserved assemblage of military equipment and incorporated some 'non-standard' features. In addition evidence was found for a possible mausoleum which, given the constraints on the excavation strategy could not be fully investigated.

During the late third and fourth centuries the burial activity was succeeded by occupation in the form of substantial stone-founded, or in some cases possible stone-built buildings. These included a sequence of well-built structures that would have fronted onto the Roman road that probably represented an extension of reasonably high status ribbon development along the main approach road to the town from the south. Alternatively they could have been related in some way to the Norton Roman pottery industry, the core area of which was located to the east of the site, although there was no evidence from them that suggested this – the only 'industrial' feature being a 'corn drier' or malting oven.

As recorded the occupation was relatively short-lived, although structures were replaced and there is the possibility that other probably less substantial buildings had succumbed to the impacts of later stone-robbing, ploughing and other destructive forces. As occupation retreated from the site, or possibly while some less substantial structures were present on parts of it, much of the site was used for the disposal of large quantities of rubbish and structural debris that presumably originated from locations closer to or beyond the river crossing, including possibly the Roman fort.

The Roman pottery assemblage incorporated in excess of 21,000 sherds and while most derived from the later dumping on the site, it adds considerably to our knowledge of pottery use and production in Roman Malton/Norton. It has allowed aspects of the Norton pottery industry to be re-examined and has provided evidence for a longer period of production than previously thought. Similarly, the substantial Roman-period finds assemblage provides insights, not only into the *bustum* burial, but also wider aspects of life in *Delgovicia*.

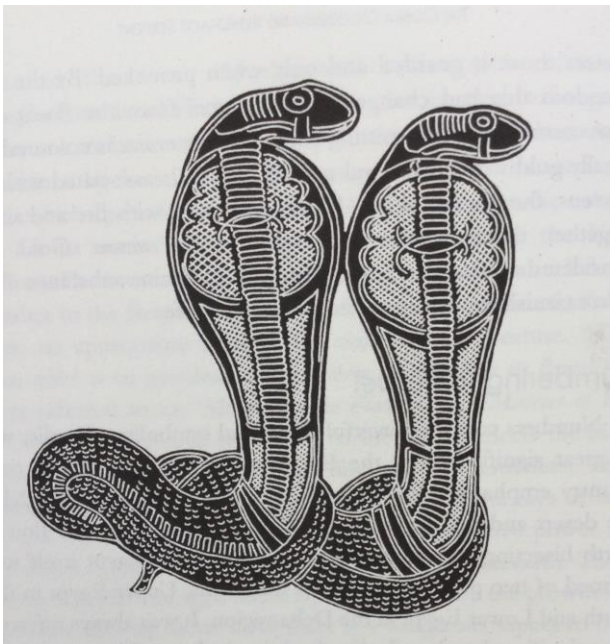
The medieval and later pottery from the site, while not derived from stratified deposits, represents the first substantial assemblage recovered and studied using contemporary methods and provides a baseline for work on assemblages recovered from Malton/Norton in the future.

Special Offer

To buy the book for £36 (25% discount on the RRP of £48) you can go to www.archaeopress.com and quote the code BROOKLYNHOUSE. Or order by post from Archaeopress, Summertown Pavillion, Oxford, OX2 7LG. For postage rates and other enquiries, go to info@archaeopress.com

Egyptian Mythology and Religion

Since giving up archaeology, ERAS's former treasurer, Lesley Jackson has developed an interest in Ancient Egyptian Mythology and has recently had her fifth book published. *The Cobra Goddess & The Chaos Serpent* is published by Avalonia. Lesley's earlier books were studies of Sekhmet and Bastet, (the feline powers of Egypt), Isis, Hathor and Thoth. These books are quite specialised and intended for those with a serious interest in the subject matter, however, they are written with a lightness of touch which makes them very readable. Due out soon is *The Goddess Nut and the Wisdom of the Sky*. All are available from Avalon or from Amazon.



Double Uraei amulet, Cairo Museum. Illustration from The Cobra Goddess & the Chaos Serpent in Ancient Egypt.

British Archaeology

(The Council for British Archaeology's Monthly Magazine)

As newsletter editor, I find I am frequently recommending the *British Archaeology* magazine, and I have no apologies for doing so again. It always has up-to-date news, comprehensive articles on specific sites and periods, book reviews, media page and the occasional look at subjects with wider links, such as art, education, archiving etc. Throw in lots of pretty pictures and it is very good value for money. By taking out a subscription, and becoming a member of CBA you are also supporting archaeology at a time when it really needs your help.

Editor's choice

THE INVENTION OF NATURE. The Adventures of Alexander Von Humboldt, the Lost Hero of Science. By Andrea Wulf. Published by John Murray 2015

I thought I would, for a change, recommend a non-archaeological book. I find myself surprised and ashamed that I did not know more about Alexander von Humboldt, the Prussian explorer, whose works so inspired Charles Darwin to study the natural world. Humboldt was full of energy, confidence and curiosity, as he walked and climbed in North, South and Central America and Russia, in the late 18th / early 19th century, accompanied by a series of close friends and always carrying his scientific recording instruments. Originally trained as a geologist and mining specialist, he developed a theory of nature as an ecological system, each part interdependent and crucial to the whole - a new and controversial view disliked by the traditional creationists.

An aristocratic background, a passion for the arts and a charismatic personality ensured this 'savant' had the right contacts to fund his explorations of the climate, geology, botany and other wild life in different regions of the world. He recognised the effect of intensive agriculture and industry on the natural world, noting how trees acted to stabilise soils, and how water levels were affected by human activity. He produced original maps, diagrams and drawings showing how the distribution of plant types was related to the environment and height above sea level, regardless of geographical location. Always interested in the lives and skills of indigenous peoples, valuing their knowledge and culture, he also drew on specialists the world over, to contribute to his publications, which were very well received. During his lifetime, he was feted, wherever he went in the world. I feel he would have loved all the new science based methodology for dating and analysis which is becoming common in archaeology in the 21st century. It was only the wars with Germany which caused his name to be erased from the many European roads, monuments and features which had been named in his honour. .

This book is an excellent read and won the 2015 Costa Biography award and the Royal Society Science Book prize for 2017, amongst other awards. I would have loved the hardback, but it was out of my price range. The paperback has an attractive cover, lots of illustrations and some colour plates, though the print is rather small.

Membership Subscriptions for 2021

Colin Parr, Treasurer

Firstly, a big thank-you to all you members who have already paid for this year or have PayPal recurring payments or bank standing orders in place. I have rather missed the scramble to pay up that usually occurs at our first three lectures of the year. Hopefully, we can get back to that next year. In the meantime if you haven't paid yet don't worry. Please let me know if you would rather wait until we can meet in person to pay by cash or cheque, my contact details are at the front of this newsletter, or you are welcome to contact me if you are unsure of your subscription status.

I will send out reminder letters to non-payees as usual in May. I'm afraid that anyone who has not paid, or has not contacted me to defer their payment, or does not have a recurring payment or standing order in place by the 1st of July will have their membership terminated in line with the ERAS Constitution. Sorry.

Subscriptions for this year are still: Ordinary £15, Family £20 and Student £5

Payments can be made by:

- Cheque made out to ERAS and posted to me at the address in this newsletter.
- Direct Transfer to our account: Barclays Bank, King Edward St, Hull, Sort Code 20-43-47, Account No 40332496.
- By Credit/Debit card or PayPal via our website www.eras.org.uk.

Thanks everybody for sticking with us through these awful times, and here's hoping we can resume our usual activities soon.

Colin Parr

Volunteers needed for deliveries

We have three volunteers who help keep the cost of postage down by delivering newsletters locally, but we could do with a couple more. If you live in the HU4, HU5, HU6 areas (or indeed anywhere in Hull and E Riding) and can deliver a few newsletters in your area, please get in touch. It is only in April and September and walking down all those garden paths is good exercise.

Odds and Ends -from the Editor.

Newsletter by email?

This issue of the newsletter will also be distributed electronically to all members who have provided their e-mail address. If, in future, in order to save print and postage costs and to reduce our environmental impact, you would like to opt to receive the electronic version **only**, please let Colin know, by e-mail. cparrateras@outlook.com. Printed versions will continue to be available to those who wish.

Summer Surveys

Rumour has it that this summer, ERAS is to co-operate with others to carry out further geophysics at an East Yorkshire deserted medieval village site. Approximately 25% of the site was surveyed by resistivity in 2019 and Ed Dennison completed a desktop and topographical survey of the site on our behalf before lockdown stopped play. This year we are hoping to complete the resistivity survey and if possible, arrange magnetometry and GPR surveys. If we are successful, it will give us a good comparison of results from the use of three or four different pieces of equipment and survey methods.

The Dig

Having watched the Netflix film *The Dig*, based on the excavations at Sutton Hoo, my first impression was that it was a very well made and atmospheric film, and certainly worth watching, but it was all about the various relationships of those involved, rather than about the archaeology. However, non-archaeological friends have said it really inspired them to find out more about Sutton Hoo, so I suppose that's a positive. The reconstruction of the ship remains, inside the mound, was most convincing and I wish we could have seen more of it. The only thing which really irritated me, personally, was that the clothing of excavator Basil Brown, played by Ralph Fiennes, was never quite grubby enough. It was as though the wardrobe department, excellent though it was, had instructed Fiennes not to kneel down and make the knees of his trousers sandy or baggy. Although he had labourers to help, the real Brown was obviously a hands-on excavator and his clothes would, at the end of a day's work, have reflected that.

Matters Arising

Did my ears have a Freudian moment, when, during the Zoom AGM meeting of the YAHS Prehistoric Research Section meeting, I distinctly heard the secretary say '*Are there any mutters arising?*'

The Prehistoric Research Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society (YAHS) recently hosted a lecture, by Zoom, by Fraser Brown of Oxford Archaeology North. The talk shows how important these large scale commercial investigations are to the rescue of fragile and often widely dispersed evidence of our early pre-history. I have attempted a summary, below, from my notes, but the original is packed with information and Fraser is happy to share it with ERAS members. You can access the full talk until 7th May, see below.

The Mesolithic and the Neolithic of the North-West:— a tale of three sites. Fraser Brown

Commercial developments on sites at Cass ny Hawen on the Isle of Man, Stainton West near Carlisle and Windy Harbour, between Lytham and Fleetwood, required extensive archaeological investigations, before development could proceed. The work has produced not only a great many artefacts, but clear sequences showing the transition from the late Mesolithic to the Neolithic. At Cass ny Hawen, a 7m diameter tepee-like dwelling, which had burnt down in situ, had a ring of postholes at the perimeter, a central hearth and raised sleeping area. 21,000 flint microliths were found inside the dwelling, with narrow-blades predominating. Occupation was between 8100-8200 (85% probability) and the house, which was very similar to other Mesolithic dwellings including the Firth of Forth house, may have been one of several. It is possible there was a land-bridge to the Isle of Man at this time, but it is likely that access was by boat.

At another site, Stainton West on the River Eden floodplain, near Carlisle, the area was gridded for sampling and a staggering 27,000 standard sampling buckets were filled, resulting in the largest microlith assemblage in the UK to date. The site was thought to be a seasonal encampment where Mesolithic hunter-gatherers met up from other areas. The sampling regime showed that there was persistent zonation of the encampment, with separate areas identified for hide-working, butchery, tool production, axe-working, middens, hearths etc and possible structures. The site was in use for several centuries and many different lithic raw materials were represented, including rose quartz, flint from Flamborough Head, pitchstone (obsidian) from Isle of Arran, and Langdale tuff. No bone survived.

Overlying the Mesolithic phases, an Early Neolithic timber platform was identified with

worked wood, planks, a paddle, residual debris from the felling of oaks and elms and stone wedges used for splitting timbers. Most unusual, and quite puzzling, were wooden trident-like objects, similar to those found in Ireland. There was also evidence for pounding and grinding (foods, pigments?) and carcass working. Pollen records evidenced the introduction of farming, and dung beetles may indicate the presence of cattle.

The third site, Windy Harbour, Fylde, Northwest Lancashire, lay at the confluence of the Lytham and Skippool valleys and had been affected over thousands of years by a series of marine transgressions and regressions. A series of Mesolithic camps were identified overlain by Neolithic occupation. With shelter from a large excavation tent, very good sequences, spanning several thousand years of activity were able to be identified, cleaned and recorded. Good laminated midden deposits from the 38th century cal BC were recorded above Mesolithic occupation layers and results from further Radiocarbon dating are awaited.

We look forward to full publication of these sites but results so far seem to show that there was maritime capability by 10,000 BC and that the narrow blade lithic technology was in use at the same time in the North West as in the North East. Although Mesolithic peoples may have had their own 'home' valleys or areas for hunting and gathering, they had much wider social networks and connections than was previously thought and this might be the reason for the rapid spread of Neolithic practices at the start of the 4th millennium BC. Controversially, it seems Langdale lithics were in use much earlier than the Neolithic period, to which they are usually attributed.

This summary was written up from hurriedly taken notes, but the original lecture is packed full of information and analysis and you can catch it on Zoom, using the passcode VLse6!!3 before 7th May with the following link, (best pasted, as what looks like a gap is an underscore.)

https://zoom.us/rec/share/qyF8lx1VvUOnsAL5KqR40jOwiR_SdG3aEbEC6wD0jqYqkwMRMEcSFZMv3XFdhLbq.Pr11rtjBQGIb4ltQ?startTime=1616853757000

ERAS Lectures

The lectures for September are still being planned, but we always start on the third Wednesday of September and you can check the website to see whether they will be online or at the University. You will receive Newsletter number 96 in the post at the beginning of September, which will give the up to date situation.

Hull Branch of the History Association

May 13th at 7.30pm

An Introduction to Hull: Yorkshire's Maritime City

By Holly Walton

June 10th at 7pm

Amnesia: Slavery in Hull.

By Dr Nicholas Evans

If you are interested in the above free online talks, please contact Sylvia Usher for details of how to register
usher@usher.karoo.co.uk

01482 448065

Cut here

Renewal / Membership Form,

☐ I would like to join ERAS **OR** ☐ Please renew my ERAS membership for 2021 (due Jan 2021)

Name I enclose cheque for **£15 single / £20family/ £5 fulltime student**

Address

.....

EmailTelephone.....

Please make cheque payable to ERAS & return to membership secretary Colin Parr, 32 Woodgate Rd, Hull HU5 5AH