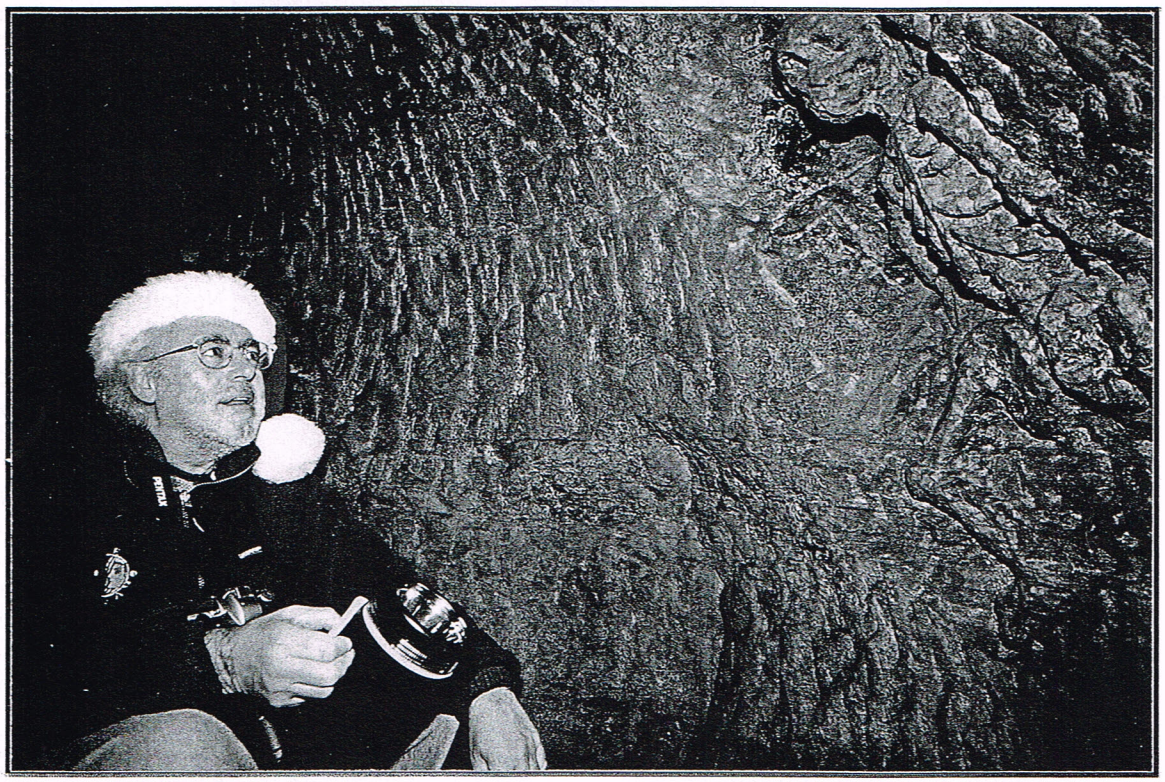
Pont Arc

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PONTEFRACT & DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

New Series, Number 41. Spring 2002.

TIME TEAM'S MICK ASTON IN PONTEFRACT!

RIGHT:
Mick investigates the carved skeleton in the entrance to the Hermitage's Well-Chamber. He appeared to be fascinated by both Oratory and Hermitage. The Editor has sent copies of the transparencies shot there to Mick. Photo: EH.



Mick Aston in Pontefract! It still seems something of a dream to have had the brains behind television's most popular archaeology series on **our** lecture programme. Judging from the reaction, others think so too.

Nevertheless, it did happen, and in All Saints' Parish Hall, where the Society was founded forty four years ago. Perhaps luckily the original building does not survive, and we were able to offer Professor Aston first rate comfort and lecturing facilities.

He did not let us down. An informal, informative, and often scurrilous style had us in laughter one minute, and fascinated the next. Even the questions were answered with humour. His comments on amusing incidents which he and our President had been involved in suggested to the visitors that perhaps archaeology is not **all** serious research. We knew that already, but it was good to have it emphasised by the leading television exponent of the science.

The following day, after the nightmare of parking in Pontefract just before Christmas, Mick exercised his magic on the youngsters of our branch of the national Young Archaeologists' Club and their parents. Then, after an all too brief visit to the Hermitage, he and Teresa had to leave for the next lecture, in Lincoln. They left many memories.

Our thanks must go to Peter and Pauline for most of the behind-the-scenes work, to Janet and Bob, and to everyone else who helped. It is quite true that a small town society such as ours depends upon its people for its success. That is evident, and the quality of that success is in direct proportion to the efforts put in.

'Thank you!'

contents.

AN ANCIENT MILESTONE?

by Sid Heywood.

A large square block of dressed stone lies beside a minor country lane, un-noticed by passing motorists; it may well be the plinth of a very old milestone which once stood at an important road junction.

Located in the grass verge (NGR SE 419174) on the south side of Went Lane (the B6428) in the village of Wragby it appears to be of local sandstone and measures 34"x33" across and stands some 18" high. The four vertical sides are flat, yet bear numerous short diagonal chisel-marks, which may simply be decorative. From the centre of the upper surface, the roughly broken stump of a 13" square pillar or post projects a few inches above its 'cemented' socket in the base-stone.

A milestone did exist until quite recently, and had stood prominently on this site for the greater part of three hundred years. Though relatively remote, and not on the popular tourist route, it was an intersting physical reminder of our heritage, and an antiquity to be protected. The location is recorded on many maps including some modern OS, and is otherwise also well-documented.

Charles Edmund Camplin, a respected amateur local historian now sadly deceased, says in his booklet *Ackworth Trail,* (one of two published in 1976):

"Customary Milestone. - This early eighteenth century milestone with its quaint lettering is situated just off the Wakefield to Doncaster road (A638). It can be seen on the right-hand side of a minor road leading from Wragby to Purston Jaglin about three quarters of a mile from Nostell Priory. The milestone is forty inches tall and twelve inches square. The faces of the milestone are as follows:

The side facing Wakefield is defaced.

Left hand side - Pontefract 3 miles.

Right hand side - Doncaster (spelt 'Dongcaster' [with a long 's'] 10 miles.

Back side facing Ackworth - Hessle 1722.

Hessle, a small hamlet, now consists of only a couple of farms and a few houses, although an 1821 directory gives the population at 139. When one views the milestone one will be surprised by its location. This is the point of the old crossroads of the pre-1740 road into Ackworth."

(NB A new bridge had been constructed at Nostell in 1740 and the earlier road re-aligned.)

The Rev. J.L. Saywell (1853-1911) in *The Parochial History of Ackworth,* 1894 identifies,

"An old milestone stands near Nostell Avenue bearing the date 1722. The old coach road appears to have entered the Nostell domain at Foulby, on thro' the Park north of Nostell up to the east avenue, crossing Brackenhill Common down to Kinsley Green, where the 'brook or watercourse was ford,' forward to Moor Top on to the main road. Although overgrown with grass, it is easily traced. About a quarter of a mile north of the said ford is a county bridge, which is the boundary between Ackworth and Wragby parishes."

Before. Photo by G Fell.

Within the last few years the milestone described above has disappeared; possibly vandalised or even stolen. It may now be a garden ornament. It is possible that the remaining plinth was too large or heavy to be removed and was abandoned after the more interesting carved portion had been roughly broken off. If this be the case, the culprit must be oblivious to the magnitude of the crime, yet arrogant enough to dispay the 'trophy.' Hopefully, someone more responsible may be persuaded to divulge its present location. Alternatively, a closer search of the immediate vicinity

Now. The newspaper gives scale. Photo, S.H.

(Continued on page 3)

may uncover the abandoned monument itself. There is some stone debris on the surface of the adjoining site which was Avenue Lodge Brick Lane.

The 'loss' was reported to several statutory agencies at the time, all of which professed no knowledge, interest, or concern, and in turn recommended an approach to each other or to someone/anyone else; the classic 'bureaucratic runaround.'

WILLIAM HENRY (BILL) HAYWOOD

Bill Haywood, one of our longest-standing members died on the 28th September last.

Bill started work aged twelve in 1923 selling programmes at the *Alexandra* theatre in Tanshelf. He moved on to the Co-op Drapery Department, and left there to join the army during the Second World War. Much of his service was in Egypt, and he took the opportunity to see many of the ancient monuments there.

On demob., he started work as a porter at PGI, spending the rest of his working life there, retiring as Head Porter and administrator.

Bill was an avid reader and prolific letter writer. His love of the theatre took him regularly to London, whilst his correspondence included Royalty and Prime Ministers. He had replies from several Royal establishments and at least three PMs.

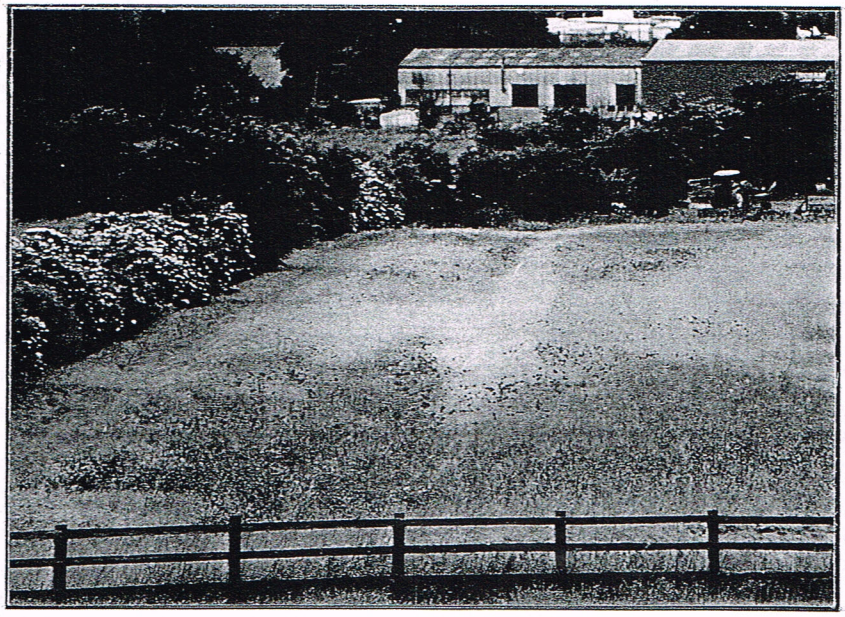
He was the eldest of nine children, and his youngest sister was Margaret Lodge, wife of a distinguished Past-President of this Society.

Born, 4th March 1911. Died 28th September 2001.

NB.

AERIAL ARCHAEOLOGY FROM A FIFTY-TWO SEATER COACH!

During the late spring of 2001, your Editor received a 'phone call from member David Hedges. Eighteen years ago, David was joint director of our work at Thorpe Audlin where we dug and recorded Roman Road 28b (Margary) and also some industrial features which were probably metallugical in origin.



On this occasion, David had been driving his coach southwards along the A639 towards Barnsdale Bar. As he passed the site of our dig he looked at the field, and having a much higher viewpoint than the average motorist or pedestrian, he saw over the rather high hedge.

To his surprise, the carriageway of the Roman road was plainly visible as a negative cropmark in the growing cereal. Even better, the numerous poppies helped the effect. Needless to say, said Editor rushed out with cameras, and took a series of pictures looking north directly along the Roman road. We append one here, in the hope that even monochrome reproduction will do justice to a unique sight.

It must also be remembered that this is the actual site of the battle of the Winwaedfield, AD 655, according to the latest research by Dr Sam Newton of Cambridge University. Older books, depending on Victorian historians who looked at names somewhat less critically than those of today, locate the battle at Whinmoor, near Leeds, In fact, the Anglian name of the Went was 'Win', and as this river-crossing is more significant strategically than any river near Leeds, we are reasonably safe in locating the battle here. King Oswy of Northumbria defeated Penda of Mercia. Amongst the allies of Penda killed was Aethelhere of East Anglia, who was once suspected of being the Sutton Hoo Ship Burial No.1 victim.

PONTEFRACT YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS' CLUB'S FIRST DIG

by Janet M^{c}Naught.

Ever ambitious, our Young Archaeologists ventured into the field of archaeological excavation. This was not done by the "let us see if we can find something if we dig a hole here?" method, but by putting in a lot of research on our chosen field.

In the first year after the Club's inauguration, an afternoon of field-walking was carried out on a field chosen by the group's leaders. A small area was walked with winter wheat poking up through the soil. A fair amount of high-status Roman pottery was present in the scatter of artefacts retrieved. During the afternoon, Ian Sanderson of the West Yorkshire Sites & Monuments Department visited us on our field, showing a great deal of interest in both the project and the finds.

Several years later, we approached the farmer to ask permission to continue the field work, to discover that the field had changed ownership. Undaunted, we approached the new owner with information on its archaeological significance from its topography and our previous work. He gave permission for the use of his field with several provisos:

1. Harvesting must be completed before work started,
2. We always left the field as we found it,
3. No metal-detectorists to be allowed on site, and
4. we were to leave the field when ploughing commenced.

Our first move was to inform the Sites & Monuments Record of the proposed work. They immediately offered to commission some geophysical studies of 'our field,' which we went out to observe and participate in. We then began systematic field-walking using the same grid. The tractor arrived on only the third afternoon of field-walking. The large double plough began to steadily make a furrow straight up the middle of the field, crunching pegs and canes as it went. However, it was not the unmitigated disaster that it sounds, as we already had more finds than we could possibly deal with in one session, and the grid could easily be restored with the help of GPS and a West Yorkshire Archaeology surveyor.

An application to **Age Concern Millennium Funding from the Lottery Commission** was successful, and allowed our project to expand into a proper mini-Time Team.

More geophysics was commissioned, aerial photographic interpretation was undertaken, professional reports on Roman and medieval pottery, glass and building materials was done, and the whole studied before a choice of trial-trench location was made.

New digging equipment at the ready, we all arrived on 'our field,' and having studied the magnetometer read-out, we began our dig. If the GPS was as accurate as the experts predicted, we should eventually come down to a ditch-end and two ditches crossing at right-angles; these two large features should appear one at the northern, and one at the southern end.

How to use a trowel demonstrated, and the importance of correctly-labelled finds trays explained, we enlisted dads and other grown-ups to remove the remains of the wheat crop from the surface of the trench. The necessity of keeping a clear baulk for safety, planning, photography and neatness, caused us to place the spoil along the western side, set back about a metre. We were soon through layers 101 and 102, at which point, with a little expert trowelling we ascertained the arable soil's depth to extend another spade-length. Once again the adults were brought in to do the heavy work. Yes, all right, one or two of the older YACs also participated whilst the rest of the crew went off to do some planned field-walking.

We had now reached an orange oxidised layer directly above the magnesian limestone, and trowelling recommenced. Soon features began to appear; in the NW corner a pit containing fine white powder began to be emptied. A metre further along the western side of the trench, a ditch with a distinct orange sandy fill with inclusions of magnesian limestone fragments was revealed. In the southern end, a distinctly curved edge became visible. Then, just as it was becoming all very exciting, our weekend was over and we had to backfill the trench. We could not be certain that the farmer would not want to plough before the next planned weekend dig.

Weekend two, and the backfill had to be removed and placed back from the side of the trench. The fill from the pit in the northern end was tested, and discovered to be very alkaline and inert with the addition of water, so was felt to be fine shattered magnesian limestone. As such, its removal could recommence, but how to remove this powder-like fill without it taking forever? A new archaeological tool was brought in to do the job, namely the 'kitchen soup ladle.' After a test-run it was declared 'just the job.' The ditch-fill was being quickly and safely removed, whilst at the southern end the curving feature was beginning to show a curved, vertical stone-lined drop, which could well be a large pit. Samples of fill from ditch and pit were taken, and at first look appeared to be very similar in colour and feel, the ditch-fill having seed, shell pebble inclusions, and the pit appearing sterile. These samples have, as yet, not been checked for environmental finds.

The site was made safe by fencing off the deeper voids with florescent tape placed around the poles as we took leave. Overnight a decision was made to place a trench two metres square a metre to the east of the area containing the stone-lined pit, to

The first day on site, looking approximately south and east. Photo EH.

try and locate the edge of another pit which we were now certain existed following a re-interpretation of the geophysics. The nuances in the latter plot were slight grey to black gradations, giving circular readings rather than a continuous dark reading, which would read as ditches.

Hard hats were now donned by people working in the ditch and pit, whilst the younger of the Young Archaeologists were placed with supervision in areas where it was deemed safe for them to continue to excavate. As the day wore on, a curved step in the magnesian limestone natural began to appear, curving from the ditch to the pit. We did not have enough time left to find out whether this was a solitary step or perhaps quarrying activity, or maybe even a series of steps. The pit came down on to a solid stone floor a approximately one metre, whilst the ditch was still going down at one metre depth; it will have to wait for another year to be bottomed.

The fill of the ditch yielded two pieces of the same red sandstone quern, and one piece of quern which is not of British geology, along with a large piece of furnace bloom which as been identified as Iron Age technology. This fall in with our own belief that a prehistoric site was re-used by Roman or RB people. The Roman pottery is giving definite dating of 120 to 200 AD, whilst only small amounts of medieval and modern scatter are being found.

Large numbers of photographs were taken, along with field notes and plans. All this data is gradually being assembled into an interim report.

Editor's Note.

The field in question, on the crest of the Went Hills behind the Swiss Cottage restaurant, was the subject of Society investigation during the mid and late 1960s. The late Charles Baines (a Past-Secretary of the Society) found both Samian and coarse-ware shards when field-walking. The late Fred Morris superintended a series of trenches across the field and unearthed more RB pottery in 1969. In 1972, your Editor, flying with Michael Leach of Darrington, and using infrared colour film for the first time in Britain outside the military, found the faint outline of a winged corridor villa. Later, flying with the late Derrick Riley, ancient ditches and possible droveways were traced all along the ridge from Swiss Cottage to Darrington Windmill. The results of all this work were reported to the relevant authorities and published.

GUNS AND BUNS WITH THE YOUNG ARCS

by Joanna & Nicholas Lambert.

When we arrived at Pontefract Castle, I saw a large tent on the Castle green. Inside, were a man and a lady in historical costume and an array of clothes, armour and weaponry from the seventeenth century.

Janet told all the Club members and their parents that they could sit inside the tent whilst the people in costume gave their display.

The man introduced himself as Colonel Granville Thomas and the lady as 'wife.' He gave us some background information on the Civil War. We then had to choose which side to support, either Parliament, the King, or remain neutral. I chose Parliament because I agreed with the causes which they supported. Also, during the Civil War there was a leader called Sir John Lambert who may have been my ancestor.

I was then picked to be one of the demonstrators of how to use the weapons. Firstly, with Colonel Thomas's help I had a sword fight with Dominic. We then had different weapons like a halberd, pike and musket. I demonstrated musket drill; there were over thirty movements! The musket was very heavy and I was afraid that I might drop it.

was intrigued by the weapons and impressed by Colonel Thomas's knowledge of the seventeenth century; I enjoyed the display.

After this, we had a picnic outside in the sunshine. Jane had also dressed in historical costume and had baked some bread and oatcakes for us to try. I liked the oatcakes.

Whilst we were finishing our food, the Colonel gave us a display of the actual use of the firearms. He showed us how to load and fire a matchlock musket. It was extremely loud and echoed all around the castle. He then loaded and fired a flintlock musket, which was even louder! The biggest difference between the two was how the spark ignites the charge inside the barrel: the matchlock uses a special type of string, which burns slowly and ignites the black powder in the pan. The flintlock has a piece of flint held in a 'dog-head' which flies forward on the trigger being pulled, creates a spark, which ignites the black powder in the pan. This runs through to the barrel.

Finally, Colonel Thomas fired the cannon, which surprisingly was the quietest of the three, or caused the least pressure on my ears. As the cannon had the biggest barrel, it sent the ammunition further. He picked some of the oldest Club members to do the cannon drill with him. I really wanted to have a go! The colonel was very strict over the drill and very thorough in the procedure, including washing out the barrel after firing. This sent a plume of ashy water from the touch-hole.

My view of the day was that it was exciting and interesting. I have an interest in the English Civil War, so the display showed me how to do things that I have only read about until now.

The Colonel assists one of his volunteers. Photo: Pontefract YAC.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS.
The Drawbacks.

Originally commissioned for an archaeological photographic newsletter, this important paper by the Editor should be read by everyone considering going into digital imaging.

It was so simple forty years ago. Everyone (photographers, archaeologists and museum curators) knew that colour was transient, that monochrome prints would fade if not correctly processed, but that good monochrome negatives were archivally stable.

However, it was never as simple as that in reality. The stability of monochrome negatives always depends upon full-term fixing in uncontaminated solutions followed by a long wash in running water. Commercial processing rarely achieved this standard, but as 'real' site photographers **always** did their own developing, it was up to each to ensure the permanence of the negatives .

Colour was more problematical simply because the modern tripack systems (invented by Kodak & Agfa in the 1930s) had not been around long enough for empirical results to be available. However one process, *Cibachrome* (for prints from slides) did promise long term stability. It was widely (and correctly, it turns out) assumed that prints from colour negatives were transient. Archaeologists on the whole did not begin using colour negatives until well into the 1970s, and these early ones do now show advanced signs of decay.

Cibachromes from this era are usually unchanged. Transparencies from the 1950s onwards have survived well too, though the writer has seen carelessly stored (exposed to light, heat, damp or combinations of the three) examples which have faded badly. He regularly projects Agfa slides from the 1950s, and they stand up very well alongside more recent transparencies. The (defunct) Gevaert slide film has not stood the test of time, however, and the writer's few examples have faded to nothing.

The introduction of digital technology was trumpeted as a solution to these problems. Indeed, some organisations went ahead and digitised all their images. The much-publicised *Domesday Discs,* designed to carry images of the late twentieth century into the distant future, were an example of the new technology in action. Unfortunately, the project now serves as an example of the problems of that technology, for in the course of the very few years since 1986 computer hardware has changed to the extent that no modern drive can actually read the discs!

The solution may appear to be the archiving of inkjet prints made from the digital files, but with one current leading manufacturer boasting of a 'life of up to seventeen years...' for its inkjet photo-paper, and even the company which is probably the market-leader in archival quality inks claiming no more than '25-30 years certified indoors display life,' it will be seen that this is not a viable option.

Problems of archiving transparencies, negatives, and digital images have recently been discussed in the *RPS Journal,* the much respected journal of the Royal Photographic Society.* The Author, Adina Lerna lately of the Walt Disney Archive, suggests that the **only** way to ensure that digital images survive is to **constantly migrate the files to the next technological platform.** The sheer labour involved in moving even the archive of a small excavation is mind-boggling. At every move, there will be a temptation to edit out what may be seen as irrelevant images. Worse, the cost implications will ensure that at some future time of financial stringency a decision will be taken to abandon the whole archive. The fact that the images will be invisible will make this decision easier. In contrast, the sheer physical presence of analogue images with recognisable sites and personalities visible upon them, will make a similar decision more difficult.

In view of these considerations, and assuming that the convenience of digital imaging will ensure its survival, what is the ideal compromise?

Firstly, the actual negatives and transparencies should always form the primary pictorial archive. Their lifespan can be extended by storing them in archival quality hanging files (which they should be in already!) in cold conditions, and at the relative humidity (RH) recommended by film manufacturers. Indeed, deep freezing is well known to impart an indefinite lifespan to photographic originals.

Digital files may be used as a convenient form of filing, viewing, printing (as either true photographic images or inkjet output) and projection. Only selected images need to be migrated to the current technological platform for temporary use. Where an original appears to be fading, digital technology can be used to produce a new photographic image to store alongside the master.

As with all technology, this cannot be a final statement. At some future date a platform may be accepted as the universal and perpetual format (like the 3 1/4 inch slide!). However, photographers, archaeologists and museum professionals must always be wary of definitions produced by computer professionals, to whom the term 'indefinite' usually means less than ten years!

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* *Archival Agonies with Digital Files.* Adina Lerna, pp272-3. RPS Journal, July/August 2001.

TIME TEAM PROGRAMME, Channel 4, 2002

An Ermine Street Pub, Cheshunt.
10th Feb. 6-30 pm.

Iron Age Market, Helford.
17th Feb. 6-30 pm.

Siege House in Shropshire.
24th Feb. 6 -30pm.

A Prehistoric Airfield, Throckmorton.
3rd March. 6-30 pm.

A Lost Roman City, Castleford.
10th March. 6-30 pm.

Every Castle Needs a Lord, Warwickshire.
17th March. 6-30 pm.

Steptoe et Filius, Isle of Wight,
24th March. 6-30 pm.

Seven Buckets and a Buckle, Hampshire,
31st March. 6-30 pm.

EDITORIAL

As I write, work is going ahead on the post-excavation process, in preparation for the publication of our Saint Aidan's report. Meanwhile, the Society programme continues. We apologise for the re-scheduling of lectures in this programme, caused by the closure of the Wood Hall Archaeological Trust, and the necessity for its employees to seek other work, in at least one case much further afield. The changes were reported to both *Dalesman,* and *Yorkshire Out'N'About* in time for them to amend their copy. Members should note that our programme is always published in both magazines, and as all libraries carry both, it is always possible to check on the details of a meeting even if you do not have a current card to hand.

Our hosting of Professor Mick Aston of *Time Team* is reported on the front page, and the story of Society involvement in the *TT* dig at Castleford is featured elsewhere in this newsletter. Members may have noticed the Editor taking photographs during the evening meeting, and wondered why they did not appear in the *Pontefract and Castleford Express.* The reason is still a mystery. The report, and the film (a *Fujicolor Superior* 400 ASA, 12 Exposure cassette) was sent in to the newspaper, but somewhere in transit the cassette went missing, leaving its can and the report. Thus, all pictorial record of the evening, and some of the best shots of the Young Archaeologists' Club meeting the following day, disappeared. Luckily, the Editor shot a few pictures with two other cameras, and it was possible to get a picture of Mick to the *Express* in time. The transparencies of Mick in the Hermitage are still at the processing lab as I write. These are particularly important as we promised him copies for his own use.

The past year has seen the Society receive much needed publicity in *Current Archaeology,* with the front cover, centre-spread, and several individual pictures and text inside in issue 173. The front cover was a personal success for your Editor, who has aspired to getting a picture on the front of *Current Archaeology* since it first appeared in the sixties.

Our work at Howden is now approaching completion under Nick Kelly. The contribution of member David Hedges must be acknowledged, for David has made himself an expert on Resistivity Surveying, and allowed us to use his meter. Nick is now collating the data, and expects to have publishable results soon.

In November, John Buglass began work on three hulks at Victoria Dock, Hull. The vessels, illustrated elsewhere in this issue, were abandoned when the dock was re-developed for housing. Two are reasonably accessible, but the third is below low-water mark. Work here will continue, though many members are finding the distance involved a bit daunting.

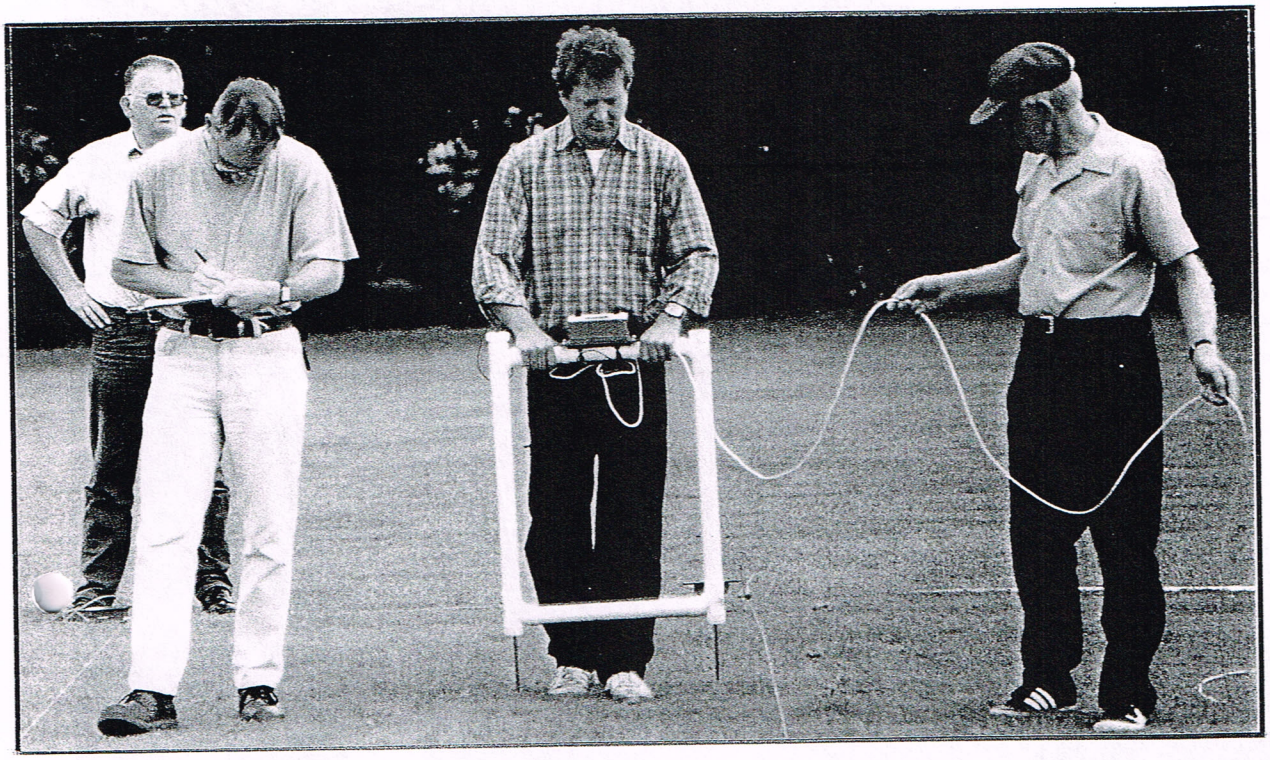
With luck, we may have the opportunity to do a geophysical survey on a Roman (?) site near Castleford this year. Negotiations are in hand, and members on the active list will be notified in time to participate.

It all looks good, but removing my Field-Director's hat and donning the Editorial headgear puts a very different perspective on the Society. This issue of *PontArc* is mainly filled with articles on fieldwork and excavation, or connected issues. The only report of an excursion is from the Young Archaeologists; thank you Joanna and Nicholas. Where are the stories from the many other trips and excursions? Where are the reviews of new books, or critiques on television programmes? With the best will in the world the Editor cannot write a complete newsletter of interest to all members. **Please** try to contribute, and do not worry about your rusty English. The role of the Editor is to collate material and correct such things as spellings, grammar, etc.

Finally, our 'Active List' is now somewhat unwieldy, containing over thirty names. The F-D spends complete evenings on the 'phone when work is in hand, and if anyone is not in, they lose the opportunity to participate. We need ideas on how to notify members of coming work. Would you be interested in supplying the Field Director with a number of stamped and addressed postcards? Whatever system we adopt, it must be cheap, efficient, and leave no-one out. Please put ideas on paper, and send or give them to the Field Director. Lastly, a belated but sincere 'Happy New Year' to all members from all on Committee, and from the Editor.

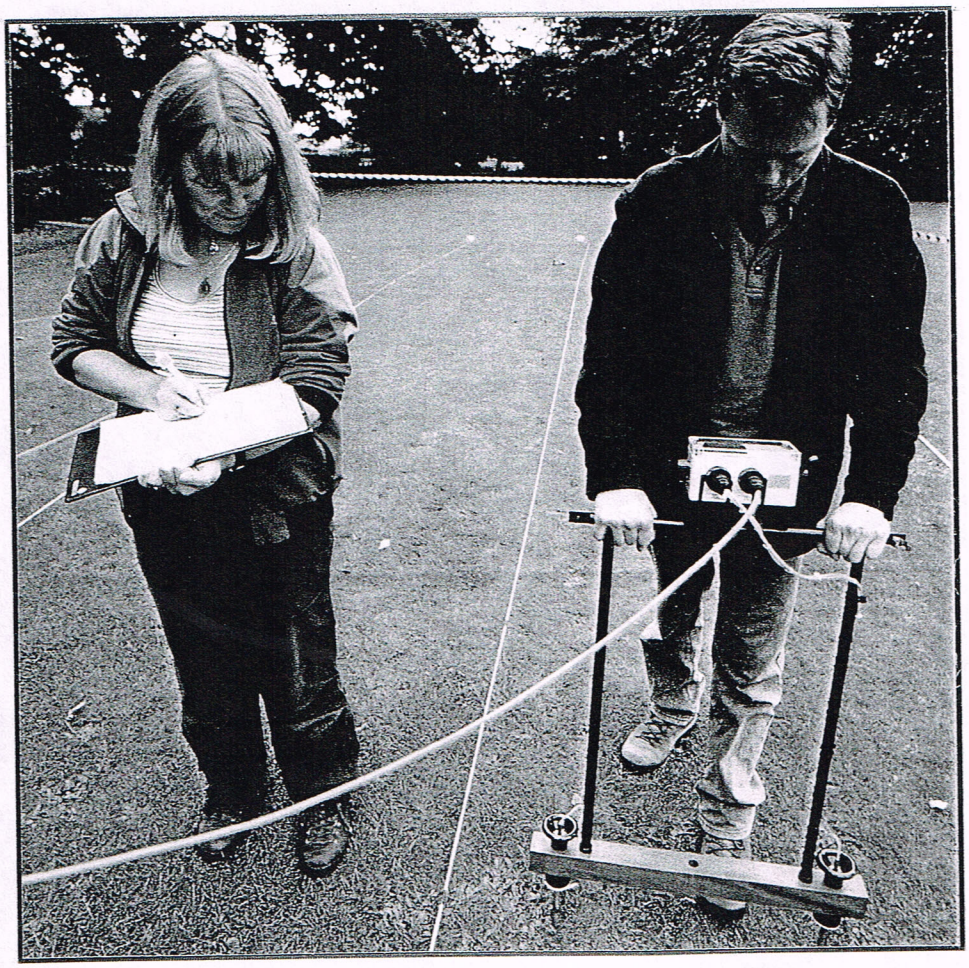
GALLERY

A selection of pictures of Society activities during the past year.



THIS PAGE: THE HOWDEN GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY.

Above: Robert, Dan, Alan and David with David Hedges' Resisitivity Meter.



Right: Linda and John, who are also members of the Wheelwright Society, with that society's new resistivity meter at Howden. Our work there proved ideal for calibrating the new instrument against David's tried and tested one.

GALLERY CONTINUED.....

VICTORIA DOCK, HULL.

Above: *The site looking upstream. Right to left, boats one two and three. The Humber Bridge is just out of sight in the mist along the horizon.*

Left: *Members Tom (with drawing board) and Ron make detailed drawings of the hull of Boat One.*

THE A-TEAM MEETS TIME TEAM.

The call from 'George of *Time Team'* came as a surprise. We knew that they were planning to dig Castleford, but did not realise that the dates had been brought forward because the foot & mouth epidemic had closed many rural sites. Further calls from Karla and Katie helped to clarify the arrangements: *Time Team* needed five diggers, two stewards, two people to help with recording, and the help of our Young Archaeologists' Club.

Trying to select a digging team from all our available talent was difficult, even though we were allowed to use different people on each of the three days. Even so, painful decisions had to be made, experience being the main criterion for selection. People who failed to respond to messages or who did not answer two calls, were passed over.

Actually working with *Time Team* was unlike any other archaeological experience that the Society has been involved with. Action was frenetic, but halted for long intervals for filming - in silence - or because no-one could start the JCB!

Lunch was provided by Channel Four's location caterers, called **Bad Catering** (!). They were excellent, supplying a choice of at least four main courses and three or four puddings. We ate in the Trinity Methodist Church's canteen, after having carried our trays in from the van at the rear. It was very democratic, for everyone, even Tony Robinson himself, queued for food and then tried to find a place in the hall; one of our members found herself next to Tony for one meal.

There was no afternoon break, but flasks of coffee and huge trays of sandwiches were provided on site, and we just 'grazed' as we worked.

The most often asked question from friends who find out that we worked with *Time Team* is;
"What was it like working with Tony, Mick, Phil, Carenza etc?"
"Surprisingly normal," would be this writer's reply. Unfortunately, Carenza was not there on this site, but the others were. Phil. Harding was extremely hard working and hands-on, not afraid to express an opinion. Mick Aston is knowledgeable and approachable. Tony Robinson, as befitted his status and salary did not appear much on site, but **always** found time to sign autographs, or pose for photographs with children. He went out of his way to explain the site to two school parties. Victor Ambrus was quiet, almost shy, whilst Stewart Ainsworth and John Gaiter were friendly but efficient and professional.

Time Team always uses local experts and consultants. Two of the experts were our own Simon Tomson, and Phil Abramson who has dug with us before. Anthea Boylston from Bradford University whom many of us know, was the visiting human bone expert.

There has been much criticism of *Time Team* in the past, mainly from stuffier professionals who do not realise the immense goodwill they generate for archaeology as a whole. Some of the criticism has been because little recording is seen in the programmes. However, our members both professional and amateur helped with a lot of recording; they appreciate how boring this would look on television.

P&DAS put a lot of effort into *Time Team* Castleford. It got a lot in return.

Field Director.

Dear Eric,

I am just writing to say thank you from the whole of Time Team for the fantastic work done by you and the rest of the P&DAS during our dig in Castleford.

By general concensus, in addition to your Pitt Rivers Award, your society has been voted one of the best that Time Team has ever worked with. We really appreciate all of your skilled and dedicated work, and without it the dig would not have been as hugely successful as it was.

We feel confident that the Castleford programme will be one of the best of the series, mainly because of the fantastic atmosphere created by everyone from the local area. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did. Thanks again.

Yours,
Ben.

Time Team's Phil, Tony, Guy and Mick with P&DAS excavation team. Photo N.Kelly

A GALLO-BELGIC STATER FROM NORTH YORKSHIRE.

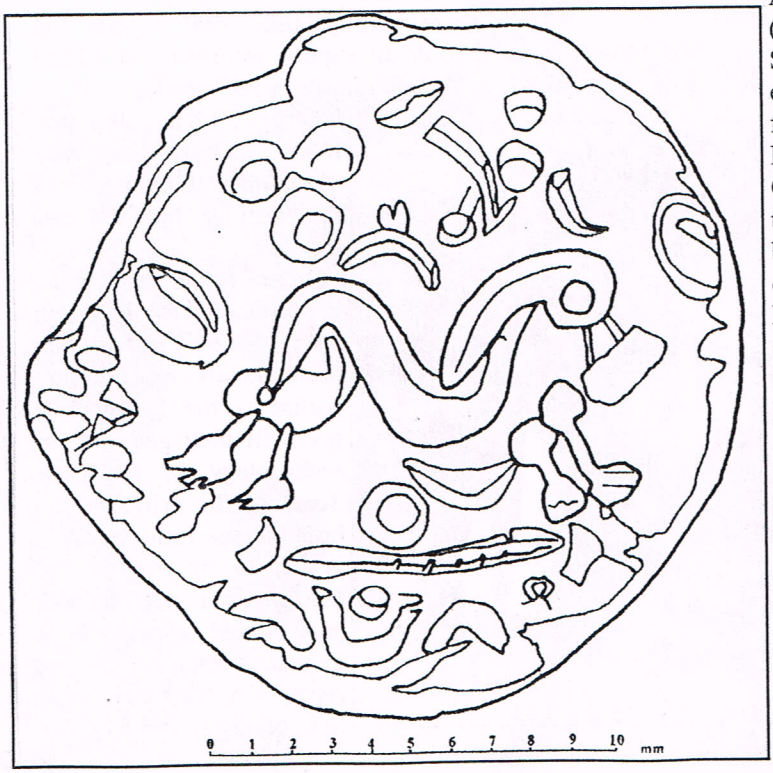
by Simon J N Tomson, lately of the Wood Hall Archaeological Trust Ltd.

In June 2000, a Celtic gold coin was found on land at Lead Mill Farm, Saxton, near Tadcaster in North Yorkshire.

The coin was found by Andrew Green an amateur archaeologist whilst metal-detecting on pasture land to the north east of St Mary's Church, Lead, and the earthworks of the associated deserted settlement. (The exact location is not being made public at the farmer's request.)

The coin was identified by Dr P de Jersey of the Celtic Coin Index at the Institute of Archaeology, Oxford. It is recorded on the index under reference 00.1120. Dr de Jersey contributed some notes on the find from which the following is, in part, taken. I am indebted to Dr de Jersey for this information and for his permission to reproduce it here.

The coin is a Gallo-Belgic E uniface of Van Arsdell's (1989) type 54-1, see Allen and Nash (1980) plate 17 no.238 and Cunliffe (1974) plate 27 no.3 for illustrations of this type. The coin is one of an estimated output of over a million struck in the territory of the Ambiani tribe centred on modern Amiens in Northern France. This coin type is thought to have been produced in very large numbers (possibly as many as 1.5m) to pay mercenary and local troops fighting Caesar during the Gallic Wars in the period 58-54 BC.



The coin is 15mm in diameter and weighs 6.1g. It has uneven "ragged" edges. The concave *reverse* shows a prancing horse facing right delineated in bas relief with an oval "wheel" to the left. the convex *obverse* is blank, although there is a fragment of unmelted scrap or native gold embedded in it. The typical content of this coin type is about 60% gold, 30% silver, and 10% copper.

This type is found over most of the coin-using areas of Iron Age England, (see Cunliffe (1974) fig. 5:3 p 62 for distribution map.) except the south-west, and there are several hundred recorded from Britain. None had been recorded, however, from Yorkshire until this example. Barton upon Humber and Grimsby/Scartho were the most northerly find-spots recorded until now.

The coin was found deeply buried (at the limit of detection-range) and does not appear to be significantly worn. It could therefore represent an ancient loss.

The find location is 6.7km east of the hillfort at Barwick in Elmet, where Roman coins of the period 196-173 BC have been found (Ramm 1980). A system of undated earthwork dykes, (The Ridge, Becca Banks, The Rein, South Dyke and an un-named eastern element at Saxton south of the Cock Beck) form a west to east link between Barwick Hillfort and the coin's find-spot. The Cock Beck also unites the two points as the dyke-system clearly follows it on both banks. If the dyke system is Iron Age in date and is associated with Barwick Hillfort, it may possibly represent part of a tribal boundary. This could provide a context for the coins loss on such a boundary.

The coin has now been purchased by the Yorkshire Museum, York (with the partial help of a donation from P&DAS).

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