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(incorporating the Cambs and Hunts Archaeological
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EDITORIAL

This is the last *PCAS* I shall edit (having decided that I should concentrate on my own research until senility overtakes me). The new Editor will be Alison Taylor, Cambridgeshire County Archaeologist for more than twenty years, and probably the first local archaeologist I met on my return to the 'old country' after many years in Australia. Alison's kindness and friendship, and her organisational abilities, I value highly, and I am delighted to edit this volume in her honour, at a time when she is beginning a new career as a consultant.

Many of the articles in this volume have been written by Alison's colleagues at the County Council, others by friends who have been associated with her and Cambridgeshire archaeology over many years, and this volume therefore concentrates on areas which I hope she will find of interest: around the massive piece of work on the Cambridgeshire Dykes are several shorter (but not small or insignificant) papers; all concerned with sites investigated in Cambridgeshire since 1974, and since Alison's appointment as County Archaeologist.

With our good wishes for future blossoming.

AUDREY MEANEY

Alison Taylor FSA, MIFA: Cambridgeshire County Archaeologist 1974–1997

Tim Malim

In every generation over the past one hundred and fifty years, one or two individuals have stood out as exceptional representatives of Cambridgeshire archaeology, men like Babington, McKenny Hughes, Fox, Fowler and Lethbridge, whose knowledge of the county's past was encyclopaedic and whose interest in the preservation and investigation of Cambridgeshire's archaeological heritage was of crucial importance. Alison Taylor must surely rank with these for her vast achievement as County Archaeologist during the last twenty-three years. Having worked closely with Alison for a decade in my capacity as Head of the Archaeological Field Unit, I am privileged to have been asked to summarise here her contribution to the archaeology of Cambridgeshire.

Alison's childhood home in Stevenage is close enough to the county's boundaries to call her a local girl, and although she has dug in Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight, the majority of her archaeological career has been spent in the eastern counties. As a teenager she dug an acre of flints at Grenstien DMV in Norfolk in 1965, and then underwent full initiation into the digging fraternity by excavating at Muckling in the winter of 1966, when all the experienced archaeologists stayed firmly in the tea-hut. Alison has gone on to demonstrate a profound independence of attitude and pioneering spirit during her thirty-odd years as a professional archaeologist. Her deep enthusiasm for the subject was glimpsed early, when she was the very first student to apply to the new Department of Archaeology at Southampton (and had to be sent away for a year as the course had not been fully set up). She read joint honours in archaeology and history from 1967–70, as part of Barry Cunliffe's first intake; he included Alison in the team that cut the first sec-

tion through the rampart at Danebury in 1969. Perhaps more relevant to her later career was her supervision of a barrow group excavation on the Isle of Wight, where she indulged in some experimental archaeology, cutting and arranging the gorse around the burial mound and then setting it ablaze with an 'appropriate' ritual. Although there was no academic publication of this event, after graduation her enthusiasm for popularising archaeology led Alison to edit a national archaeological magazine called *Ago*, but unfortunately competition from *Current Archaeology* was too great, and within a year it folded.

After supervising sites in Lincoln, Alison went to Bedfordshire in 1972 to help on schemes that David and Evelyn Baker had set up on the creation of an Archaeology Service for the county, conducting an extensive parish survey by bicycle, and later jointly directing excavations at Roxton with Peter Woodward. It was while she was eating sandwiches during a balmy Roxton lunch break that a job advert in the *Guardian* caught Alison's eye, for County Archaeological Officer to the Cambridgeshire Archaeological Committee.

In November 1974, Alison was appointed by John Alexander, with a broad brief that covered not only advice to the planning authority and thus prevention of the wholesale destruction of archaeological sites, but also the creation of a Sites and Monuments Record to assist in this task, and a wider remit to involve the public and raise the profile of local archaeology, as well as bringing archaeology into conventional education, within the newly formed county of greater Cambridgeshire. For the first few years, Alison's position was a bureaucratic spaghetti junction; she was employed by the CAC, with annual grants from the Department

of Environment, financial administration from Cambridge City Council, and office space from the County Council. In spite of the potential difficulties of such an arrangement, she made great steps forward: the SMR maps and card index were begun in 1975, agreements were established with the Districts and County for monitoring of planning applications, and archaeology was written into the County Structure Plan for the first time. Alison followed these achievements by setting up a programme of rescue excavations, successfully applying for DoE and MSC funding to help the overstretched voluntary groups that had carried out these tasks previously, and in 1976 David Hall was appointed as the County Council's Fenland Survey Officer. By 1977 Alison was holding monthly 'Archaeology Workshops' in Cambridge Central Library, the SMR was enhanced by crop-marks sketched from the collection of the Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography, and she had begun a public education programme. The first popular publications on the county's archaeology were written by Alison in 1978 and printed by Oleander Press, the first archaeological store was created in Castle Street, and later that year Francis Pryor was appointed as the County Council's Welland Valley Field Officer, complementing the work undertaken to the west of Peterborough by the Nene Valley Research Committee. 1979 saw the passing of the Archaeological Areas and Monuments Act and a review of all county sites to recommend those suitable for scheduling. It was only after this, in 1980, that a permanent post as County Archaeologist was formally adopted for Alison by the County Council, based in the Department of Land and Buildings.

During the 1980s, Alison developed the County Council Archaeology Section, seeking funding from a variety of sources so that up to 25 temporary staff were on the books at one time. Surveys were undertaken of Neolithic sites, redundant churches, and moats, while the team also responded to threats requiring archaeological rescue, the largest of which was the excavation on Castle Hill, Cambridge, where new buildings on the Shire Hall site revealed a large part of the Roman town. One of Alison's most important achievements, however, with her MSC workforce and County Council colleagues, was to initiate one of the first computerised Sites and Monuments Records in the country on the powerful 'Stairs' mainframe. This involved checking and synthesising records from a great variety of sources, and making use of any vacant terminals in offices throughout Shire Hall. Archaeologists came to

be regarded with some caution by County Council employees who were not used to such irregular activities. Mud on the stairs was another issue of concern. To alleviate the problems of space (and mud) Alison persuaded the County to convert a redundant classroom block at Fulbourn for an archaeological store and processing area.

It was also through Alison's MSC funding that the first educational publications were produced by the Archaeology Office, and display panels were designed for use at schools, libraries, and other public events. The biggest of these were the East of England Shows, where Alison and staff could be found in period costume, with painted back-drops, artefacts, and even live chickens, as the team encouraged children to make contact with the past, and the activities of the Archaeology Office were widely promoted. In another sphere, Alison helped to found the Heritage Officers Group within the County Council, allowing discussion and cooperation between like-minded professionals isolated in diverse departments. Alison enjoyed close cooperation with museums such as the University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography and the Folk Museum, which participated in joint exhibitions and mutual support. Alison wrote and erected the first archaeological information boards at Wandlebury, Devils Dyke and other monuments, and became known nationally as a pioneer in archaeology and education. Amateur involvement in archaeology was actively encouraged, and, jointly through the Cambridge Antiquarian Society's Archaeological Panel and Cambridgeshire County Council, small grants were made available to local societies. On Alison's initiative, *Conduit* was started as a free publication to keep those interested in the heritage of the county informed of what others were doing. Alison was much in demand to talk at meetings, and began giving an annual lecture to CAS on The Archaeological Year in Cambridgeshire.

The later '80s saw the termination of MSC funding, but the argument had been made for a larger staff at the Archaeology Office. Alison on her own could not carry out all the duties expected of the emerging Service: feeding into County Council policies, strategies and action plans; maintaining and developing the SMR; advising on planning matters; attending public enquiries; responding to development threats; excavating, recording and publishing sites; carrying out preemptive survey work; promoting an awareness of the importance of archaeology amongst young and old alike, and developing the educational side of the service.



In addition, Alison's interests were moving on to the management of monuments, again leading the field nationally in her endeavours to ensure their long-term preservation and presentation. First English Heritage and then County Council funding established a part-time Sites and Monuments Record Officer in 1985, followed by a part-time clerical assistant, then in 1987 grants from the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, English Heritage and the County Council enabled a post as Alison's field assistant to be created, and in 1988 her first full-time Assistant County Archaeologist was appointed.

The following two years saw great strides by Alison and her new team in developing 'Cambridgeshire Archaeology' (as the County's Archaeology Section was popularly known). She acquired funding to undertake and publish two major surveys (Archaeology of the Cambridgeshire River Gravels and Archaeology on the Cambridgeshire County Farms Estate), and created a professional field operation for the Service under myself, beginning with excavations at Ely North Range, Wimpole *mansio* and

Barrington Anglo-Saxon cemetery, and seconding staff to run the important Bronze and Iron Age excavations at Fengate Power Station. The Archaeological Field Unit has since grown to 30 staff, all funded by external sources, and the volume of artefacts requiring attention has enabled Alison to add another dimension to the County Archaeology Service with the appointment of an archaeological conservator in 1991.

English Heritage continued to give financial support for new initiatives and Alison proved herself extremely adept at finding partnership funding from the Countryside Commission and District Councils, especially South Cambridgeshire, to pilot a programme of Monument Management which became the envy of her counterparts in neighbouring counties. A fresh batch of archaeological interpretation boards were designed and erected as a parallel project, and a sustained campaign of cooperation with County Farms colleagues and English Heritage funding allowed all scheduled monuments on County land to be saved from damaging arable cultivation. In 1993, with the cooperation of County Council colleagues and South Cam-

bridgeshire District Council, Alison created a permanent Archaeology Store for the County in a converted barn at Worts Farm, Landbeach.

This location, opposite Jack Ravendale's house, was very appropriate, as Alison had worked closely with him and other local historians and landscape archaeologists, delving into the origins of local communities to help bring archaeology alive for the people of Cambridgeshire. She always encouraged amateur archaeologists and metal-detectorists alike to show her what they had found, so that a central record could be maintained, and she overwhelmed the antipathy that many of them feel towards professional archaeologists with her openness and enthusiasm for their knowledge.

Public archaeology continued to be a key aim for Alison in the 1990s, and she initiated a series of events such as guided walks around historic towns, villages and monuments, archaeology activity days at selected monuments, and displays at libraries and museums, as well as producing an annual leaflet, *Archaeology for All*, to publicize them. Alison was also instrumental in running a series of concerts at Guardianship sites, the 'Ancient Echoes' series, in 1993 and 1994, to help advertise the formation of the County's new Heritage Service, and to make these interesting buildings more accessible.

Typically, Alison's latest venture is as audacious in scope as it is down-to-earth in character: having known more about the archaeology of the county than any one other individual over the past 20 years, since 1995 she has been working on a series of volumes to succeed the seminal work and pocket SMR written by Sir Cyril Fox in 1923, and, true to her overriding principles, this project is designed once again to make archaeology more accessible to the general public.

Alison has always put the interests of archaeology foremost in her dealings with all levels of authority, even at the expense of personal gain, she has been a leading communicator, stirring ordinary people's interest in their past, and she has been a pioneer in bringing archaeology into education and in looking for best management of existing monuments, to ensure their survival and enjoyment by future generations. Through her vision and energy she has formed a many-faceted Archaeology Service, and it is instructive to us all to see how she has achieved so much with so few resources. From her appointment in 1974 she has created a role as County Archaeologist which has become pivotal in the continued well being of the sites and monuments of Cambridgeshire and in the attraction that archaeology holds

for the county's present-day communities, providing a focus for strategic planning, and influencing decisions at the highest levels. She has been an archaeologist of the people in the best traditions of local authority service, and from her retirement in September 1997 we look to the colleagues she leaves behind to see that her legacy is continued and her achievements as County Archaeologist preserved for the future.

This volume of the *Proceedings* is therefore dedicated to Alison Taylor in recognition of her crucial contribution to the Archaeology of Cambridgeshire.

Publications by Alison Taylor

- 1975. Cainhoe Castle excavation 1973 (with Peter Woodward). *Bedfordshire Archaeology* 10.
- 1977. Skeleton at Wandlebury hill-fort. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 67.
- 1977. Roman Bank, a medieval sea-wall: a culvert beneath the Sea Bank at Newton, near Wisbech. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 67.
- 1981. A Saxon glass beaker from Dry Drayton, Cambridgeshire. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 71.
- 1981. Recent discoveries in Gonville and Caius College. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 71.
- 1981. The Barrows of Cambridgeshire, in *Barrows of East Anglia*, ed. A. J. Lawson *et al.*
- 1982. Excavations at Roxton, Bedfordshire 1972-4: the post-Bronze Age settlement (with Peter Woodward). *Bedfordshire Archaeology* 16.
- 1982-3. Churches out of use in Cambridgeshire. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 72.
- 1982-3. Excavation at the site of St Benet's Church, Huntingdon, 1980. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 72.
- 1984. A Roman stone from Stuntney and gazetteer of similar coffins in Cambridgeshire. *Proceeding of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 73.
- 1985. Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and medieval artefacts from the southern Fen-edge, Cambridgeshire. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 74.
- 1985. A Bronze Age barrow cemetery and associated settlement at Roxton, Beds (with Peter Woodward). *Archaeology Journal* 42.

1991. Cambridge Castle Ditch (with Tim Malim). *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 80.
1992. Managing monuments in an arable landscape. *Archaeology in Britain*.
1993. A Roman lead coffin with pipeclay figurines from Arrington, Cambridgeshire. *Britannia* 24.
1993. Flat earth erosion control: caring for archaeological monuments in Cambridgeshire, in *Erosion on Archaeological Earthworks*. IFA and ACAO.
1997. *The Archaeology of Cambridgeshire*, volume I: *South-West Cambridgeshire*. Cambridgeshire County Council.
- In press. *The Archaeology of Cambridgeshire*, volume II: *South-East Cambridgeshire*. Cambridgeshire County Council.
- Forthcoming. A Roman child-burial with animal figurines and pottery, from Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire. *Britannia*.
- Cambridgeshire County Council Annual Reports 1990–95.
- Annual Reports in *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, *Medieval Archaeology*, *Archaeology in Britain*, etc.
- Editorship and twice yearly reports in *Conduit*.

Booklets

- Caring for Churchyards*.
- Castles in Cambridgeshire*.
- Prehistoric Cambridgeshire*. Oleander Press.
- Anglo-Saxon Cambridgeshire*. Oleander Press.
- Normans in Cambridgeshire* (with J. Reck and F. Hivernel).

Leaflets

- Earliest Cambridgeshire*.
- Archaeological Sites and Monuments for Cambridgeshire*.
- Archaeology and Planning*.
- Archaeology in Gravel Quarries*.
- Archaeology in the Field*.
- Managing Archaeological Monuments*.
- Sites of Interest Open to the Public in Cambridgeshire*.
- Archaeological Resources Available to Schools*.

Acknowledgements

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Books: Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Vol.3, ed. by William Smith (London 1862) pp.23-4.

Theses: Mark Campbell, 'The changing residential patterns in Toronto, 1880-1910' (unpubl. M.A. thesis, University of Toronto 1971).

Articles: K.R. Dark, 'Archaeological survey at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, 1984', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* 74 (1985) pp.81-4.

Chapters in books: John Patten, 'Changing occupational structures in the East Anglian countryside, 1500-1700', in H.S.A. Fox & R.A. Butlin (ed.), *Change in the Countryside: Essays on Rural England, 1500-1900* (London 1979) pp.103-21.

Subsequent references to previously cited works should use *ibid.*, *op. cit.* or *loc. cit.*, but if more than one work by an author is cited the reference should be given thus: Patten, 'Changing occupational structures', pp.115-17.

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