

cause only Sundays were available. Builders were already working on the site and trenches had to be back-filled on Sunday night so that work could continue on Monday.

COLEG's first full-scale dig was in November 1964 beside Cannon Street station in Upper Thames Street. This site proved to be worth all the effort expended by COLEG. The Roman walls were massive and extensive. Peter Marsden concluded, considering the extent, quality and plan of the buildings, that it could only have been an important administrative centre and the home of a Roman official of some standing.

From here the Group moved to the Guildhall area. The eastern side of a Roman fort was uncovered just inside the boundary of Guildhall car park. A considerable length of the ditch and of the robbed foundation trench of the wall was exposed, adding to the information Professor Grimes already had on the fort.

At this time as many as 50 members were digging regularly and it was possible to work two sites simultaneously. Therefore, while one team worked on the fort, another excavated the foundations of St. Michael Bassishaw, a medieval church directly north of Guildhall.

COLEG then worked on the site of Dyers Arms, again off Cannon Street and near Bush Lane. The area which could be excavated was only 20ft wide. To the north were a medieval well and chalk cess-pit, in which was found a gold noble of A.D. 1400. To the south were thick Roman walls and a small

portion of a hypocaust, which presumably connected with buildings found last century beneath Cannon Street station itself, but incompletely recorded.

Members of COLEG were now anxious to do more than simply dig. Hard work and a common interest had created an atmosphere of friendship between members who wanted to discuss the various aspects of archaeology, to consider the possibilities of a site and the results of the excavation.

Dr. Huelin, a friend of the Director of Guildhall Museum was kind enough, in February 1966, to offer a room in St. Margaret Pattens Church, where the Society holds monthly meetings.

In December, 1966, it adopted a constitution to form the City of London Archaeological Society. The meetings are well attended and the atmosphere one of lively interest.

Twice-a-year outings are planned to places of archaeological interest. The Guildhall Museum has purchased tools for the Society and those borrowed from Wandsworth Historical Society and from London and Middlesex Archaeological Society have now been returned. A hut was donated. COLAS also has a site on the estate of a patron, J. A. P. Charrington, Esq. where it undertakes the excavation of part of a medieval village as a holiday and long week-end project.

Currently, excavation under the direction of Peter Marsden is taking place on the site of the old Coal Exchange where part of a Roman bath was found in the 19th century. More of the bath has now been exposed and it is hoped that eventually a large portion of it will be preserved.

IRENE WADE

Current Projects

Rescue excavations at Mucking, Essex

DIGGING will take place during most of December at a rescue excavation at Mucking, Essex, (TQ 673 803) where work has been in progress for three years. The discovery of the forty acre crop-mark sites, lying on the higher, Boyn Hill, terrace was made known by Dr. J. K. St. Joseph in *Antiquity* (volume XXXVIII number 151, September 1964, p. 217, Pl. XXXVII). They are now scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Act.

The range of features is from Beaker grave (a flexed burial with all-over-corded Beaker, and barbed and tanged flint arrowheads) to Saxon sunk floor huts, of which 68 have now been examined. Two features at least owe their existence to the strategic value of the terrain, facing the straight and widening estuary with its dual character of landfall and outlook.

These are the Double Rings, a hill-fort of Iron A, and a mid-first century A.D. double-ditched, rectangular enclosure which almost exactly overlies it and had undoubted military significance. Farmers and herders have left less dramatic traces of their lives in the slight network of late Bronze Age enclosure ditches, the hut gully circles (with and without attached compounds) of Iron B, and a ditched layout which almost certainly belongs to a Romano-British villa. Whether the occupants

of the Saxon huts were soldiers or settlers is still to be determined.

This is the first time in Britain that such an extensive attempt has been made to investigate crop marks acre by acre. Since the sites are being 100 per cent destroyed, it has seemed logical at any rate to attempt 100 per cent rescue.

An interim note (to appear in the next issue of the *Antiquaries Journal* includes contributions by Miss V. I. Evison and Dr. J. L. N. Myres on the exceptional early Saxon material — notably a five piece set of belt equipment from a grave, and decorated 5th century pottery from huts.

The rapid rate of quarrying offers plenty of work for field archaeologists in the London area, especially outside the main Easter and summer digging periods.

If you are keen to take part, please write for more information to: Excavation Supervisor for M.P.B.W., Mucking Excavation, Mucking, Stanford le Hope, Essex.

Excavation takes place seven days a week. For regular weekend diggers some help with travel costs should be available; and for really tough campers with own equipment, and two digging days to offer, a camp hut should be available.

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