

DIGGING NEAR TOWER BRIDGE

THE COVER photograph shows the dig at Mark Brown Wharf, Potters' Fields, Bermondsey, which was directed for Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society by Francis Celoria of Keele University. The site is close to a 17th century tin-glazed earthenware pottery, and to the dumping ground near this excavated by Dr. Celoria in 1965. The area was quite densely built up from the 16th century with riverside wharves, industrial premises and dwellings.

When the surface concrete had been removed, all previous layers could be assumed to be pre 1856, which is when the demolished wharves had been built. Most of the material sealed below was of 1700-50 date range. This was overlying a thick layer of pitched timbers, tar and rubble, under which the 17th century layers were finally reached. A complex of 17th century buildings fairly rich in pottery and small finds occupies the river side of the excavation. It is intended to do more work on the site during the autumn.

LOCAL MUSEUM WORKSHOPS

AS WAS REPORTED in the Summer issue, several societies are establishing archaeological centres or workshops in conjunction with their local museum. However, there is still a reluctance on the part of some museums to provide anything but the basic facilities in this field.

The report of the Survey of Provincial Museums and Galleries for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, published in 1963, had this to say of local historical and archaeological museums:

"But far more than the acquisition and display is demanded of a museum which is to play the part it should play in the archaeological life of the community. Some museums owe their existence to the local archaeological societies, share their finances and have always been their home, offices and meeting place; and their curator has been an officer of the society. This close link between the museum and a society sometimes remains when a museum has been taken over by a local authority, but even where it does not remain, or has never existed, the museum must at the very least be able to offer a library, lecture room, reading and study room for whatever society or societies, independent groups, Adult Education classes or simply interested individuals, form the local or regional units of archaeological endeavour. What more it can do depends on the energy and ability of its curator and staff but it ought to take a leading part in local excavations and to be prepared to house, treat for preservation, classify and publish the results of local excavation and research."

A local society cannot function efficiently in recovering knowledge through archaeological investigation unless it has the support of the local authority, and the museum loses the value of the local societies' enthusiasm unless it is prepared to provide facilities and professional guidance for the excavation, study and publication of the antiquities uncovered.

THE TUDOR PALACE AT GREENWICH

AN EXCAVATION aiming to reveal the alignment and structure of the river-side Tudor palace of Placentia is taking place in the Grand Square of the Royal Naval College, directed by Phillip Dixon on behalf of the Ministry of Public Building and Works.

Henry VII's palace, dating from about 1500 may have incorporated the house which Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester

built at Greenwich around 1428. The palace was a favourite with the Tudor monarchs and has many associations with Elizabeth I. It probably fell into dis-repair by the mid-17th century, and Charles II decided to have the building demolished to make way for a new palace, which although began in 1664 was never completed. A naval hospital designed by Wren was built about 1700 and this building has been used as the Royal Naval College since 1873.

MITCHAM GAS-PIPE LINE

EXCAVATIONS in Mitcham in 1969 indicated the potentially rich remains of the area, and as a gas-pipe line is about to be laid from Croydon to Mitcham, the need for a team of archaeological observers in the area is urgent and immediate. Anyone interested in watching for sites along the pipe line should contact E. N. Montague, 9 Devonshire Road, Sutton, Surrey.

CLAPHAM TRANSPORT MUSEUM

ALTHOUGH the Ombudsman, Sir Edmund Compton, has upheld the decision to move the rail exhibits to York, his report does reveal certain faults in the administrative actions of the Department of Education and Science which may have misled people who were deeply concerned with the important matter of the dispersal of the present collection of transport exhibits.

His report states that the attendance figures for the present Museums at Clapham and York, which the Department used to defend the move, were shown to be "not as the Department had been stating." A visit by a single person to the two parts of the Museum at York had been counted for some years as two visits. Also it would appear from the report that a meeting called by the former Minister for the Arts was not as representative as it should have been.

Mr. Harry Graham, secretary of the Clapham Society, has said that he did not think the battle was lost yet, especially as the present Minister has promised to look into the matter.

The future of the London Transport exhibits is still in jeopardy, the Greater London Council remains strangely silent on the subject, and while other cities build new local Transport Museums, London may soon be without one.

"LONDINIUM"

THE LONDON Branch of the Classical Association has just published a short practical guide to the visible remains of Roman London. This pocket-size booklet is intended to provide an introduction to the most interesting parts of the Wall, the Fort, the Temple of Mithras, baths, mosaic pavements and smaller Roman finds housed mainly in the Guildhall, British and London Museums.

Authorities at the main London museums co-operated by listing their most important Roman exhibits, and valuable assistance was given by owners of premises where Roman finds are still preserved.

"Londinium" is obtainable, price 4/- (post free), from the Headmaster, Twickenham Grammar School, Waldegrave Park, Twickenham, Middx.