

The end of volume I

THE EDITOR

WITH THIS, the last issue to complete the first volume of *the London Archaeologist*, a good opportunity is provided to look back over the last four years and to consider some aspects of the magazine.

Short of an opinion poll it is difficult to be precise as to the general reaction to the magazine. However, every year the number of direct subscribers has increased and the Subscriptions Secretary often receives short notes of appreciation with renewals.

The current circulation figure is over the 2,000 copies, of which 1,600 go to regular subscribers. This suggests that *the London Archaeologist* has become established in local archaeology. Indeed, it is also taken by a number of overseas readers, particularly in North America. One recent subscription even hales from Peking!

Independent Role

During the four years *the London Archaeologist* has been able to maintain its independent role. This has helped the magazine to acquire charitable status which was achieved with a slight reorganisation. As a number of eagle-eyed readers will have noticed the magazine is now published by the London Archaeologist Association. The L.A. Publishing Committee is still in being and in fact now manages the Association. The Committee continues to consist of the five main officers and representatives of five local societies.

The fact that everybody connected with the magazine undertakes their role on a spare time voluntary basis provides the great strength of *the London Archaeologist*. This collaboration in running the magazine has also produced a much closer relationship between societies and individuals than existed before. Although no professional archaeologists are connected with the production of the magazine, *the London Archaeologist* has nonetheless received a large measure of support from them, both directly and indirectly.

Archaeology and the Public

The main object of *the London Archaeologist* is 'the advancement of archaeology among the public.' This is achieved in part by publishing interim reports and other papers to satisfy the archaeologist, but the rest is very much an exercise in public relations. If a more enlightened attitude towards archaeology

is to be forthcoming from officialdom, then it is the public who have to be brought into the picture. After all even the highest official is basically only an individual member of the public.

Particularly of late the magazine has been erratic in its publication date. This occurrence is of course one of the penalties to be paid when all the work is done by volunteers in their spare time. Unfortunately the demands of ones livelihood, rescue excavation, local society obligations, holidays and the like often intervene. However in an effort to overcome this problem, the manner of production is being changed so that, in theory at least, there is spare capacity to meet eventualities. It is hoped that all future numbers will be issued within the first fortnight of the appropriate month, although the next number may take a little longer — it is already in galley form.

Finance

In the last four years printing costs have risen considerably. In addition, two rounds of increases have doubled the postage charge—nearly a quarter of a subscription goes this way. During its first four years *the London Archaeologist* has made respectively a loss of £65, a profit of £5 and a loss of £21. A further small loss is expected for the current year despite the continuing increase in circulation.

As a result the London Archaeologist Publishing Committee has come to the very regrettable conclusion that the price of the magazine must soon be raised. The magazine has been run on a very tight budget all its life and at the present moment still owes £100 of its 'grub stake' which has of course been used to meet the accumulated deficit of £81.

However, because of the 'freeze' and other factors, the subscription rate is not likely to be increased before December 1973.

Tribute

Before finishing this report I must pay heartfelt tribute to the many people who so freely give their time towards the production, administration, distribution and promotion of *the London Archaeologist*. The unstinted help given by the various officers and helpers is for me a very stimulating and gratifying experience.