

# Books

**Ancient Diseases — The elements of palaeopathology** by Srboľjub Zivanovic (Translated by Lovett F. Edwards) *Methuen* 316 pp. (hard cover), 60 black and white plates, 9 figures, index. £17.50.

ON THE FRONT flap of the dust-cover for this book is the following statement — “Archaeologists and physical anthropologists have always had difficulty in understanding the true mean and significance of different pathological signs in human remains from archaeological sites. Many mistakes have occurred simply because of lack of medical knowledge.” I think this close to the truth, but I am not so sure that the contents of this book have in any way provided answers to these basic problems. To be of real value, books of this type need to be of practical assistance to the archaeologist (I cannot speak for the physical anthropologist), as well as providing information on the pathological and medical aspects.

There is little doubt that the medical content of the book is first class, or that the many years of work have provided Dr. Zivanovic with a depth of experience from which we could all benefit. However, to my mind, the book lacks many of those requirements which would make it useful to an archaeologist working in the field, although it might provide some help to a specialist undertaking post-excavation work on human remains. The text is medically orientated and in some cases difficult to follow (even though a glossary of terms is provided), and this could have benefited from more explanation at a general level, i.e. information that might be quickly useful in the field. More photographs might have been used to illustrate the text, although those used in the book are poorly reproduced. Clear and distinct photographs above all else, would have provided the archaeologist with a visual account of the particular pathological problems likely to be encountered, and may have persuaded them to buy an otherwise expensive book.

ALAN THOMPSON

**A Thesaurus of British Archaeology**, by Lesley and Roy Adkins. *David and Charles*, 1982. 319 pp., many figs., bibliog., index. £14.95

**The Penguin Dictionary of Archaeology**, by Warwick Bray and David Trump. *Penguin Books Ltd.*, 1982 (second edition). 283 pp. 16 maps, many figs., index. £3.50.

“WHAT DO YOU SAY when you’ve said hello” was the title of a book by psychologist Eric Berne.

It could also be used as sub-titles of these books. When the beginner — amateur or student — has said “hello” to archaeology, what does he do next? Having become acquainted, perhaps through an excavation or a lecture course, he will need two aids to pursue his interest further: (i) a working knowledge of the language of archaeology and (ii) a selected reading list on the topics in which he is particularly interested. Both of these books try to meet the first need, and the *Thesaurus* also tries to meet the second.

How well do they succeed? Geographically, Bray and Trump have the wider coverage (the world) and can be expected to be less intensive given the roughly equal lengths of the books. There is a subtle difference in emphasis between them — Bray and Trump (being academics) treat archaeology as a body of knowledge while the Adkins (being employed field archaeologists) tend to see archaeology more as an activity. Presentation differs too, the *Dictionary* being strictly alphabetical with lots of cross-references, while the *Thesaurus* (which my dictionary defines as ‘treasury’) is structured by period and topic, is written more discursively and therefore needs its index to help the reader to find his way. The *Dictionary* has perhaps a more even coverage of widely differing subjects, while the Adkins seem to give better coverage to the topics that interest them more. The reader’s choice will depend on his inclinations, the armchair archaeologist probably choosing the *Dictionary* and the more practically minded the *Thesaurus* to meet need (i).

However, it’s on need (ii) that the Adkins really score, with a bibliography of over 500 entries to help the newcomer find his way into the subject. This and the structured references to it are worth having even if you never have time to read the rest of the book. If you want to say more than “hello”, this is the book to help you by performing the necessary introductions. If the price deters you, don’t panic. A paperback edition has been published in March 1983 by Papermac at a price of £5.95, under the title *The Handbook of British Archaeology*.

CLIVE ORTON

**The Penguin Guide to Prehistoric England and Wales** by James Dyer. *Penguin*. 385 pp, 32 plates, 45 figures, index. £3.95 paperback.

WHAT A DELIGHT to find a reasonably priced book which is so full of information, and that can be slipped into a pocket so that on walks or holidays

in this country, when places of interest are visited, a brief account is at the fingertips. Mr. Dyer stresses in the foreword that the sites are his personal selection, but he nevertheless finishes up with a comprehensive group of site representing much of the viewable prehistory of England and Wales.

The introduction briefly sets the scene for the prehistoric period, whilst the main part of the book is divided into two main sections, i.e. England and Wales, with each section sub-divided into its various counties, which in turn are alphabetically ordered for ease of reference. Each county has its selection of sites described, and their location is made easy by a six figure O.S. reference, plus the name of the nearest town or village. Also, each site name has a

number beside it, which can be related to a series of maps at the front of the book; so that for the county of Dorset, for example, there would be — 19 HENGISTBURY HEAD, Bournemouth SZ: 164910.

The descriptions of the various sites are succinct and to the point, and although the figures are few in number (when compared to the number of sites and the area covered), and in most cases small in size, they are very relevant and useful. Also the photographs are well produced, when the price of book is considered, and in general Mr. Dyer is to be congratulated on a well thought out and interestingly produced book.

ALAN THOMPSON

---

*(Continued from p.277)*

Roman period, from the first century onwards, and seen in the N part of the site. The unusually large area of excavation made it possible to trace the alignment and fall of the gullies over long distances. These features produced much animal bone, pottery, and metal work. The Rangoon Street site lay just within the walls of the Roman City, and well back from the main road (Fenchurch Street); it is likely that this area was taken up with gardens, or given over to industrial purposes, such as butchers' yards or even rubbish tips, as suggested by the plentiful animal bone and pottery.

In the N part of the site, the Roman features were sealed by about 0.3m (1ft) of dark earth, deposited some time at the end of the Roman period, or later. It contained two human skeletons, buried together in the same grave, their heads to the north, the head of the upper (female) in the lap the lower (male?) These unusual arrangements suggest some pagan burial practice.

Cut into the dark earth was a large medieval chalk-lined cess-pit, containing fragments of painted window glass, decorated with an heraldic lion and foliage patterns; and a pattern of small rectangular pits, filled with rammed chalk and gravel, perhaps post-pads of a timber-framed structure.

South of Rangoon Street, the lower part of a timber-lined well survived, cut into the gravels and containing much 14th or 15th c pottery, including a watering-pot. The most conspicuous structure on the site was the East India Company's Tea and Drugs warehouse, built in 1796, whose massive brick and stone foundations covered most of the site. Surveyors' plans and elevations of this building survive in the India Office Archives. Associated with the warehouse, but not appearing on any surveyors' drawings, was an underground brick structure, identified as an ice-well. This consisted of a brick dome and cylinder, about 3m (10ft) deep altogether, set in the natural gravel, down to the top of London Clay. It may originally have been built before the warehouse, but was retained when the warehouse was constructed.

**7-10 Foster Lane (TQ 3220 8132) (I. Blair).** A 2 month watching brief funded by Wates Developments Ltd. produced evidence of Roman and later periods from a small area of excavation and from a watching brief on building works. The earliest activity, recorded during the watching brief, consisted of quarry pits cut into the natural brick-earth. Sealing the consolidation of at least one of these pits in the SE corner of the site was a succession of at least eight major road metallings, the earliest of Flavian date, of a NE/SW road. It seems likely that this originally formed the W boundary of an insula which was bounded on the E by the Roman road found at Milk Street in 1977.

Associated with the later road surfaces was a structure fronting directly onto the street to its W. This phase of activity was superseded by a series of linear roadside cuts which are interpreted as gullies. This means that subsequent buildings (which were not recorded) were pushed back behind the new lines of roadside ditches. In the main area of excavation the first series of buildings comprised four internal walls forming a room 3m x 2.5m (10 x 8½ft), its axis parallel to the street, of brickearth sills probably for wattle and daub walls. This contained a domestic hearth similar to those on the GPO Newgate Street Site. The building was destroyed by fire in the mid-to late second (the general date of the road widening) and was replaced by further structures which suffered the same fate in the early/mid third c.

Cutting through the later fire dumps the NE corner of a Roman masonry structure was recorded on the W side of the site, running under Foster Lane. A second masonry structure in the N of the site comprised one NS wall of rammed chalk, on the Roman alignment, which was not robbed until the early 11th c.

The dark earth was found slumped over 3rd c surfaces, though its relationship to the masonry buildings and to the road was not established. External surfaces and stakes of the ?10th c suggest the establishment of Foster Lane. The medieval period was represented by two cesspits, which produced crucibles for metal working, in one case (datable to the 14th c), with traces of gold working upon it. For an important group of fragments of Venetian glass vessels from the 14th c backfill of one of the cesspits, see *Mosaic*, previous issue.

*(For reasons of space, the rest of the Round-up will be published in the next issue).*