

OBITUARY

CHARLES GREEN 1901–1972

Charles Green, Vice-President of the Norfolk and Norwich Archæological Society since 1964, was an archæologist of national repute, well known for his wide experience of excavation and acute assessment of practical situations, past and present. With this he coupled an unerring and disconcertingly rapid ability to grasp the weaker points of the most complex polemic. He was, however, essentially a kindly and shyly sensitive man and the present writer will ever remember the warmth and sincerity of his welcome to East Anglia.

Charles Green was a Lancastrian by birth and he began his career as assistant at the Royal Museum in Salford. He was appointed curator of Gloucester Museum in 1932 and made a study of the Roman city, publishing a number of papers upon its complexities as well as pursuing that region's prehistory. A notable product of this period was his prescient note on the Birdlip burials. To war service with the Royal Air Force he took an archæologist's appreciation and knowledge of air photography and served in the photographic and intelligence branches.

Although his signal achievements were in East Anglian archæology, the many excavations that he carried out for the then Ministry of Works, in the 1950s, must not be overlooked. At the present time, when such operations are quite well equipped and largely student staffed, the difficulties that he often worked under, and overcame, must not be forgotten. Of note there is the near plough-destroyed barrow cemetery at Shrewton, near Stonehenge, the subject of a paper delivered to the Prehistoric Society in 1960.

Charles Green came to East Anglia in 1951 to excavate on the Roman town site at Caister-on-Sea, near Great Yarmouth. He worked at its problems for some four years, isolating the rise and decline of this unsuspected installation across the estuary from Burgh Castle.

His work at Caister led him to appreciate the effects of the fluctuations of the North Sea and he was able to contribute an authoritative section to the *Making of the Broads* (1960). Two by-products of a far-seeing interdisciplinary approach were his papers: A Human Skull from Runham, Norfolk (with Calvin Wells) (*Norfolk Archæology*, XXXII (1961), 311–315) and Broadland Fords and Causeways (*Norfolk Archæology*, XXXII (1961), 316–331). Historical topography is the methodology applied to The Lost Vill of Ness (*Norfolk Archæology*, XXXIV (1969), 2–8) while emergent Industrial Archæological considerations led to the entrancing Herring-Nets and Beatsters (*Norfolk Archæology*, XXXIV (1969), 419–428).

A long experience of boat-handling throughout the length and breadth of the North Sea, and also in Western Irish waters, enabled him to evaluate realistically the potential of both prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon craft. His book on *Sutton Hoo, The Excavation of a Royal Ship-Burial* (London, 1960), acclaimed as a major contribution to our understanding of this unique site, reflected adventurous, though scientific, sea-faring. At the time of his death, he was engaged upon a study of early sea-travel, especially Pictish sea-raids in currachs on the coasts of Roman Britain.

As a member of the National Executive of the Council for British Archæology, Charles Green played a considerable part in guiding that body through its critical formative years. Besides his services to this Society, he was a past President of the Norfolk Research Committee and President of the Great Yarmouth Archæological Society. In various ways, many organisations, national and regional, have benefited by his counsels.

P. A.