

Medieval Settlement Research



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MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT RESEARCH GROUP

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EDITORIAL

It is with great pleasure that I present to you another issue of *Medieval Settlement Research*. In the last volume, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Medieval Settlement Research Group, stressing the important contribution that the Group has made to settlement and landscape studies in Britain, Ireland and beyond. This issue further expands on this, with a range of research papers and reports utilising a wide array of approaches and methodologies, from portable antiquities to the use of satellite imagery in landscape studies. It emphasises the way in which scholars from Britain and Ireland have pushed the subject forwards, not only ‘at home’ but also in the rest of the world.

We start with an excellent paper by D.M. Hadley and J.D. Richards, who use the evidence from the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) to reconstruct a landscape of temporary encampments related to the movements of the Viking Great Army across England. The contribution made by metal detectorists in Britain is invaluable for an improved understanding of this otherwise elusive settlement type, and we hope that readers will be inspired to attend our Winter Seminar on 8 December 2018, for which the main theme will be ‘Settlement in the Danelaw’.

The next three papers all showcase databases of different kinds. A paper by Mirjam Kars and Stijn Heeren introduces the Portable Antiquities of the Netherlands (PAN) scheme, which was founded in 2016 and inspired to some degree by the British PAS. This initiative will open up important new avenues for research for British archaeologists as well, especially for those with an interest in trade and communication networks across the North Sea.

Travelling further away from the British Isles, the next two papers take us to the Mediterranean and beyond. A short paper by Celeste Fiorotto analyses settlement patterns and environment in the Ravenna area in Italy, based on a detailed database of information derived from documentary sources. The fourth and final research paper is written by Robert Bewley and myself. This seeks to demonstrate how landscape archaeological approaches developed in the UK – in particular remote sensing techniques that were pioneered in the middle decades of the twentieth century by (amongst others) some of the founding members of the MSRSG – have set the agenda for landscape-archaeological research on a global scale. It also presents the database of the Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa project, emphasising the importance of incorporating condition assessments into archaeological database systems to place the focus more firmly on the role of heritage in present-day societies.

The Reports section takes us back to the British Isles, but is no less varied in subject matter and approach. Jonathan Hunn and Nicholas Doggett reconstruct the origins of the town of Berkhamsted (Hertfordshire) from an interdisciplinary perspective, based on new archaeological findings and a re-analysis of documentary sources. I.G. Simmons takes a fresh look at the definition of medieval parks in a coastal setting in Lincolnshire. Malcolm Cook reports briefly on the excavations of a moated site in Solihull near Birmingham, and Carenza Lewis reports on yet another successful year of test pit excavations in currently occupied rural settlements in eastern England.

The next contributions take the focus down to individual buildings: Peter Allen and Anthony Cooper highlight the use of gypsum-plaster and lime-ash for flooring in Bingham, Nottinghamshire, also found during test pit excavations. Helena Hamerow and Adam McBride discuss a recently discovered seventh-century ‘great hall complex’ in Oxfordshire, for which investigations were partially sponsored by the MSRSG. This gave rise to a new reconstruction project, the House of Wessex project, which is briefly introduced by project manager Lesley Best.

Following this is a project announcement for the Manifestations of Empire project, carried out at the universities of Exeter and Canterbury Christ Church, which uses palaeoenvironmental analysis to study the end of Roman Britain in south-east Wales. The Reports section is concluded with two short contributions commemorating Lawrence Butler, a pioneering figure in Welsh and English archaeology, who sadly passed away in 2014, focusing in particular on his excavations at Faxton, Northamptonshire.

Thanks to the efforts of many different reviewers and our longstanding Reviews Editor, Neil Christie, this issue’s book review session is particularly broad in scope. The same can be said for the Bibliographies, this year including another excellent list of works relevant to Britain and Ireland compiled by Andy Ford, and an Italian bibliography compiled by Maily Serra.

I hope that this wide array of material will provide something of interest to everyone.

LTH

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The MSRG AGM 2018 and Winter Seminar

The Winter Seminar will take place on 8 December 2018, hosted by the Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester. The seminar will be preceded by a student seminar from 10.00 am, followed by the AGM from 11.30 am. Papers will be presented on the theme of 'Settlement in the Danelaw'. For details of how to register see: <http://medieval-settlement.com/events>.

For other upcoming events, please keep an eye on the MSRG website at <http://medieval-settlement.com/events>.

Research grants

The MSRG can make grants for the support of research by members of the Group within its field of interest. A maximum of £5,000 is available annually until 2021, and applications for sums up to this amount or smaller requests are invited. Grants can cover fieldwork and associated analysis, documentary research, and other appropriate forms of assistance towards eventual publication. A summary report of the work will be required upon completion of the work and, subject to editorial consideration, may be published in *Medieval Settlement Research*. Prospective applicants can find more information and download an application form from <https://medieval-settlement.com/grants-awards/research-grants>.

MEMORIAL PRIZES AND BURSARIES

John Hurst Memorial Prize

The Medieval Settlement Research Group is dedicated to enhancing our understanding of the rural landscape and its settlement in the period c. AD 400-1600. The late John Hurst was a major figure in the development of the Group and in his honour, and to encourage new and young scholars, an annual prize of £200 is offered for the best student paper on any theme in the field of medieval settlement and landscape exploitation in Britain and Ireland. Up to four papers will be selected, to be presented during the morning of the Winter Seminar on 8 December 2018. A panel will judge the entries and an award will be made at the end of the seminar. A summary of the winning entry may also be published in *Medieval Settlement Research*. Full details, including an application form can be found on our website at <https://medieval-settlement.com/grants-awards/dissertation-award>.

Maurice Beresford Memorial Bursaries

In accordance with its aims and in memory of Maurice Beresford, a pioneer in medieval settlement studies and a founder member, the Group awards a number of bursaries annually up to a total value of £400 to help to defray the expenses of attending a conference within the field of the Group's interests. Applicants must be registered as full-time or part-time students. Applications, including the sum applied for and full details of the venue, topic and costs of the conference and its relevance to the applicant's interests, together with the name of a referee, should be submitted in writing by email to the MSRG Secretary. A panel appointed by the Committee of the Group will decide on the awards. Successful applicants should note that reimbursement can only be made after attendance at the conference and after verification of the costs involved.

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Next year's journal will once again include refereed research articles and reports on fieldwork, excavation and other work undertaken during 2018. Submissions should be focused on topics relevant to the core interests of the MSRG, which is medieval settlement and landscape in Britain and Ireland from the fifth to sixteenth centuries AD. Articles and reports focusing on landscapes and settlements from other parts of the world are also welcomed, especially where they can be demonstrated to be of relevance to British and Irish research in terms of methodology and/or subject matter. Please submit all copy to the MSRG Editor by **1 April 2019**. Please note:

- **Research Articles** should be 4,000–10,000 words in length, with as many illustrations as are deemed necessary to support the argument. As the journal is printed in full colour, there is no limit on the amount of colour illustrations. All submissions to this section are fully peer-reviewed by *at least* two peer reviewers.
- Short items for **Reports** summarising fieldwork or projects should be kept concise, in the range of 500–4,000 words, plus one or two illustrations (unless the work is of a scale that necessitates a longer article – for example reports on major projects).
- Submissions should adhere to the **journal's guidelines**, which can be downloaded from <https://medieval-settlement.com/publications/journal/>.
- Do contact the Editor on medieval.settlement.research@gmail.com at an early stage for advice on your submission.

