

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LXVIII

1978

IMRAY LAURIE NORIE AND WILSON

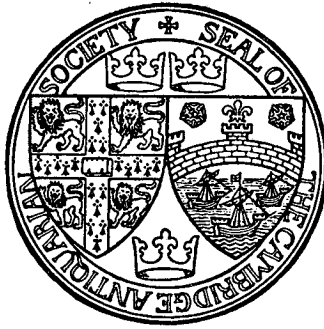
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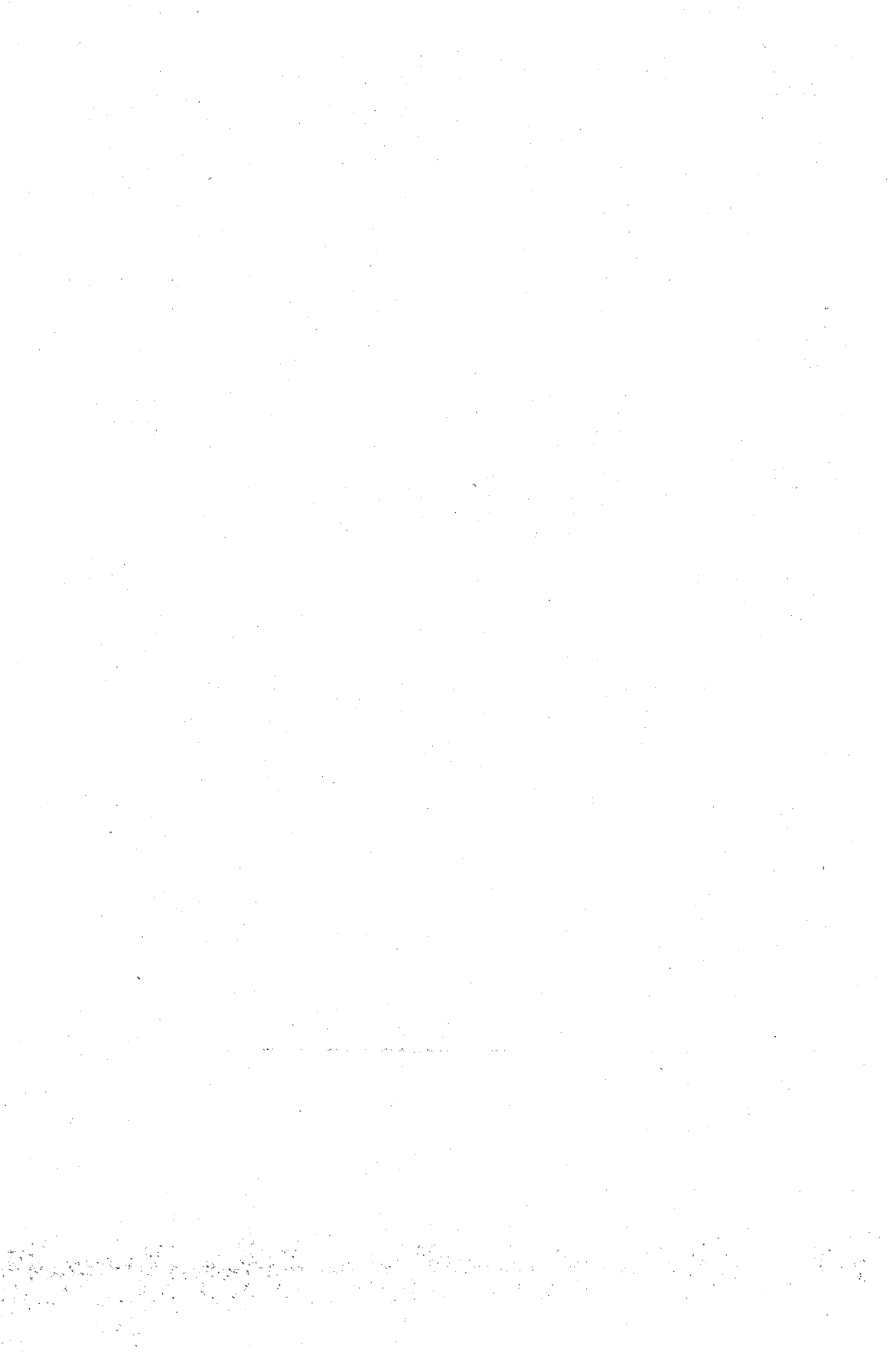
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Published for the Cambridge Antiquarian Society (incorporating the Cambs and
Hunts Archaeological Society) by Imray Laurie Norie and Wilson Ltd, Wych House,
Saint Ives, Huntingdon

Printed at The Burlington Press (Cambridge) Ltd., Foxton, Royston, Herts. SG8 6SA

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BOOK REVIEWS

Godwin, H. Sir 1978. *Fenland: its ancient past and uncertain future*. Cambridge University Press, 196pp, £7.95.

This is a well produced, readable book illustrated by many line diagrams and photos; it is good value for money. The book is an account of the work done in the southern Fenland by Sir Harry Godwin and his collaborators, and his reminiscences relating to that work.

The early chapters deal with the ecology of the former peat fen and the importance of pollen analysis in these studies. Then the work of the Fenland Research Committee (1932-1940) is described, especially relating to the stratigraphy of the Fenland. The loss of peat by wastage and cutting since the draining of the Fens and the subsequent changing pattern of crops are discussed. The last chapter deals with animal and plant species which have disappeared or are in danger of extinction, and the problems of conservation.

The Fenland vegetational and stratigraphic successions and their dating are described especially well, with useful references to other sites in the British Isles and Europe to make points more clear.

The book is mainly about the Peat Fenland and the "Silt Fen" is only briefly dealt with. That the term "Silt Fen" is now in common usage is unfortunate, as much of the Cambridgeshire and Norfolk "siltland" is clayey, on former upper tidal marsh deposits. It is mainly in the former Ouse estuary that coarser deposits of tidal flats and channels are found. There are two other small points to note. The first is that it is implied that the sandy drift of the eastern Fenland and Breckland was deposited by ice in the last glaciation: a point of view I am sympathetic with, but it is disputable. And, secondly, perhaps the soil map and memoir referred to in the book should be credited to R.S. Seale as well as to the Soil Survey of England and Wales. Apart from these trifling points, I enjoyed the book.

R. Evans

A series of introductory booklets on the archaeology of Cambridgeshire published by the Oleander Press. £1.30 each.

Prehistoric Cambridgeshire. Alison Taylor. 1977

A careful and accurate introduction to the prehistory of the new Cambridgeshire (which includes Huntingdonshire and parts of the Soke of Peterborough).

It is to be hoped that the quality of some of the photographs can be improved, or replaced by line drawings, in the reprintings which can confidently be predicted.

John Alexander

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Price £4.00 net for members, £5.50 for non-members

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