

NEW HEAD OF CITY EXCAVATIONS

ON THE 3rd December Brian Hobley, best known for his work on the Lunt Roman fort near Coventry, took up his new post of Chief Urban Archaeologist at the Guildhall Museum.

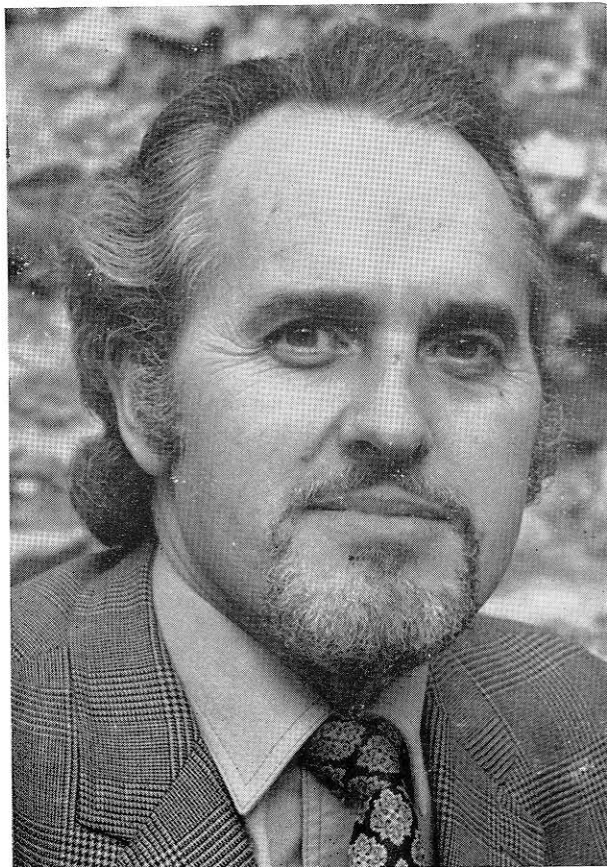
Mr. Hobley who is 43, has held the post of Keeper of the Department of Field Archaeology at Coventry Museum since 1965. He has had considerable experience of urban sites in that city, including the cathedral one. When he first arrived in Coventry, he found that urban renewal was well advanced and hopes that this experience will stand him in good stead in the City of London where a similar state of affairs exists.

The RESCUE publication *The Future of London's Past* already provides a blueprint for the work which needs to be undertaken in the City. Mr. Hobley believes that it is a very positive report and agrees with Sir Mortimer Wheeler's succinct description — "a brilliant survey of needs and deeds."

The selection of sites which might produce evidence for the growth of London, is a challenge for Mr. Hobley. He feels that, in particular, evidence covering the Saxon and Viking periods, the 5/7th centuries, is badly needed.

Much of the success of archaeological work in the remaining 15 years left for the City's renewal will depend on the co-operation and friendly support of the developers. Mr. Hobley believes that this can be won on a personal basis. A large amount of planning and thought has already been given to the problems of the City and he feels that the Corporation has received some quite unjustified criticism.

The utilisation of all forms of labour available is envisaged. In particular, the amateur archaeologist is regarded by Mr. Hobley as being able to provide not only help in many directions, but also to contribute "a bonus of enthusiasm".



Mr. Hobley is aware of the importance of the historical background and has already made a decision to fill one of the posts in his five man team with an archivist. With publication in the forefront of his mind, he intends that once an excavation is completed, the field officer who directed it, will be taken off all other jobs to write his report. Mr. Hobley who hopes to produce annual interim reports, has a firm rule — "no excavation without publication".

of co-ordination and general improvement in museum standards could be achieved, it is suggested, by a regional organisation based on museums or groups of museums as "centres of excellence." Outside London local government reorganisation is providing an opportunity for a review of museum provision and development; one wonders, as the Museum of London becomes a physical reality, whether the

time is not now ripe also for considering the future pattern of museum services in Greater London as a whole?

Few of the recommendations of previous similar reports on museums, issued at intervals over the past 50 years, have been implemented. One hopes that those of the Wright Report will not suffer a similar fate.