

Letters

A DECLINE IN THE LONDON SETTLEMENT

Harvey Sheldon has focussed attention on a fascinating problem; but for us in Surrey he has got the recession at the wrong time, and the two examples he quotes are not nearly the best evidence which exists.

At Rapsley the coarse ware folded beaker, a foundation deposit, was not used as a reference point for the start of Period III just because it could not be dated closely. The dates for this and the other periods were reached by careful assessment of all the stratified groups which contained datable objects, and no gap exists in the sequence at this point. There are several other factors which indicate continuity between Periods II and III; to quote one example, the new building retains the awkward, assymetrical alignment and even incorporates in its stone foundations two of the sleeper beams from the burnt-out Period II structure. Newcomers to the site would be unlikely to use them again after they had lain rotting under nettles, brambles and regenerating woodland for fifty or more years.

The Byfleet site consists of 23 sherds of pottery found by workmen in an unspecified number of shallow pits during the course of sand extraction in 1936. As the site was never excavated we know virtually nothing about it and Lowther's speculations on the nature of the occupation should be regarded as special pleading for native settlements which were currently out of fashion. It would be very rash to use the sherds as evidence for an economic recession in *Londinium*.

But workers in Surrey have been conscious for a long time of a recession in the 4th century. Lowther and Frere drew attention to it in the report on the Cobham Bath House¹. No Surrey villa except possibly Chiddingfold (excavated in the 19th century and still unpublished) took part in the 4th century expansion so apparent in other areas, indeed Rapsley comes to an end at just that time. The recession should be due to a shrinkage in the London market, which is why Sheldon's paper is of such interest. Perhaps the time-lag is due to the resilience of native farmers.

Folly Hill,
Ewhurst,
Cranleigh,
Surrey.

ROSAMOND HANWORTH

1. A. W. G. Lowther, Pattern Stamped Flue Tiles, in S.S. Frere, 'Excavation of a Late Roman bath-house at Chatley Farm, Cobham' *Surrey Archaeol. Coll.* 50 (1949) 73-98.

MORE SINNED AGAINST THAN SINNING

Dennis Turner's article on "original sin" appears to be an attempt to criticise a fellow archaeologist and then to "build" an article around the criticism to justify it. The extraordinary point is that the report on the moat excavation at Fulham Palace has not yet been published. It could be considered unusual to take to task a director, before the evidence that is being criticised is made fully known in the final publication. Any reader should be aware that excavation articles in *The London Archaeologist* are a preliminary note, not a thorough discussion on the reasons for one's views based on one's findings; insufficient space dictates this. Further, Mr. Turner has never discussed the moat excavation with me, in fact, I have never had the pleasure of being introduced to him! His statement, "certainly tough enough to stand the criticism," is perhaps based on the views of others he

has discussed the matter with, not personal association with me.

Mr. Turner is concerned about intellectual error but he commits errors himself and he falls into his own trap. His lack of quotes and genuine criticism does not do this magazine justice. For example, he states, "I have no wish to slander Mr. Whitehouse or even, particularly, to criticise," but then proceeds to apparently libel and ridicule, labouring what I believe to be a fallacy. Mr. Turner starts with an unintellectual argument, "that the earthwork is what it seems to be — a medieval moat," and therefore appears to insinuate that if Mr. Whitehouse, or anybody else says otherwise, they must be wrong! He continues, "Mr. Whitehouse, sensibly, dug a trench. Unfortunately for all of us the only positive evidence he found was that the moat as we see it today is post-Roman." True, but he fails to mention that any Roman occupation evidence at all was found on the excavation!

The suggestion that the earthwork may be of Roman origin is based on the large quantity of Roman finds and features, that are associated with the existing moat and bank. These findings will be thoroughly discussed when the full report is published; I feel that Mr. Turner's criticism is a little premature. He could easily have come to see me and examined this evidence for himself. Unfortunately he preferred to express his doubt in open forum. I wonder why?

On an intellectual argument basis the moat, as we see it today, should not be classed in the medieval category. There is no archaeological or documentary evidence that proves the moat and bank was first constructed in medieval times. The moat is definitely first mentioned in the 14th century as already existing, and we know that it enclosed a manor-house and grounds of a Bishop. Neither of these facts proves that the moat and bank is originally a medieval construction. They just indicate that it was in existence when the Bishop of London was occupying the site, and therefore it could still have been of earlier origin. Treated as a medieval construction it encloses an unusually large area, 36½ acres. This size of enclosure fits more comfortably with types of earthwork common to the Roman and Iron Age periods.

Mr. Turner further states, "where lack of evidence and unjustified conclusions lay side by side" without pinpointing exactly what these conclusions are, then continues, "takes his earlier conclusion as a positive fact." What is the earlier conclusion? If the second article is carefully read, there is no conclusion: the origin of the moat is an open question. I even suggest the "possibility" that it had its origin in the Iron Age! The strong exclamatory remark by Mr. Turner, "positive fact," is covered in my third article concerning the origin of the "bank" and "ditch" by the word "suggest." The final statement that, "not everyone who reads the third article will have read the second"; logically, then, not everyone who reads this article and "Original Sin," will take the trouble to read my previous articles!

Readers should be made aware that Mr. Turner is not the first critic by any means, but I can overtly say that the criticism, everytime, comes not from those who took part in the moat excavation, or were closely connected with it; but comes mainly from persons who have not examined the evidence but appear to have an axe to grind. Surely, the "fellow labourers" in Mr. Turner's "vineyard" do not produce vintage wine, only "sour grapes"!

Would the Editor be willing to accept an article on the discussion of the origins of the Fulham Palace

moat, based on known archaeological and documentary evidence?
56 Tamworth Street,
S.W.6. KEITH WHITEHOUSE

Mr. Turner writes:

I am sorry that I was misled by Mr. Whitehouse's public remarks in local newspapers into thinking that he is more resilient than he is. For this, I can only apologise — my use of "certainly" in this context was clearly ill-judged. On the other hand, I must reiterate that I was only using Fulham as an example; my main purpose was to propound a thesis, not to criticise Mr. Whitehouse.

I did not wish to burden the readers of *The London Archaeologist* with numerous quotations to prove my point, and I discussed this aspect with the Editor when I submitted my essay, but I think that the following should show Mr. Whitehouse's progression from hypothesis to fact (my italics):

Vol. 1 No. 16, p.346: "The moat *may* have had its origin in a Roman camp."

Vol. 2 No. 6, p.144: "The important factor concerning the section of the bank (on the inside of the moat) excavated is that the material, apart from the gravel capping, *does not come from an accompanying ditch*. The bank is constructed of scraped soil, presumably from the surrounding ground surface." No evidence is quoted for the provenance of the gravel.

P.144: from coins found, which, in the circumstances, could only provide a *post quem* dating, Mr. Whitehouse made the following conclusion ("logic: proposition deduced from previous ones"—Concise Oxford Dictionary): "it would *seem* that the bank was constructed sometime between 360-380."

P.145: "*There was no sign* of a Roman ditch for this had *presumably* been destroyed by the moat."

P.146: "The moat *appears* to owe its origin to the latter half of the 4th century" (because of the dating of the bank?)

Vol. 2 No. 9, p.213: "Archaeological evidence would suggest that the mile-long moat . . . had its origin in a *bank and ditch constructed by at least the latter part of the 4th century*."

I submit that anyone reading the article in Vol. 2.9 would take it that archaeologists had found a Roman bank and ditch (but see p.145 quotation above) of 4th century date which may have been the origin of the moat.

Mr. Whitehouse takes me to task for not mentioning that evidence for R-B occupation was found during the excavation. I think that any sensible person who reads my essay without actually reading any of Mr. Whitehouse's articles will infer that R-B material had been found (otherwise why the fuss?) and I was not concerned to repeat evidence already set down by Mr. Whitehouse himself in his second article.

Although it was not my object to criticise Mr. Whitehouse's conclusions, he seems eager to attract my comments. I have little to say, however, regarding the origin of the earthwork — and that little is based entirely on the evidence published to date and is without prejudice to any conclusions that may be justified when the final report is issued. I am not by any means expert in the R-B period but I understand, from friends who are more knowledgeable in this field, that the Fulham earthwork would be even more exceptional if seen as R-B in origin than it would be if seen as medieval. It would not be, after all, *that* exceptional as a medieval earthwork (if we avoid the more specialised sense of

"moat") and can possibly be compared with earthworks at, *inter alia*, Lambeth, Cwrtsey and M.chelham.

I admit that I have not had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Whitehouse, despite our common membership at one time of *The London Archaeologist* publishing committee. However, I don't think that this affects the issue, since it is normal to only comment on published evidence. One of the purposes of interim publication in *The London Archaeologist* is to engender public discussion (c.f. the interminable articles on Roman London Bridge) and to stimulate comment from people the writer would not otherwise meet. That some of this comment will be public is one of the risks.

I await Mr. Whitehouse's excavation report with considerable interest and if, in the meantime, he wishes to seek my private views on the unpublished evidence I shall be pleased to be at his service.

Regarding Mr. Whitehouse's final paragraph — the Editor feels that, with at least four articles bearing on the subject already published in this magazine, the origins of Fulham Palace are perhaps suffering from over-exposure. This correspondence is now closed.

FOR WHAT IS ARCHAEOLOGY, AND FOR WHY IS PUBLICATION?

I greatly welcome this opportunity to answer Jeremy Haslam's letter, as space did not permit me to extend my original article on the Department of Urban Archaeology's first year of operations. However, my emphasis on organization was deliberate because the size of operations being undertaken and the considerable financial resources being employed required demonstration of a responsible approach.

The D.U.A. centres its main archaeological and historical research on the City and its environs. Therefore, it will have to take into consideration the recommendations contained within *The Future of London's Past*. In this splendid survey Martin Biddle highlighted all the major research needs. Consequently, the D.U.A. has in essence adopted this report as its *main* guideline for the ordering of academic priorities. The City must be seen as one vast archaeological site of some 133.5 hectares — a 'tell', in fact, of which relatively little is known for any period of occupation. A long-term plan of operations is, therefore, essential, co-ordinating all of Haslam's "methods of enquiry". Martin Biddle advocated a multi-period approach and listed these period by period, but giving an emphasis upon Saxon and Viking research whenever possible. Few will argue against the soundness of this reasoning.

Ideally, sites should only be chosen to answer specific historical problems posed by the overall research programme, e.g., the pattern and type of early Roman occupation, the date of the building of the Roman town wall and bastions, the growth of the Roman and medieval waterfronts, the origin and continuity of street patterns. Origins and continuity are basic research themes for both site and documentary research. The favouring by Biddle of strategically located large sites, to be excavated at a research speed, rather than as a salvage operation, is a sound policy. Normally this is very difficult to achieve in the City, but the present situation makes it possible to implement this at both the Newgate Street and Trig Lane sites. Waterfront sites were a high priority in the survey and since the inception of the D.U.A. in 1974 many have been excavated.

Given a choice of sites, the criteria upon which the decision to excavate any individual site can be many and varied. They involve not only the researched archaeological and historical potential but also the allocation of the unit's financial resources, in light of existing and future commit-

ments. Long-term combined research-rescue sites help to ensure a continuity of work for a full-time team. Another important consideration, bearing heavily on the level of staffing, is the massive drain that expensive plant hire can produce. These are but two, non-academic factors, that have to be carefully considered when overall academic priorities are being decided. One factor, though, is paramount. The reconciling of pure research needs against day-to-day practical problems is such that it can only be fully comprehended by those who are primarily trained as archaeologists and, secondly, as administrators.

An ever-increasing amount of the D.U.A.'s resources are being used away from the excavation sites. A massive publication programme of past and present excavations and documentary research is underway. This year will see the publication of the long-awaited Roman Palace report and next year that of the recent Roman riverside wall excavation.

Fundamental pottery research aimed at establishing a London reference collection will commence immediately premises are available. An evaluation of environmental sampling on urban sites has been made, and a re-examination of the history and archaeology of the Thames in the London region will be published this year. Historical and topographical research is in progress on several districts, including Trig Lane, Billingsgate and Moorgate. Work is also about to commence by the writer, on a Saxon and medieval study with a gazetteer, similar to Merrifield's *The Roman City of London*. Within the next year or so a synthesis of all the D.U.A.'s work will be started to complement the publications of both Professor Grimes and Ralph Merrifield.

Space, once again, does not permit me to unduly extend a list of excavation discoveries, which are undoubtedly extending our historical knowledge of London. The following should suffice to show that the right sites are being chosen, not by any random method, as implied by Jeremy Haslam, but by a careful examination of their potential to the overall historical research programme. The discovery of a late Bronze Age collared urn, north of St. Paul's, is significant, being the first stratified prehistoric find from the City. A massive section of Roman Riverside wall (almost certainly defensive) built in part of sculptured stones are now being studied by Professor J. Toynbee, Tom Blagg and Mark Hassall, for publication next year as a L.A.M.A.S. Special Paper. An 8th-9th century late Saxon timber waterfront, discovered for the first time and built of boat timbers of an earlier date. A succession of timber and stone medieval waterfronts from the 11th-17th centuries have also been uncovered for the first time, to advance our knowledge of the commercial history of London. Finally, a 12th-15th century church graveyard containing over 250 skeletons will aid research on the medieval population itself. I trust that this letter has alleviated Jeremy Haslam's concern over London's archaeology.

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BRIAN HOBLEY
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RESCUE'S GOOD WORK

IT IS a pity that Graham Thomas chose to devalue the good work done by "Rescue" by claiming too much. He seems to want all the beneficial developments that have taken place in archaeology in the last five years to be seen as the direct result of the formation of "Rescue"—and he is not the first "Rescue" officer to take this line.

The truth is that the bandwagon was already rolling

before "Rescue" appeared on the scene. "Rescue" has undoubtedly given a number of hearty and helpful shoves but for that organisation to claim to have built the vehicle and to have paved the road is quite beyond reality.

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D. J. TURNER

RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY

AS MY name is mentioned twice in Tim Tatton-Brown's article in your Summer 1975 publication, I hope that I may be permitted the luxury of a few personal comments.

I think his review of the *Rescue Penguin* is fair and well taken. The book should have been more concise. However, it did suffer from a 2-year delay in publication, which made it less relevant in 1975. It is a great pity that Cecil Hogarth's chapter failed in its impact because, to my mind, he was putting over one of the most important tasks ahead of archaeologists, that is, to convince the public, and particularly politicians, that archaeology and archaeologists have a relevance to society today beyond that of saving things, recording evidence and the advance of knowledge. It is essential to convince society and politicians that the interpretation and the lessons to be derived from past societies in coping with human problems is vitally relevant to the solving of these problems today. To mention a few—violence, social morals, religious decline, over population, birth control, urban overcrowding, conservation. In fact, we archaeologists need to come forward with our solutions to these problems based upon the lessons of the past. I feel that if politicians had been trained as archaeologists or anthropologists, they would be much better equipped to cope with many of these problems than say an economist or a sociologist.

As a businessman who has supported archaeology and "Rescue," may I also comment on his remarks about "Rescue." I agree with many of them but I think he overlooks the fact that "Rescue" has been outstandingly successful in two fields; it set out to alert public opinion and local and national Government to the rescue crisis, and to raise money for this. There is no doubt that it did alert the public and it is well known that Government money has increased something like 8-fold in the last few years and that money from local authorities and from private sources has increased roughly in the same proportion.

The overall result has been an enormous increase in the number of paid archaeologists, particularly in the London area. The fact that "Rescue" itself has not handled this money does not alter the fact that it has become available. However, the way that some archaeologists have reacted to this money gives me grave disquiet. Firstly, many professional archaeologists who owe their present positions and salaries, at least in part, to "Rescue's" work do not support it. Secondly, the large influx of money has made some professionals intolerant of those who work for nothing. This alienates those very people in business, like myself, who should be supporting archaeology. Thirdly, the scramble disquieting to businessmen. Why should we be expected to for money and position, coupled with waste of money, is support an inefficient muddle?

As I see it, "Rescue's" role in the future must be:—

- 1) to see that the money and resources available are efficiently used.
- 2) that we get proper legislation on antiquities to stop pillaging by treasure hunters.
- 3) it must bring together all archaeologists and bring together archaeologists and their local communities.

As regards raising money from developers and businessmen and the public, surely this is best and most economic-

Mosaic

THE CITY OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST FUND

THE Department of Urban Archaeology (City) of the Museum of London, under Brian Hobley, has gone a long way towards meeting the needs of archaeology in the City of London. The organisation has been described in these pages and elsewhere and several preliminary accounts of its findings have appeared. In addition a goal of prompt publication has been set and a number of reports have now appeared in the *Transactions* of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. The cost of the work is considerable.

The Museum of London gets a large grant for this purpose from the Department of the Environment for survey, excavation and post-excavation studies. The Museum itself, funded equally by the Department of Education and Science, the Greater London Council and the Corporation, provides headquarters staff, photographic and conservation services, accommodation and storage of the data recovered. Although these resources are vastly more than were formerly directed to the City, they are still inadequate to the task and no increase in finance from the public sector is likely in real terms in the foreseeable future.

The City of London Archaeological Trust Fund has been established under the auspices of the Corporation to fill the gap and provides a reserve to meet the unexpected. The Management Committee comprises, in addition to members of the Court of Common Council, representatives of the Museum of London, the Council for British Archaeology, the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London, and distinguished academics. Its President is Professor W. F. Grimes.

If you would like to contribute, please contact the Secretary, City of London Archaeological Trust, c/o

Museum of London, Gillett House, 55 Basinghall Street, London EC2V 5DT for details. £100,000 a year is needed — your help is vital!

EXCAVATION AT THE G.P.O. SITE

AT THE southern end of the site, the excavation has uncovered part of the church and churchyard of St. Nicholas Shambles, first referred to in 1187. Three distinct building phases for the church have so far been revealed. The churchyard was to the north and east of the church and from these areas many skeletons have been recovered which will be invaluable for studying burial patterns and physiology.

At the Dissolution the large conventual church of Grayfriars was converted into a parish church and St. Nicholas Shambles was demolished in 1547. Bull Head Court covered the internal area of the church by 1552 and the surrounding area was developed as tenements. The parsonage became the hall of the Butchers' Company until it was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666. In medieval times this area of Newgate was one of London's principle meat markets (shambles).

Beneath the medieval church there is evidence of burnt wattle and daub, and the silhouettes of beam slots and post-holes, probably of 2nd century date. Cut into the brick-earth at the northern end of the site are remains of timber slots and post-holes of the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. Evidence has also been found of early medieval floor and hearth levels plus cess and rubbish pits.

A small area of brickhearth in the north east corner of the excavation has produced fragments of a tripartite decorated collared urn of a type found in both settlement and burial contexts in southern Britain during the late Bronze Age. This pottery is the first prehistoric material to be found in situ in the City.

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ally achieved locally and not nationally (except for clear and specific tasks). This does happen in many areas. The roles of "Rescue," the C.B.A. and the D. of E. should be to encourage archaeologists to do this. I do not rule out a national appeal by "Rescue" but if it raised £250,000, what would archaeologists do with it, and to whom should "Rescue" give it?

In these hard days I do not feel inclined to contribute or raise money for archaeology except for specific projects (like *The Future of London's Past*) of which I approve and will not do so unless, and until, archaeologists have shown firstly that they can spend money wisely, secondly that this money will not be used to the exclusion or detriment of the amateur and the vocational archaeologists, and thirdly that some legislation exists to stop pillaging of sites, which increases with every increase in archaeological activity.

Silver Birches,
High Molewood,
Hertford,
Herts.

ROBERT KILN

Mr. Tatton-Brown writes:

It is nice to be able to comment here briefly after Robert Kiln's interesting letter rather than after the diatribe "Rescue's" chairman published in the last issue.

I would however disagree strongly with his suggestion that "Rescue" was the group that forced Government

to substantially increase its grant to archaeology. The substantial increase was due to a change in attitude by government to the environment generally. This was taking place well before "Rescue" was set up.

On the other hand, I share his "grave disquiet" at the way some of this new-found capital is being spent, particularly by the £100,000 units. A letter in a recent issue of *Current Archaeology* (C.A. 48) by David Brear shows clearly how many people feel. The two replies in the following number also show that his comments strike home and are difficult to answer, the resulting replies were mainly long and boring "waffle."

It should be the role of all archaeologists (particularly the new DoE advisory committees) to see that all money and resources are wisely and efficiently used, and Robert Kiln's comments here should be noted by all so called, professional archaeologists (like myself!).

Finally I am afraid that I do not agree that legislation is the way to stop treasure hunters. New antiquities laws of this sort would be almost impossible to implement. The way to try to stop "treasure hunters" is by education and this should be the task of "Rescue" (as well as all local groups).

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