

Books

Popular Archaeology, Vol. 1 No. 1 July, 1979. 65p \$2.50. Subscription rates £10 per annum — Overseas Sterling £10. Overseas Dollar \$20. Editor Magnus Magnusson. Subscription Department — Model & Allied Publications Ltd., PO Box 35, Bridge Street, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 1EE.

POPULAR ARCHAEOLOGY is aimed at the amateur. Further, it is aimed, one suspects, at a very uninitiated amateur who has as yet only a superficial interest in archaeology at all and has not passed the “treasure hunting” stage.

Reading through this attractively presented new periodical one quickly becomes conscious of the motivation of the whole thing — it is a positive act on the part of the establishment to counter the ever present threat of the metal detector and its user. We have all been busy saying DO NOT to these people for a long time now: here is a positive alternative, and if it is to succeed it deserves our wholehearted support.

Having said that, there are inevitably some criticisms, even though they do not detract from the underlying merit. Professor Cunliffe's article on the Roman Sacred Spring in Bath unfortunately ends with a less-than-missionary slant on the joys of the loot to be found when the silt is excavated. On the page facing his article there is an advertisement for a kit to construct a model of the baths and this is surely a point which is worth persuading — drop all mention of treasure (and loot) and concentrate instead on what they achieved, with plenty of visual aids to stimulate interest — a point well made by Graham Webster in a lively article, Starting in Archaeology. Henry Cleere's article on My Job is well-written and fair, but will it interest the non-aligned? Perhaps I'm wrong in my definition of the intended readership, but if so, then much of the other stuff is aimed too low.

The photography and illustration is excellent throughout the issue. There is only one dud and that, sadly, is captioned ‘Stanstead Mountfitchet: illicit diggings by treasures hunters below the motte. March, 1979’. All one can see is a blur in two tones of grey. What a pity, this could have been arresting in its horridness.

The missionary theme outlined at the start runs through at least half of the articles, and crystallises out in a good one called Cause for Concern. In the advertisements we are even offered seven different sets of Replica Coins at very modest prices which should surely take the wind out of a metal detector's

sails if it had any. Another theme, and always a winner, is the successful BBC Chronicle Series, and two of the articles, Tigris, and Sailing to Santorini have been drawn from this source. Unfortunately Magnus Magnusson's article has suffered from the ministrations of the Misprint Man, who cut it off in mid sentence at the bottom of p.33. Industrial Archaeology is well covered by Paul Elkin's Steam on the Roads and by a description of Roman lead mining in Day Out on Mendip. (Is it safe to tell the readers of the high silver content of Mendip lead?!) Field Archaeology scores well too, with Cataloguing Cornwall, by Charles Thomas, Battlesbury Hill fort — Site of the Month, and Going Round in Circles, a review article on Prehistoric Avebury, which also urges visitors to Avebury and Stonebridge to consider their setting and study their ecology with the aid of 20 references.

This brings us once again to the essential difficulty in a ‘popular’ approach — at what intellectual level should it be pitched? One has to admit that this first issue is a hotchpotch, and perhaps rightly so, since no-one can yet be sure where it will be most effective. Perhaps it is not wholly ironic that in my home town *Popular Archaeology* is on sale in the book-stalls jostling with metal detector magazines. Let us hope it sells well, if it really catches on it might do a lot of good.

ROSAMOND HANWORTH

Tutankhamun The Untold Story. Thomas Hoving. Hamish Hamilton. 1979. 384pp., 32 pl. £7.95.

THIS OUGHT REALLY to be titled Carter—the Untold Story as it scarcely deals with the king. In his introduction the author asks the question how was the story of the discovery unearthed, and answers it by stating intuition, a bit of searching and some “serendipity.” The second item appears a bit on the short side at times, for the others I cannot answer. His view of Carnarvon seems to vary wildly but like many other people in this book he comes in for a good castigation at times.

In a review of this length one can only pick on certain points to test the writer's accuracy and objectivity. Thus on p.25 the statement that “no one in history had ever found a tomb (noble or royal) that had not been substantially plundered by ancient robbers” is erroneous and omits all reference to the tomb of Kha discovered by Schiaparelli *before* that of Tutankhamaun.

Biographical facts are equally carelessly researched: Carter was in fact born in Kensington in

1874 not Norfolk 1873. Again the statement that his father was too poor to send him to school is hardly convincing, a more plausible explanation is that he was educated privately owing to delicate health. The then Egypt Exploration Fund was hardly "a private organization" linked to the British Museum, but an independent body as it is today. Hoving's harsh judgment of Carter's ability as a water colourist gives no idea of his skill as a copyist of the Deir el Bahari reliefs.

p.38. Ramesses IX belonged to the Twentieth Dynasty not the Nineteenth, and it was the former one under which the tomb robbery papyrus was written. On p.47 the costing of a season's dig at £5,000 in 1900 is extraordinarily high for the period. Would one in any case have necessarily needed "several hundred" workers for this type of work. p.49 The tomb of Horemheb in the Valley of Kings is that taken over by him after he became king, his one prepared when general is at Saqqara.

On p.58 the old misconception is repeated, namely that Carter was specifically looking for the tomb of Tutankhamun. On his own admission he was near the end of his up till then barren concession and was rather hopeful only of finding a royal tomb. p.62 refers to the linen headbands worn at the funeral "one inscribed with the last known date of Tutankhamun—the sixth year," in fact he reigned nine.

If the archaeological and historical facts are inadequately researched the book more than makes up for it by the rather unpleasant light in which the leading figures and Egyptologists are shown. Scarcely anyone escapes, least of all Carter. Lacau who is presented as a fiend in the background trying to upset the work at every turn is curiously described as a French Jesuit in 1921, yet he married Anne-Marie Bernard in 1919! But it is needless to dwell on these personal judgments by someone who clearly knew none of the leading protagonists at first hand. Suffice it to say that only the American Winlock comes out of it with an unscathed reputation and that the book leaves an unpleasant taste in the mouth for much of the time. To keep up public interest Hoving stoops to the lowest trick of all and introduces the famous curse on p.72. From then on the subject rapidly loses interest and has to be kept going by all sorts of almost fantastic schemes and machinations purported by the writer to have been devised by Carter and his associates from the Metropolitan Museum to outwit the Egyptian Antiquities Service. Some of these verge on pure James Bond, involving as they do coded messages, etc. A. C. Mace is called a nephew of Petrie, remarkable since the latter had no brothers and sisters. Weigall likewise is labelled a "German-born Jewish Egyptologist," here the writer having been misled by the name apparently. The basic premises behind much of this section of the

book is that Carter and Carnarvon secretly entered the tomb the night following the opening of the antechamber and then broke down the wall to the inner burial chamber. Hoving goes so far as to state that Carter's account is a lie.

It seems almost incredible if this really happened without everyone in Luxor knowing about it, the more so as it involved reclosing the partition which was of bricks according to Carter's account not blocks as stated here. Significantly Breasted who had not only visited the antechamber but worked here regularly for several weeks, never noticed the hole in the north wall concealed only by reeds and baskets. Yet we are asked to believe that he actually studied the sealings on this very wall. "The pre-eminent archaeologist of his day" to quote Hoving. Come off it, doubting Thomas!

This reviewer at any rate prefers to follow Carter's account of the actual opening and equally feels that the technical point about Carter's wish to have a tomb that was not intact can be made too much of.

Following on from this the secret division may also be seen partly as a piece of fantasy. It has long been known that some objects did come out of Egypt, after all as Hoving admits at one stage Carter and Carnarvon expected to get a share quite legitimately as on the old scheme of things, but these need not amount to anything of great moment. All the writer can claim is the first group from Carter's own list, i.e. 17 objects which went to the Metropolitan Museum. These were either purchased or given by Carter. Some are clearly of no value except for scientific tests. Another 10 Hoving claims were not listed, among which the gold ring is a remarkably early find if it ever came from the tomb at all. The list of about 14 pieces in other museums is not complete. Even if all these items really did come from the tomb, a total of about 40 items out of the 5,000 or so mentioned by the author is nothing to get excited about.

The rest of the book is a rush to completion of the discovery and clearance and hardly adequate in relation to the amount of space spent on the earlier phases.

In conclusion it may be remarked that a good opportunity has been lost to give a new account of this the most sensational if not greatest archaeological discovery as claimed by the writer. The beautiful plans showing the original placing of objects as produced by Hall and Hauser could have added much, and as Hoving admits, the clearance by Carter was at that time of unequalled precision. One must agree that it is difficult to see who else could have done it in so exemplary a fashion. Two final points: there is an index but the footnotes at the back are hardly

adequate for sources, and there is no bibliography. The statement that only one volume on the material, i.e. the bows, has appeared since the discovery is again incorrect, the Griffiths Institute publications numbered six at the time of the publication of Hoving's book.

ERIC UPHILL

Anglo-Saxon Pottery, by David H. Kennett. *Shire Publications*, 1978. £1.25.

THIS LITTLE BOOK should appeal to many, as it provides a much needed popular approach to a very complex field of study. Considering the constraints of space and format, the result is quite impressive, although certain points are a little troublesome.

The title is somewhat misleading, as it suggests a study covering the whole of the Anglo-Saxon period, whereas the field is, in fact, limited largely to pottery discovered in pagan Saxon cemeteries (i.e., broadly speaking, of the 5th-7th centuries AD, or before the Conversion). While the chronological divisions of the Anglo-Saxon period are somewhat artificial, there is a notable change in the nature of the material available for study after the Conversion. Jeremy Haslam's *Medieval Pottery* in the same series should be seen as a companion volume, since it takes as its starting point pottery of the so-called Saxo-Norman phase, c. 850-1150. However, neither book deals adequately with the important study of Middle Saxon pottery, and this is a serious omission.

Kennett adopts a basically chronological approach to the bewilderingly complex body of material, and has managed quite successfully to synthesise and order the main types and decorative schemes. The fact that he does not take into account regional variations and local distributions, nor draw many implications, however tentative, from his basically descriptive approach, should not be allowed to detract from the overall usefulness of the study. It is very good as far as it goes, and whether it could have gone further within the limits of space is perhaps idle to speculate.

The sequence of illustrations, 30 pages of illustrations and 173 individual pots, is excellent and the book is worth buying for these alone. A slight quibble perhaps, but, in spite of Kennett's argument that in certain cases the inclusion of a section detracts from the overall decorative scheme, his approach seems a little inconsistent, since he gives sections in a number of highly decorated examples, e.g. nos. 24, 27, 41 and 98, and omits them from others, e.g. nos. 3, 4, 10, 22 and Fig. 8, where they could probably have been quite reasonably included.

The section on 'Sites of Importance,' with references for further reading and the related distribution map, together with the list of museums containing

important collections, including numbers of pots, and the main sites from which they were drawn, are extremely useful and commendable appendices, although the Glossary is somewhat inadequate.

To sum up, by giving a good and very reasonably priced general study, and by filling an important gap in the popular market, the book is well worth buying, useful to the general public and the impecunious student alike, in spite of the reservations discussed above. It is, however, recommended that the prospective buyer investigate Haslam's companion book at the same time, as leading on, almost directly, from the study here under review, the two books together giving a more complete picture of Anglo-Saxon pottery studies as a whole, as well as of the succeeding medieval period.

JACQUI PERRY

Hadrian's Wall, by David J. Breeze and Brian Dobson. *Penguin* (1978). 324pp., 29pl. £1.25.

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS much research and excavation has taken place on Hadrian's Wall, providing a great deal of new evidence. The "experts" are still divided on some of the deductions drawn from the dateable evidence. This book sets out to review the evidence to try and explain the reason for the Wall, setting it in the overall policy of the Empire and to follow its history to the end of Roman Britain.

The Antonine Wall is discussed in depth, its differences and similarities, and its influence upon the frontier. The traumatic times of the 3rd and 4th centuries are covered, showing the gradual decline and eventual abandonment of Hadrian's Wall.

This is not a guide book to nor a description of visible remains, although many of the sites are used as examples and illustrated in the text. There are chapters on the Roman Army and the life on the Wall both military and civilian. The various appendices give the Roman Emperors and Governors of Britain, the known regiments and their location, the gods worshipped on the frontier, the Roman names of the forts and the evidence on the ground. There is an excellent and quite extensive select bibliography and a useful index.

Although the authors state that the book contains their personal views and cannot be the final solution, it is one that should be on the bookshelves of every student of Roman Britain.

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