

# Mosaic

## CITISIGHTS

WHEN VISITING our historic towns, I have always found the conducted tours given by 'official' guides to be both informative and entertaining. By contrast, on the only occasion that I have played the tourist and taken a guided tour of London (several years ago) I was appalled to discover that the guide was about 20 years out of date, at least in regard to the archaeology of the City. Perhaps I was unusually unfortunate but one suspects that many tourists may be missing out on the exciting story of the discoveries made in the City in recent years, and that archaeology is missing out by not being presented in this particular 'shop window.'

Now we have an organisation with the potential to put things right. Citisights offer 'walks around the 2,000 years of old London', guided by professional archaeologists. Individual tours, tailored to special requirements, can be arranged for parties of ten or more, at rates from only 50p per person, subject to a minimum charge of £15 per tour. Lectures can be arranged too, whether to explain a topic in more detail before a visit or perhaps as a follow-up. One of these tours could well fill a blank spot in your local society's programme of outings, and might be a good way of 'spreading the word' in non-archaeological groups, like social clubs, W.I.s or youth groups. The address is: CITISIGHTS, 12 Alpha Place, London, S.W.3.

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tantial remaining artifacts, on the distribution patterns of largely unprovenanced material and on place-name and documentary studies. The series of essays by the eminent early medievalists of today here collected together under the editorship of David Wilson provides an invaluable synthesis of the change of emphases in Anglo-Saxon archaeology over the past thirty years or so.

The contributions include an extremely useful summary of recent work on excavated settlement sites, by Philip Rahtz, very fully illustrated and supplemented by a lengthy gazetteer listing those sites which have yielded definite evidence of domestic settlement. This is well complemented by Peter Fowler's study of rural settlement and land-use patterns, and by Martin Biddle's discussion of the development of towns. There are also chapters on ecclesiastical architecture, by Bridget Cherry, dealing with evidence from excavations as well as more substantial standing structures; on monastic sites, by Rosemary Cramp, and largely concerned with the writer's own extensive excavations at Monkwearmouth and Jarrow; on craft and industry, by David Wilson, a study necessarily limited by the poor survival of organic material; and on the animal resources, by Juliet Clutton-Brock. John Hurst's chapter on the pottery reflects the great advances that have been made in this field since his pioneering 1959 study in *Medieval Archaeology*, and is again

## VENTURE DAY

ON SUNDAY 6th June Capital Radio sponsored a 'Venture Day' in Battersea Park. The intention was to give to young people who were short of ideas for filling their spare time, an opportunity to find out more about the various activities and organisations which requires an effort or offer a challenge to the individual — anything from Conservation to Mountaineering.

Wandsworth Historical Society was invited by Capital Radio to put on a presentation of archaeology. A dummy excavation with various improvised features was set up to give onlookers some idea of how a 'dig' is organised. The front cover shows Rosemary Ward, Chairman of Wandsworth's Archaeological Committee explaining the Society's intentions to Prince Charles who spent an hour visiting some of the participants of the Venture Day.

Other aspects of Wandsworth's exhibit included the various post-excavation activities, a publication sales counter (including the *L.A.*) and a general enquiry stall which offered advice on all matters archaeological. Apart from general queries there were about forty detailed ones ranging from how to read Physical Anthropology at university to a pipe layer who wanted to know to know where he should report any chance finds from his work. Some thirty people were put in touch with organisations undertaking excavations in the London area.

very well illustrated. It is perhaps unfortunate that the section on early pottery is so short.

Michael Dolley's study of coins and the editor's discussion of the Scandinavians in England are largely historical summaries. However, the much studied and analysed "art", the metalwork and stone sculpture notably, which once formed a mainstay of Anglo-Saxon archaeology receives only a brief mention, and that in the introduction. Art-historical approaches, to which Dr. Wilson has contributed so much, are of great value to the archaeologist, and it is to be regretted, as Catherine Hills noted in her review of the book on its first appearance, that they do not receive more attention in this volume. It is also unfortunate that there is little discussion of the cemeteries which figured so prominently in early studies, the more so in the light of recent excavations at such sites as Mucking and Spong Hill.

The blurb claims that this reprint is "without abridgement". However, revision would have been welcome in a book some of whose essays are now nearly ten years old, and full revision will certainly be required in about five years time when current major excavations have been assessed. At least until then, this book will surely remain the standard basic reference for all students of the Anglo-Saxon period, whether potentially professional archaeologists or not, especially as it is now available at almost one third of the original price. JACQUI PEARCE