

100 years, but two Roman brooches, a bronze weaving tablet, toilet instruments and a few bronze coins have been recognised, and numerous very corroded iron objects have been recovered. Large quantities of hypocaust tile, flue tile, and roof tile have also been found, and large tesserae of fired clay and smaller coloured tesserae are evidence that both tessellated and mosaic floors existed on the site.

A small amount of medieval and post-medieval pottery has also been recovered, but so far no Saxon pottery has been found to suggest a link between the Roman site and the nearby Saxon cemetery.

Most of the pre-Roman features so far excavated appear to be Late Iron Age in date, but stray finds of Later Bronze Age pottery indicate the likelihood of a Later Bronze Age settlement close-by. A quartzite pebble hammer, probably of Early Bronze Age date, and a Neolithic ground flint axe have also been found.

The 1981 season of excavation has established that the areas within the drying beds have undergone much disturbance since the first sewage works was built so that, although there is a large quantity of finds mixed in the topsoil, archaeological features have been partially removed. It is apparent, however, that even in these areas deep-cut features such

as pits, ditches and postholes are not substantially damaged. There are various areas, though, which have been well protected by raised trackways and embankments and have suffered virtually no disturbance: it is these areas which are continuing to produce the better preserved archaeological remains, and it is these areas which require further excavation before the stripping of topsoil prior to gravel extraction.

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Letters

IT WORRIES ME when the Big Brotherism of the CBA (Collective for British Archaeology) creeps into the liberal pages of the *London Archaeologist*. Of course much of what was said about the publication of conference proceedings was sound, and of course the guidance given to potential publishers was right, but in less discerning hands the call for 'selection' of papers for printing is going to result in censorship; and all censorship is bad, especially when no-one knows, or agrees, what the criteria for support or suppression should be.

Refereeing is mentioned. This noxious practice already makes sure that many interesting papers which conflict with the views of the picked referee do not get into the journals; it must not spread into the suppression of conference papers. The only selection which may properly be operated is in the choice of people to present papers at conferences, and here is the point which ought to be argued out. Dissatisfaction with conference proceedings is, to my mind, no more than dissatisfaction with conferences as they are at present constituted. However poor the proceedings, if the market will stand it, there is no basic reason against publication. So much rubbish is published that it is unfair to archaeologists to ask that they should be the only group to suppress their own rubbish rather than express it.

But Conferences! They should be divided into Teach-ins and Work-ins. The first consists of a group of people who want to know about something, who ask experts along to tell them roughly what is already known. Originality is out of place, and publication could only be utilitarian, not interesting. The Work-in should consist of a group of people who want to move a subject along, to improve it. There is no objection here to a non-participating audience so long as they realize that they are there solely to learn, and not to put forward their own half-baked ideas, or ask inconsequential questions. All papers must be prepared and circulated beforehand so that the timetable is one solely of discussion, and the organizers must take the responsibility of reading through the papers and giving more time to interesting looking papers, and less time for discussion to dull ones. And, having invited the speakers to submit papers, and then decided which papers to discuss, the editor must be no more than a technician who sees through the press the text of the papers which were discussed, in the form that they were submitted, together with the typed version of the tape of the discussion.

Until there are some guidelines as to what is Good in archaeology (a separate article in itself) the more publication the better, for amongst the present unexciting mediocre offerings the mistaken and the sparkling would at least give variety.

Richard Reece

Institute of Archaeology,
31-34 Gordon Square,
London, W.C.1.