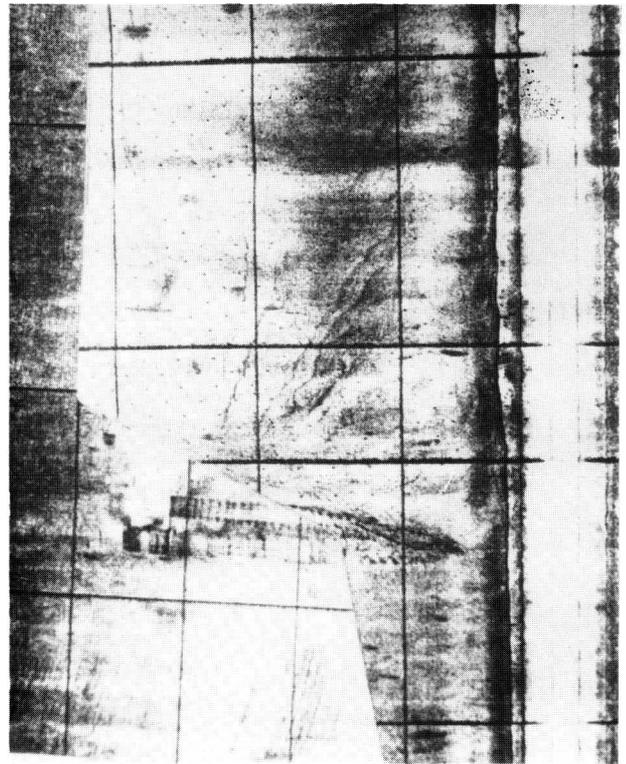


examining the underwater remains of the 12th century bridge piers and associated wooden piles. The practical problems of survey work in British waters, even when restricted to single site survey, are considerable, and remote sensing is seen as an essential preliminary to diver inspection in many areas where visibility, currents and seabed mobility are never constant. M.A.S. will be directing its work in 1989 towards Pudding Pan, Margate Sand (Fig. 10) and the monitoring of conditions on two protected wrecks on the Goodwins: the Stirling Castle and Northumberland (ships-of-the-line wrecked in the Great Gale of 1703).

As seabed evaluation and monitoring continues in the Thames area, the group aims to establish the density and diversity of sites amid the shifting sands, with a long-term programme of research on seabed stability in specific areas, and to promote the professional archiving of data within regional sites and monuments registers. Such a programme is currently under review by a working party for the Joint Nautical Archaeology Policy Committee, which is putting together a number of discussion documents providing appraisals and recommendations for nautical archaeology in Britain<sup>13</sup>.

### Acknowledgements

We would like to thank James and Ruth Norman for providing the raw materials and much advice; the many volunteers from the Institute of Archaeology and Passmore Edwards Museum, in particular J. Wallis; and the Passmore Edwards Museum for assistance in removing the finished boat from the wood. We are very grateful to Terry Monaghan of M.A.S. for making a video recording of the manufacturing process and editing the exhibition video, to volunteers from the Museum of London for helping to launch *Ravensbourne*, to staff of the DGLA and P.



**Fig. 10: Sidescan sonar image of an unidentified wreck emerging out of Margate Sand in the Thames Estuary. Without a national programme of survey and wreck management, such sites remain prone to escalating threats of indiscriminate salvage, erosion and decay, damage from dredging and mineral extraction, and souvenir hunting.**

Marsden (Museum of London) for information on the original find, and to P. Marsden for permission to use his drawing of it.

13. The logboat currently features in an exhibition entitled *Logboats to Ships* at the North Woolwich Station Museum (extended P.E.M. exhibition).

## Letter

### The London Amphitheatre

Published information on the Roman amphitheatre recently discovered in London (*Current Archaeol* no. 109, 1988) suggests that it is a straightforward elliptical structure, stone built, on an E-W alignment with two entrances at opposing ends of the long axis and a masonry outer revetment wall. The simplicity of the morphology of the published ground plan leads one to believe that this is a structure associated with the civilian settlement in Roman London, similar to other known amphitheatres such as Silchester, Dorchester, Chichester *et al.*

In fact examination of the known amphitheatres in this country shows that none of the two-entranced amphitheatres, which are associated primarily with civilian urban settlements, has a solid outer revetment wall. Indeed only one example, Silchester, shows any indication of ever possessing an outer revetment wall at all, and in this instance it was made of turves. Those with masonry outer

revetment walls invariably have at least four entrance passageways. There are only two examples which display these characteristics, Chester and Caerleon, both of which are unequivocally military sites.

These are observable facts. The London amphitheatre lies, unusually, within the Roman town walls but this merely suggests that it had fallen into disuse, a common occurrence at other sites, when the walls were built. Given the proximity of the Cripplegate fort and the bath buildings in Cheapside it would perhaps be more consistent with the known facts to regard the London example as an adjunct of the fort rather than of the civil settlement. In which case the ground plan could reasonably be expected to approximate more to Caerleon than, for example, Silchester and, incidentally, light may be shed on the date of the Cripplegate fort.

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