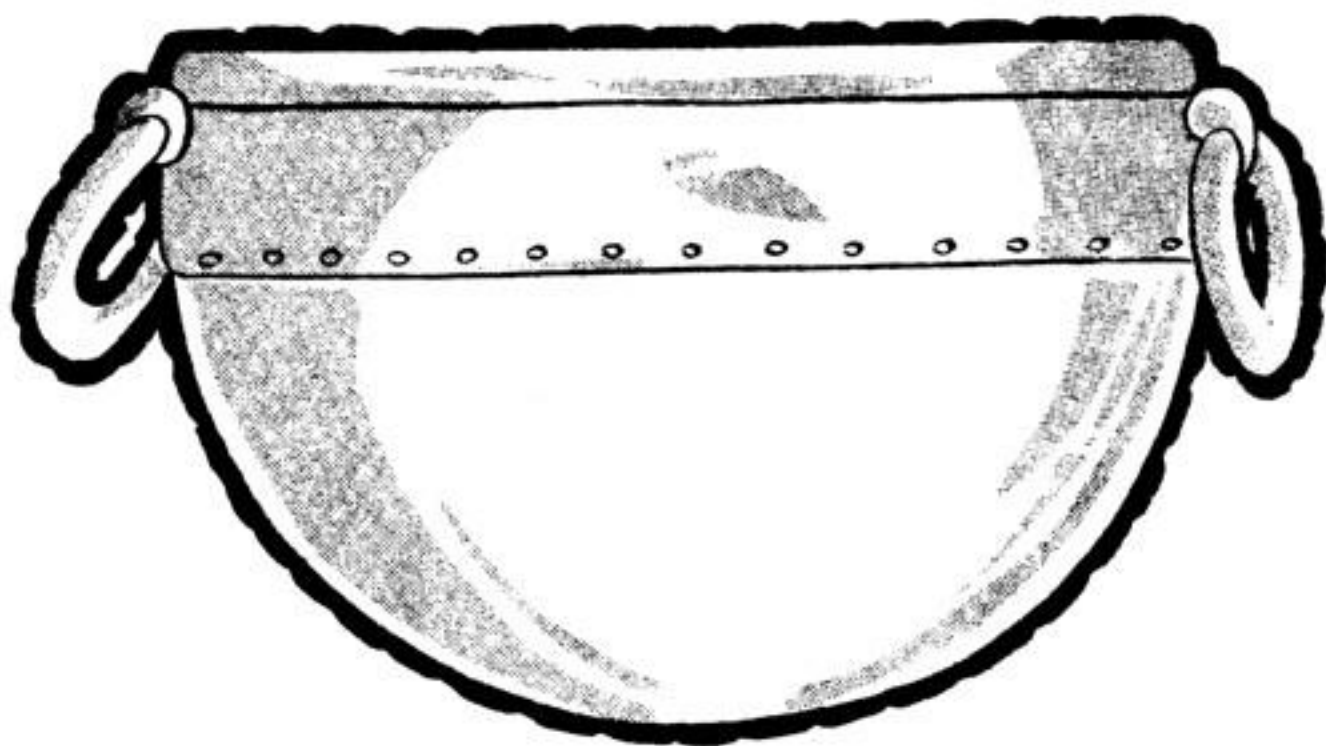


# THE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ANTIQUARY



NUMBER 4.

OCT-DEC. 1967.

THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY

Free to Members

THE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

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J.F. Dyer, M.A.

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Tel. 3292.

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78. Broadway,  
Letchworth.  
Tel. 5912.

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194. Icknield Way,  
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Tel. 4699.

Contributors to the NORTH HERTS ANTIQUARY are free to express their own views which do not necessarily coincide with those of the Editor or the NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

## EDITORIAL.

After a years delay we present again the North Hertfordshire Antiquary. It is hoped that in its changed format it will be found more convenient and interesting while at the same time keeping production costs within the available budget. We aim to publish four issues a year.

A magazine such as this in a Society like ours cannot function to the full without members support and we therefore solicit contributions from all readers. It is intended to provide space in our columns for correspondence and comment, both general and if need be critical, indeed any member who feels they have a contribution to make, either in the manner of a technical article, news of a find or just a point of view, will be welcome.

Of necessity, much of the present issue includes matter concerning our Society itself and your committee hoped that by also including a list of current members, greater contact and enthusiasm may be engendered within our ranks.

The success of the magazine and prosperity of our Society is really up to you.

-oOo-

### Our Front Cover.

Our front cover illustration, representing a cauldron of a continental middle La Tene type hitherto unknown in Britain, is typical of the form of cauldron from which an iron rim was discovered at Letchworth in 1961.

The Letchworth cauldron rim was found in a ditch of an Early Iron Age enclosure at Blackhorse Road and dates from about the mid-Second Century B.C. As a complete article the cauldron would probably have had a basin of sheet bronze riveted to the top iron rim the diameter of which is some 50.cms. Details of the discovery are to be found in "The Antiquaries Journal" Vol XLV, Part 11.

1965, in an article entitled "A Iron Cauldron-Rim from Letchworth, Herts", by John Moss-Eccardt.

NORTH HERTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held 10th. April, 1967.

1. Minutes of the previous years A.G.M. were read by the Secretary.

1. 1. There were no matters arising.

2. Adoption of the accounts.

2. 1. The income and expenditure sheet and balance sheet were read by the Treasurer.

2. 2. Comment was made on the 'fall off' of institutional members. It was agreed that an effort to revive their membership would be made.

2. 3. The Chairman expressed thanks on behalf of the Society to the Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Auditor for their kind services throughout the year.

3. Election of Officers and Committee.

3. 1. The Officers were re-elected to serve another year in office.

i.e. Chairman & Field Director - J. Moss-Eccardt.  
Honorary Treasurer. - Col. N.M. Blair, O.B.E.  
Honorary Secretary. - P. Palmer.

3. 2. As there were several new nominations for the Committee the names of the present Committee and the new nominees were presented to the meeting and a ballot was held. The following persons were elected to serve.

Mr. R. Bedford-Payne.  
Mr. F. S. Bland.  
Mr. A. Cockburn.  
Mr. V. G. Fenton.

Miss. M. Gadd.  
Mr. I. Higgins.  
Miss. M. Westaway.  
Mr. I. B. Wright.

#### 4. Chairmans Address.

The Chairman began his address with a reminder of the years winter activities.

In October a **Brains Trust**, jointly organised by N.H.A.S. and the Hitchin Regional Survey proved a success.

The Lecture season comprised:-

November. - 1966. - The events of that year - by J.F.Dyer.  
December. - Belgic Coinage. by Dr. Kent.  
January. - Norwegian Rock Carvings. - by J. F. Dyer.  
February. - Anglo Saxon Jewellery. - by Miss. J. Cooke.  
March. - Stoneage in Greece. - by E. S. Higgs.

4. 1. The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Fenton for his efforts in producing the posters announcing the above events.
4. 2. The most successful venture undertaken by the Society in this year was the outing to the Berkhamstead Pageant. The success was largely due to the fact that the Letchworth Round Table organised a party which merged with that of the N.H.A.S. and a coach was easily filled.
4. 3. Reference made to the survey of a site at Wallington. The framework of the survey had been laid down but more support needed to enable a full plan of the ground features to be drawn up.
4. 4. Support is generally very poor at 'digs' and for this reason the 'training dig' planned for the Spring seemed in danger of being called off. Although the number of new members was increasing it is still only the same hard core of enthusiasts who assist in excavation.
4. 5. Another problem was the lack of headquarters. If a permanent place could be found, the Society would be able to engage in research, for which there are grants available.



5. Any other business.

5. 1. Miss. Gadd asked if the 'Antiquary' was still to be produced. J. Moss-Eccardt answered in the affirmative but stressed the difficulty of compiling and printing this screed.

Mr. Wright stated that Mrs. Wright was prepared to assist with typing and collating the copy.

5. 2. It was requested by Miss. Hershaw that details of forthcoming events be circulated to other Societies in the area.
5. 3. Questioned about Dr. Glyn-Daniel, J. Moss-Eccardt replied that he has had to decline Presidency of the Society, due to increasing commitments abroad. At present a successor had not been appointed.
5. 4. It was suggested that committee meetings be held more regularly in the forthcoming year, and it was agreed to meet on the 1st. Tuesday of each month.

There being no other business the meeting was closed.

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Library New Books - Review.

'Britannia'. A History of Roman Britain. The text of this book deals extensively and in great detail with its subject. Its appeal will perhaps be more to the serious student of Romano-British History than to the amateur archaeologist. However there are some excellent photographs reproduced, mostly ariel shots of hill forts, stations and roads. Included also are some very good plates depicting coins which could be most useful for identification or reference purposes. Certainly worth a visit to the library. I.B.A.

'Britannia' A History of Roman Britain, by Sheppard Frere, published by Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

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THE PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN SITE AT BLACKHORSE ROAD.  
LETCWORTH.

by John Moss-Eccardt.

Between the ancient town of Baldock and the more recent Letchworth Garden City lies a small belt of chalkland bounded by the slight elevation of Norton village to the north-west and Baldock Road to the south-east. In the centre of this area lies the newly-developed industrial strip of Blackhorse Road and a section of the Baldock By-Pass. Amongst these features of the twentieth century runs the ancient trackway of Icknield Way, and close to it, the remains of early settlements covering some three thousand years.

The industrial development of Blackhorse Road began in 1958 when the roadway was constructed by Messrs. Charles Ball Ltd., and it was through the co-operation of this local firm that the identification of the site was made possible. During the digging of a kerb trench a workman uncovered a Saxon skeleton and the find was reported to the Museum. Subsequent work brought about the discovery of three more graves, and a detailed examination of the site followed. It was seen that the highest part of the road was marked with areas of disturbance, and a limited trial excavation was carried out during the Christmas holiday in 1958. Numerous trenches yielded nothing until a small ditch was uncovered near the present lower entrance to the I.C.F. factory. This was followed up with the aid of a handful of helpers and eventually the outline of an enclosure took shape. While this was happening the road was nearing completion and contractors arrived to begin the construction of the factory and it now became a matter of urgency to complete the rescue of the archaeological features before they were destroyed. A meeting of the architects, contractors and a representative of the Ministry of Works was held and Messrs. Taylor Woodrow and I.C.F. agreed to financially support the excavation to its conclusion and as a result labourers were hired to do the digging. While the part of the enclosure that lay in the threatened

zone was being uncovered construction work was going on elsewhere on the site and those features which appeared were recorded and, where possible, excavated. By the end of the summer the work was completed and the site destroyed.

It seemed evident that the rest of the enclosure lay to the south of the road which was also due for development. A grant from the Ministry of Works was sought which, together with money from Letchworth U.D.C., made a further season of digging possible. In the summer of 1960 a large team of students from Cambridge and the Letchworth area excavated the site now occupied by Messrs. Shelvoke and Drewry where the rest of the enclosure lay. An opportunity was taken to drive three trenches across Icknield Way where three parallel ditches were discovered. In addition to this, four Neolithic (2950 - 1800 B.C.) pits were found which contained animal bones, pottery and flint tools. The whole site produced many Iron Age (600 B.C. - 43 A.D.) pits, ditches and postholes many of which contained potsherds, animal bones and charcoal, and two further Saxon skeletons were found, one of which had been killed with a spear that lay among the bones.

In 1961 an aerial photograph showed a number of pits to the east of the I.C.T. factory and an area was uncovered near the U.D.C. allotments. This contained a triangular double-ditched enclosure with associated storage pits. The most important find was an iron cauldron rim (see frontespiece) which was of a type hitherto unknown in the British Isles. It was associated with pottery which places it in the middle of the Second Century B.C. As there was evidence of more features to the south of this area further work was carried out in 1962 which produced a large number of storage pits of the Early Iron Age. The contents of these pits included animal bones, pottery, and loom-weights. A number of postholes were found within a circular gully and it is possible that these features formed the foundations of a round hut.

After a two-year break when work was carried out



elsewhere, the progress of factory-building made another rescue operation essential. An area near the railway bridge to the south of Blackhorse Road was stripped during the Spring and Summer of 1965. Again the finance was provided by Letchworth U.D.C. and the Ministry of Works. The line of the Icknield Way ditches was traced again which showed that it ran continuously from behind the Shelvoke and Drewry factory to beyond the railway bridge. A double ditch was found to run at right angles to this ditch system and from it came Roman material. A bronze fibula or safety-pin brooch came from the very bottom of one section of the ditch which could be thus dated to the early First Century A.D. This was followed by a coin of the Emperor Domitian (81 - 96 A.D.) and a piece of Samian (red imported ware) of the same date. Two later coins came from higher in the ditch and were of Valens (364 - 378 A.D.) and Theodosius (379 - 395 A.D.). A great deal of pottery was also found together with remains of iron objects. Two more skeletons were also found within the excavated area.

The Roman double ditch had been left running under the roadway at the end of the 1965 season so it was decided that it should be traced further. In addition it was thought desirable to make sure that no features would be destroyed on the south side of the road by building operations. The help of Dr. Martin Aitken of Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, Oxford University, was sought and the area was surveyed with a proton magnetometer and a new devise called "Dekko". Little showed on the southern side but a ditch was indicated to the north and this was subsequently investigated in 1966. The apparatus indicated a pit on one part of the side and this was found and excavated to a depth of eight feet. Its contents were extremely interesting as this one pit produced the remains of six Beaker vessels dating from around 1800 B.C. together with animal bones, antler fragments and charcoal. On another part of the site occurred an antler pick, an ox shoulder blade and a piece of Rinyo-Clacton pottery (Neolithic c.2000 B.C.). A small ditch was also uncovered as well as several Iron Age storage pits. The

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Expenditure.

Stationary, Printing & Postage.	22.	18.	6.
Lecture expenses.	26.	9.	5.
Society subscriptions.	1.	12.	6.
Film.	1.	6.	6.
Cheque Book.		5.	0.
Sundry tools.	4.	7.	9.
	<hr/>		
	£56.	19.	8.

BALANCE SHEET  
as at 31/3/67.

Liabilities.

1967/8 Subscriptions  
paid in advance.

Full members. (4).	4.	4.	0.
Institutional. (1).	2.	2.	0.

Sundry creditors.

Beds. Arch. Council Subscription.	9.	10.	0.
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Income & Expenditure.

Balance B/F 1/4/67.	24.	17.	7.
Less excess of Expenditure over Income.	20.	12.	8.
	<hr/>		
	4.	4.	11.
	<hr/>		
	£20.	0.	11.

Accounts audited by  
L.G.A. Gowers.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
for the year ending 31st. March, 1967.

Income.

Subscriptions.

Full members.	(29).	31.	9.	0.
Junior members.	{ 4 }.	1.	0.	0.
Institutional.	{ 1 }.	2.	2.	0.

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34. 11. 0.

Profit on outing to  
 Berkhanstead Pageant.

1. 16. 0.

Excess of Expenditure over  
 Income carried forward.

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20. 12. 8.

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£56. 19. 8.

Assets.

Prismatic Compass at cost.

13. 14. 6.

Cash at Bank. 24. 11. 0.

less cheques not

yet presented. 18. 4. 7.

6. 6. 5.

Cash in hand.

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0. 0. 0.

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20. 0. 11.

N. M. BLAIR.

Hon. Treasurer.

contd. from page 7.  
continuation of the Roman double ditch was not found  
during this season.

The previous season's work was continued during  
1967 and is under way now. The nature and the  
significance of the discoveries at Blackhorse Road will be  
dealt with in future numbers of the "North Herts Antiquary".  
The report on the Iron Age cauldron rim can be purchased  
as an off-print at the Museum for 2/-.

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South Beds. Archaeological Soc. Programme. 1967 - 8.

7. 30.p.m. Carnegie Room, Luton Central Library.

Thursday 28th. Sept. New Discoveries in Northamptonshire.  
R. Hollowell. Esq.

Thursday 26th. Oct. The Roman Palace at Fishbourne.  
David Baker. M.A.

Thursday 23rd. Nov. New Light on Saxon Bedfordshire.  
D. H. Kennett. B.A.

Thursday 25th. Jan. Archaeology in Northern Ireland.  
James Dyer. M.A.

Thursday 22nd. Feb. A Napoleonic Arms Factory at Enfield.  
W. L. Gates. B.A.

Thursday 28th. March. The Romans in Wales.  
W. H. Manning. B.Sc.

Thursday 25th. April. A.G.M. and Film Evening.

The Archaeologist Speaks. - a series of lectures arranged  
by Luton Public Library and Putteridge Bury College of  
Education at the Library Lecture Theatre. Tickets from  
the Citizens Advice Bureau in December.

Friday 5th. January. Verulamium. Prof. S.S. Frere.

Friday 12th. January. Jerusalem. Dr. Kathleen Kenyon.

and following four Fridays to be finally arranged.

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### Equipment Fund.

It has been proposed by the committee that a fund should be established to enable the purchase of various items of survey equipment. The first item required is a Resistivity Meter and our funds initial target is set at £50. We need ideas for fund raising, donations and help in canvassing support. It is suggested that a New Year draw take place and for this we already have promises of support from local firms, so, ideas and help please!!!

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### A.G.M. and Dinner.

The next Annual General Meeting will take place on Friday 26th. April 1968 in the Library Lecture Room, Letchworth. The meeting will be followed by the Society Annual Dinner at the Broadway Resturant. More details in the next issue of 'The Antiquary'.

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### Journals and Periodicals.

The Society currently receives a number of journals and periodicals including "Current Archaeology", the "Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal" and publications from other local societies. Those wishing to borrow copies please contact the Secretary, preferably at lecture meetings.

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### List of Members - September 1967.

Dr. J. Alexander,  
Spring Cottage,  
Haslingfield,  
Cambridgeshire.

Mr. & Mrs. R. Bedford-Payns,  
125. Norton Way South,  
Letchworth.

Col. & Mrs. N. M. Blair,  
78. Broadway,  
Letchworth.

Mr. F. S. Bland,  
67. Norton Road,  
Letchworth.

Miss. J. M. Brown,  
25. Fishponds Road,  
Hitchin.

Mr. R. T. Bland,  
67. Norton Road,  
Letchworth.

Mr. E. H. Bell,  
8. Docklands,  
Pirton,  
Hr. Hitchin.

Mr. R. Castledine,  
3. Clothall Road,  
Baldock.

Mr. A. P. Clarke,  
Letchworth Museum,  
Letchworth.

Mr. R. Cooper,  
82. Waysbrook,  
Letchworth.

Mr. A. Cockburn,  
Wheelers Plot,  
Fore Street,  
Wotton.

Mr. F. J. Dyer,  
45. Ashcroft Road,  
Luton.

Dr. Glyn E. Daniel,  
St. Johns College,  
Cambridge.

Mr. G. J. Foley,  
53. Garden Walk,  
Royston.

Miss. M. Gadd,  
73. Heathfield Road,  
Hitchin.

Mr. E. J. Hewitt,  
59. High Street,  
Langford.

Mrs. J. Cahn,  
6. Sollershott East,  
Letchworth.

Mrs. M. A. Cherry,  
68. Highsett,  
Hills Road,  
Cambridge.

Mrs. R. Cooper,  
82. Waysbrook,  
Letchworth.

Mrs. P. F. Cocks,  
119. Montgomery Close,  
Steuartby,  
Bedford.

Mrs. D. Cadwallader,  
206. Rushby Mead,  
Letchworth.

Miss. M. Dixon,  
76. Tytton Avenue,  
Letchworth.

Mr. V. G. Fenton,  
1A. Cloisters Court,  
Letchworth.

Mrs. L. G. A. Gowers,  
63. Highfield,  
Letchworth.

Mrs. M. Henville,  
23. Field Lane,  
Letchworth.

Mr. M. I. Higgins,  
Bridgewater,  
Stevenage Road,  
Little Hymondley.

Mrs. A.V.M. Hurst,  
The Firs,  
151. Norton Road,  
Stotfold.

Mrs. C.J. Halliday,  
20. The Chilternae,  
Hitchin.

Miss. A. Jordan,  
8. Sollershatt East,  
Letchworth.

Miss. D. Meyer,  
5. Souberie Avenue,  
Letchworth.

Mr. & Mrs. J. Moss-Eccardt,  
Museum Flat,  
Letchworth.

Mr. P. Palmer,  
38. Romany Close,  
Letchworth.

Mr. F. Pryor,  
Lennoch Manor,  
Hitchin.

Mr. D. Ross,  
13. Willian Way,  
Letchworth.

Master A. Rolfe,  
31. Cranbourne Avenue,  
Hitchin.

Mr. I. L. Storer,  
17. Bedford Street,  
Hitchin.

Mr. C. Hutchings,  
Drill Hall Cottage,  
Ickniel Way,  
Letchworth.

Miss. E. Harker,  
63. Willian Way,  
Letchworth.

Mr. & Mrs. D. J. Lee,  
7. Berkley Close,  
Lucas Lane,  
Hitchin.

Mr. E. J. Madden,  
Rectory Annexe  
Graveley,  
Hitchin.

Miss. M. McWhirter,  
21. Souberie Avenue,  
Letchworth.

Mr. M. V. Pritchard,  
4. Sollershatt East,  
Letchworth.

Miss. W.A. Reading,  
106. West View,  
Letchworth.

Mr. I. Ross,  
13. Willian Way,  
Letchworth.

Mr. R. Seaford,  
73. Monklands,  
Letchworth.

Mr. P. Smith,  
41. Market Hill,  
Royston.

Mr. P. M. Stevens.  
39. Spring Close,  
Boreham Wood.

Miss. K. Westaway,  
60. Chiltern Road,  
Baldock.

Mr. I. B. Wright,  
194. Icknield Way,  
Letchworth.

Mr. & Mrs. A. F. I. Wood,  
34. Taywood Close,  
Stevenage.

Mr. & Mrs. R. Welch,  
161. Sish Lane,  
Stevenage.

Mr. I. O. Wren,  
68. High Street,  
Kimpton,  
Hitchin.

### Institutional Members.

St. Francis College.  
Letchworth.

Hitchin Museum,  
Hitchin.

St. Christophers College,  
Letchworth.

Grammar School,  
Letchworth.

Hitchin Girls Grammar School,  
Hitchin.

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### Late Change in Lecture Programme.

December. 4th. 'Brains Trust'.  
Animal Vegetable & Mineral.  
(Panel to be announced).

at 7.30.p.m. in the Lucas Room, Town Hall, Hitchin.

March. 5th. 'Archaeological Detection'.  
by Anthony Clark Esq., of the Ministry  
of Public Buildings and Works.

at 8.00.p.m. Library Hall, Letchworth.



Lecture Programme.  
1967 - 68.

- October. 10th. 'Roman Colchester'  
by David Clarke Esq., M.A., F.S.A., F.M.A.  
of Colchester Museum.
- November. 21st. 'Pagan Saxondom'  
by L.J. Matthews Esq., of the Manshead  
Archaeological Society, Dunstable.
- December. 5th. 'Archaeological Detection'  
by Anthony Clark Esq., of the Ministry  
of Public Buildings & Works.
- January. 2nd. 'Roman Wales'  
by W.H. Manning Esq., B.Sc., F.S.A., of  
Cardiff University.
- February. 16th. 'Archaeological Field Techniques'  
by Dr. J. Alexander M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.  
of London University.
- March. 'Brains Trust'  
Details and date to be announced in  
next issue.

Lectures in October, December and February to be held  
at Hitchin Museum at 8.00.p.m. and in November, January  
and March in the Library Hall, Letchworth at 8.00.p.m.

Printed and published by the  
NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.