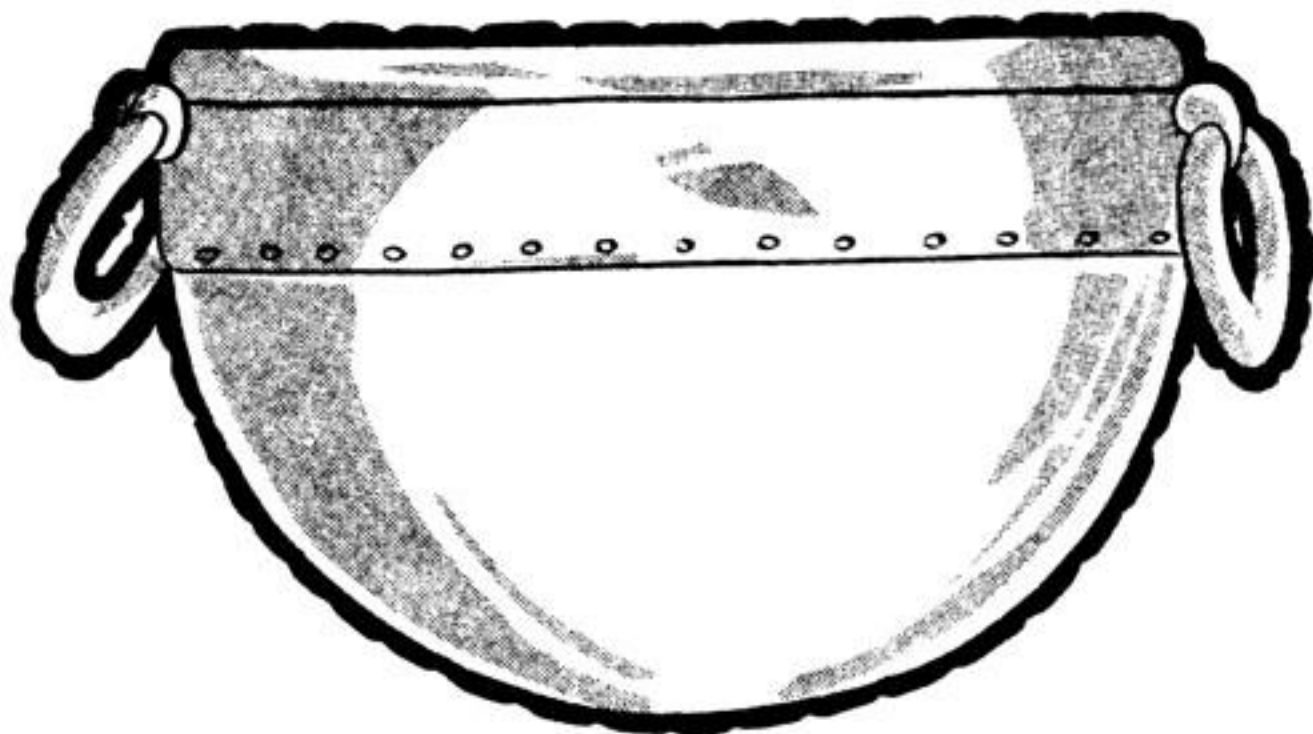


THE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ANTIQUARY



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SOCIETY

Free to Members

THE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

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Editorial

We welcome from the 1st April, our new Honorary President, Dr Brian Hope-Taylor, who has graciously accepted the task of heading our Society.

We look forward with new enthusiasm to the coming season and, if the last winter session of lectures is any measure to go by, the standard and breadth of technical deliberation has set a new level of achievement.

Yet once again support is solicited from rank and file members, not only for active support at digs, but for constructive criticism and suggestions in the areas of our Society's activities which still leave much room for development.

Members are reminded of the forthcoming Annual General Meeting and a full attendance would be appreciated. This singular occasion in the year goes a long way to set the trend for activity for a further twelve months and only by members expressing their wishes by word or vote can our Society be steered in the desired direction.

Nominations for the coming years Committee are requested, if possible being sent to the Secretary before the A.G.M. in order to enable prior ballot organisation which will save time at the meeting.

The Annual General Meeting. is to be held in the Library Lecture Room, Letchworth, commencing at 8 O'clock on Friday 26th April 1968.

The Annual Dinner, which will immediately follow the A.G.M. on the 26th April will be held in the Letchworth Cinema Restaurant with Mr Sofianos and his staff serving our gastronomic needs. The cost of the dinner will be £1. per head and for those wishing to attend, would you please let the Secretary know by Friday the 19th April; sending him the necessary funds with your request.

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Equipment Fund - New Year Draw.

Thanks for the gratifying support given by all concerned to the 1968 New Year Draw in aid of the Equipment Fund, a total of £30-19-8d (net £23-1-6d) was raised.

The draw took place on the 2nd of January after the lecture of that evening and our guest speaker, Mr W.H. Manning of the Department of Archaeology, Cardiff University drew the lucky winners.

Due to a magnificent response by local firms who donated all the prizes the winners must have been given some pleasure for their well spent sixpence.

Our most grateful acknowledgement is made to the following in being so generous in donating prizes:- Messrs T Brooker & Sons of Hitchin, Messrs Hands-England Ltd., Messrs Irving Air Chute of G.B. Ltd., Messrs G.C. Palmer of the Wynd, Letchworth, Messrs Spirella Co. of G.B. Ltd., Messrs R. Westly & Co. Ltd. of Luton.

Prize winners for the N.H.A.S. 1968 New Year Draw were:- 1st prize (Set of Car Seat Belts) Miss A.E.Hall of 26, Eldefield, Letchworth. 2nd prize (Set of Excavation Tools) Mrs I.P.G. Wood of 34, Taywood Close, Stevenage. 3rd. prize (Box Set of Perfume) Mrs A. Cockburn of Wheelers Plat, Fore Street, Weston. 4th prize (Box Set of Perfume) Mrs K. Welch of 161 Sish Lane, Stevenage. 5th prize (Bottle of Whisky) Mrs K. Smith of 74 Baldock Road, Letchworth. 6th prize (Chicken) Mrs O. Castledine of 3, Clothall Road, Baldock. 7th prize (£2 Sterling) Mr Lee of 111 Jackmans Place, Letchworth. 8th prize (Ladies Shower Hat) Mr I. Wood of 34 Taywood Close, Stevenage. 9th prize (Ladies Shower Hat) Mrs Austir of 5, Denton Road Stevenage and the Booby Prize (for the first ticket out of the tub for a member of the audience, a jar of Chicken) Mr A. Cockburn of Weston.

—oOo—

It was reported recently that the Soviets would be publishing a book about a second Atlantis - Arctis - which the polar explorer Yakov Gakkel (1900 - 65) believed to be a lost land now sunk beneath the Arctic waters. Soviet Scientists who agree with Gakkel say that the ocean floor and the nature of the rocks on its slopes support this view, and point out that the submerged Lomonosov Range lies along a volcanic and earthquake band. Ornithologists also point out that some migratory bird routes in the Arctic seem irrationally long, but would seem logical if in the past they passed overland or along coasts.- Could this land be the legendary Hyperborea ?

—oOo—

AN IMPORTANT NEW FIND AT BALDOCK.

By John Moss-Eccardt.

1968 had a most auspicious beginning for archaeology in North Herts. Sometime before Christmas, work had begun on a new building site at the Tone, Baldock, a site where some inhumation burials had been discovered in 1947 during the construction of "aluminium bungalows" or "prefabs". While removing the topsoil for a road, an excavator driver uncovered a find of unprecented richness for this area. In the soil appeared what seemed to be a piece of old iron bedstead and pieces of brass; fortunately the men concerned noticed the unusual shape of the objects and collected the pieces. Some did, in fact, get thrown on the lorry but a substantial part was assembled and taken to an amateur archaeologist in the site foreman's home town. Mr Les Matthews, Director of Excavations of the Manshead Society, Dunstable, was able to assemble the majority of the finds and contacted the writer. Mr Matthews recognised the find as of great importance and was anxious that the objects should be returned to the rightful owners, Baldock Urban District Council. The writer visited the site where more fragments were to be seen and the whole collection was taken to the Baldock Council Offices.

It was quite obvious that steps should be taken to recover whatever remained, and that a proper record should be made. The writer contacted Dr I.M. Stead, an authority on Belgic burials and one of the Ministry of Works's specialists in excavation. In the space of one afternoon Dr Stead arranged an excavation and alerted his team of experienced "diggers" who were able to arrive in Baldock to begin work on January 2nd. Arrangements were made with the authorities concerned and considerable co-operation was received from Messrs Shanley of Luton, the site contractors. Certain reasonable restrictions were imposed as to which areas were available for exploration.

The main priority was the completion of the clearance of the hole in which the objects had been found. The ground was extremely muddy and the weather snowy, and it was necessary to erect a polythene shelter over the site so that the careful scraping could begin. At the same time, footings were already being dug by the contractors at the Pinnocks Lane end of the Tone and a team was set to work there to recover the inhumations that lay in the trenches. Meanwhile others

were searching the spoil heaps for parts of an iron firedog which was missing, and were successful.

The finds up to this point were: two iron firedogs of fine artistic execution, fragments of a large bronze cauldron of sheet bronze and its iron ring handles, two bronze dishes, fragments of bronze strips in decorated Celtic style which had been part of a wooden bucket, the handles belonging to this, two terminal heads which decorated them, and an amphora or wine jar. This assemblage was typical of a Belgic "Chieftain's Burial" and Dr Stead hoped to discover the cremated bones of the deceased, as well as any other similar burial, for these are seldom found singly.

The main excavation was, therefore, concentrated in the area of the first discovery. The bottom of the hole was reached and this yielded further bronze fragments and another head from the bucket. Another hole nearby looked as if it might contain some associated finds but its contents of lamps and pottery were dated to the third century A.D. by a Roman coin at the bottom. Other finds were made nearby but no other Belgic material emerged.

The inhumation cemetery on the other area yielded twenty five burials and pottery of the Belgic and Roman periods. There were also several ditches which ran off the site and disappeared into areas which were not available for excavation. Some of these matched the discoveries made earlier during the construction of buildings in the High Street.

The majority of Dr Stead's team of diggers was forced to leave the site in order to return to their colleges and universities at the end of two weeks. A watch on the site was kept by Mr Tony Pacitto, Dr Stead's deputy; the two have worked together for twelve years! Mr Pacitto is an expert on electrical and mechanical aids to excavation and the excavation was supplied with floodlamps driven by a generator to make night work possible. Various detection devices were also used for the location of buried pipes and other impedimenta of a building site. During the "watching" period traces of a Roman building were discovered and two walls were found running at right angles to each other. The corner was reinforced with tiles and the structure itself was made of chalk blocks or "clunch". The interior produced a great deal of pottery dating from the first century A.D., and later. The continuation of the walls, in both directions couldn't be followed because of the modern road. In one section the wall had been built over an earlier pit and was therefore

provided with foundations of over four feet deep. The general appearance of the building suggests its use as a dwelling house and it is the first example of a properly recorded Roman building in Baldock.

The finds have been sent to the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works to be studied and prepared for publication: the metalwork will be treated in the Ministry's Laboratory. It is hoped that it will be exhibited at Baldock and then, finally, go to a local museum on permanent loan.

The lesson to be learnt from this excavation is the need for swift reaction when a discovery is made, and when such a dig is mounted it should be backed by the most modern and plentiful facilities of equipment and conservation organisation. Some may feel that this leaves little room for the amateur but, on the contrary, there is a great need for trained amateurs always, and it must be remembered that all Dr Stead's helpers, with the exception of two, were simply amateurs who were being paid for their experience and efficiency.

The distribution of burials of this type is, up till now, limited to Herts, Beds, Cambs and Essex. The significance of these is discussed by Dr Stead in the current number of Archaeologia. It is hoped that a copy will be available for those interested, in due course.

——oOo——

Pity its not on our "Patch".

It is learned that no-one wants to take the responsibility for the skeletons of two Romans which were exposed when part of a river bank at Alcester, Warwickshire, collapsed some months ago. Archaeologists it is said, have shown no interest and local authorities and police say the 2,000 - year - old skeletons are "not their problem".

——oOo——

A British team of archaeologists have discovered a large archive of inscribed Assyrian tablets of about 1500 B.C., which promises to throw new light on a fascinating period of history. Some 300 tablets were found in the remains of a great palace with 8-ft. thick walls. They include administrative records, name of palace officials and appeals to the king Zimri-lin for troops.

THE EARLIEST JERUSALEM.

It is the fate of Jerusalem that it has been a city of importance to so many different peoples and religions. There is probably no other city in the world that has been ruled by so many different races and for many of them it has a standing and fame that far exceeds that of wealth, size or physical attractions.

For the past six years, the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, in collaboration with the Ecole Biblique de St. Etienne and the Royal Ontario Museum, and supported by many interested institutions, especially the British Academy, the Russell Trust and the National Geographic Society, has been carrying out excavations on the site, with the aim of unravelling the tangleskein of its structural history from the much-destroyed remains of its defences and houses.

The excavations have now reached the stage when the history of Jerusalem can be set out with some accuracy. The present political situation gives these results peculiar relevance.

The Old City of Jerusalem today bridges the northern end of two steep ridges which run out from the main mountainous crest of Palestine. The ridges are defined to the east by the Kedron Valley and to the west and south by the Hinnom Valley, which curves round to join the Kedron. Between the two is the Tyropoeon, now much silted up separating the two ridges.

The most important result of the excavations has been to show that the original city of Jerusalem was situated entirely on the southern end of the eastern ridge. It has been possible to locate the earliest town wall, well down the eastern slope, where it was placed to guard access to the spring in the valley; it was the existence of this spring that dictated the position of Jerusalem, for a perennial source of water was the absolute essential for all ancient cities in Palestine.

It was found possible to date the wall to circa 1800 B.C.; there was some occupation on the site about 2600 B.C., but there is so far no evidence of a walled town.

This town of 1800 B.C. was the Jerusalem whose ruler, Abdi Kheba,

was in correspondence with Akhenaten of Egypt C. 1370 B.C. and of the Jebusites whose successful resistance to the first incursions of the Israelites is recorded in the book of Joshua.

As a site for a town, the steep slopes and narrow crest were not very inviting. Access to the spring can have been the only reason why the walls were carried so far down the slope, for the angle of the rock is about 30 deg.

The early houses on the slope were irregular and unimpressive. But in the 13th century B.C. the Jebusites carried out a major town-planning operation which was to alter the aspect of Jerusalem for the next 700 years. On the slope they constructed a series of massive stonefilled terraces to serve as the basis of much more commodious houses. The terraces were vulnerable to natural disasters, such as earthquakes, and to human attacks, but they were so vital to the structure of a large part of the city that they were repaired again and again.

This Jebusite Jerusalem held out against the Israelites until Circa 1000 B.C. but it was vital to David in his aim of uniting all the tribes of Israel under his rule that he should capture it, for it controlled the main north-south road of the hill country. The Jebusites were so confident in the strength of their defences that they jeered at the Israelites and declared that the city could be defended by the blind and the lame. It fell because a detachment of the attackers was able to penetrate within the walls by climbing up the rock-cut shaft and tunnel leading to the spring in the valley.

The evidence is clear that the city of David was this same Jebusite city. The east and west walls remained in use down to the 8th century B.C. and the north wall, some 220 yards south of the present Old City, continued in use throughout the reign of David.

The whole of the original Jerusalem was therefore well outside the Old City. David's repairs of the Jebusite walls are recorded in the Bible, and it is also recorded that he (and several successors) repaired Millo. This is a word meaning filling, and we can now interpret it with much probability as the terraces on which an appreciable part of the town was built.

Solomon's addition to Jerusalem Circa 960 B.C. was the Temple. Its site is that of the present Moslem sanctuary of the Haramesh-

Sherif, but Solomon's Temple has disappeared completely beneath the great platform of Herod's Temple, which supports the Haram. Nothing has survived, either, of Solomon's city for it has been found that in Roman times the whole area was used as a quarry. What is, however, clear is that his city was still confined to the eastern ridge, for excavations on the western ridge have shown that this area was not occupied until much later.

Jerusalem retained the boundaries of Solomon's city with one slight addition, down to the time of the Babylonian destruction in 586 B.C. In the eighth century the eastern wall was rebuilt and several times repaired. One of these builds was probably the work of Hezekiah, circa 700 B.C. faced with the threat of the advance of the Assyrians, who in 722 B.C. had captured Samaria and carried away the northern tribes of Israel into captivity. Hezekiah's most famous measure in face of this threat was to carry the water from the spring in the valley by the rockcut Siloam Tunnel right through the ridge to the pool of Siloam in the central valley, which can now be shown to have been a rock-cut cistern.

The city and the Kingdom of Judah survived precariously for another 100 years. Excavation has shown that the Babylonian destruction was even more disastrous than the Biblical account would suggest. The vital terrace structures on the eastern slope collapsed in a vast tumble of stones.

The first returning exiles in 530 B.C. were concerned only with rebuilding the Temple, and when the walls were at last rebuilt by Nehemiah in 440 B.C. the wreckage of the eastern slope was left outside and the walls followed the crest of the ridge.

Excavation has shown that it was not till the time of the Maccabees in the 2nd century B.C. that Jerusalem began to grow again. New terraces were built, this time out in the central valley, and it was probably Circa.142 B.C. that the northern end of the western ridge was included in the city, though the southern end still remained outside it.

This was the Jerusalem that Herod the Great, at the end of the 1st century B.C., beautified with many fine buildings including his great rebuilding of the Temple, And Herod's Jerusalem was the Jerusalem of the time of the Gospels. One of the most interesting results of the excavations was to be able to establish the approximate

line of the north wall of Herod's city and to show that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre lies outside it, and may therefore be on the authentic site of Calvary.

The greatest extension of Jerusalem came in the time of Herod Agrippa, A.D. 40-44. It has now been able to show that the wall enclosing the south end of the western ridge belongs to his time. Dr. J.B. Hennessy, Director of the British School, working on behalf of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, has shown that the contemporary north wall lies beneath the north wall of the Old City.

Herod Agrippa's Jerusalem had a short life, for it was utterly destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70 when the exile and Diaspora of the Jews began. The ravages of this destruction were everywhere evident in the excavations. In A.D. 135 the obliteration of ancient Jerusalem was completed when Hadrian built Aelia Capitolina on the ruins. Chronological investigation of Jerusalem culminated in 1966 in establishing that the walls of Aelia are the basis of those of the Old City.

For another 500 years, the city was Roman and Byzantine. When Christianity became the official religion of the Empire, there was a period of considerable prosperity and expansion, but after the Arab capture of the city from the Byzantines it shrank back into the area of Aelia. From then on it has been Moslem, with a brief century of Crusader rule in the 12th century A.D. The Turks captured it in 1517, and the present walls of the Old City are the work of Suleiman the Magnificent in the 16th century A.D.

Jerusalem has thus had a chequered history in situation and ownership: occupied by the Jebusites from 1800 to 1000 B.C. (and perhaps eight hundred years earlier); occupied by the Jews from 1000 B.C. to A.D. 70, and ruled by them from 1000 B.C. to 586 B.C. and then by the great empires of the Near East in turn; ruled by Rome from A.D. 70; Christian under Byzantine rule from A.D. 330 to A.D. 636; occupied by Arabs from A.D. 636 to the present day, and ruled by one of the Arab Powers from A.D. 636 to 1099, by Latin Christians from 1099 to 1187, by Arabs again till 1517, by Turks from 1517 to 1918, under a British Mandate till 1948, and ruled by Arabs till 1967. No other city has known such a history. —oOo—

Archaeologists at Sheffield University are hoping that excavations which they will carry out this summer in northern Greece will

provide fresh evidence about the connection of Neolithic man in South Europe with the Near East and Central Europe.

The archaeologists hope the excavations may tell them from which of these places Neolithic man learned the art of metalurgy. A joint expedition from Sheffield and the University of California is to start digging under the auspices of the British School of Archaeology, Athens, at Photolivos, near Drama, in eastern Macedonia at the end of July.

The field director, Dr Colin Renfrew, of Sheffield University, said yesterday that the site was a large mound about 100 yards long, 60 yards wide, and 10 yards deep which seemed from surface evidence to date from the late Neolithic period - between 4000 and 3000 B.C. He said that the expedition, which will continue for three seasons, would try to establish the sociology of the Neolithic village by drawing up a complete plan of it, something which has not been done in Greece before.

In particular, he hoped to find evidence to show whether the Greeks had learned the art of smelting and moulding copper and bronze from contact with the Near East - the generally accepted view - or by contact with settlements in Bulgaria, a theory which he favours.

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The people who occupied Britain nearly 4,000 years ago had a good knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, according to Professor A. Thom. Prof. Thom has just brought out a book on "Megalithic sites in Britain", wherein he sets out evidence that Megalithic man could set out ellipses based on "Pythagorean" triangles a thousand years before the earliest Greek mathematicians. A "yard" of 2.72 ft. was in constant use throughout Britain. A calendar divided the year into 16 parts of 22 or 23 days. Eclipses could be predicted with accuracy and it is almost certain, Prof. Thom adds, that the stone-age people could keep accurate time by observing first-magnitude stars.

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Archaeologists have been working on the site of a moated manor house between Cookham and Maidenhead and have found a great deal of evi-

dence indicating that the area was inhabited before the Norman Conquest. The manor was previously thought to date from the 11th century and is the first mediaeval structure of its kind to be completely excavated in Berkshire. Discoveries so far include coins, animal, fish and bird bones, a bronze buckle, broken pottery, knife blades hundreds of oyster shells and a chalk figurine.

—oOo—

Scientists are convinced that man was living on the Armenian plateau at least 800,000 years ago. Armenia is said to be an archaeologist's paradise and hardly a year passes without something exciting coming to light. One of the most astonishing recent finds, however, was not the work of archaeologists but a couple of young Soviet geologists. They spotted a pattern of little "potholes" and trenches that meant that iron ore had been smelted and worked there. It took some time to convince archaeologists that what had been discovered was a sort of blast furnace, 3,000 or 4,000 years old. Further excavations made it quite clear that the community who had lived there had reached an unexpectedly high level of culture. The "blast furnaces" were only the first of the finds at Metsamor, near Erevan—far more interesting things were found. There was, for instance, a vast temple hollowed out of a mountain side and the great altar at its centre still bore traces of fires, as did seven pillars at the head of the altar. Experts came to the conclusion that the Metsamorians had quite an extensive knowledge of astronomy, as there were representations of the heavenly bodies and compass points, and a small hill had apparently been used as an observatory.

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A Russian working on excavations beside the Ili River, South Kazakhstan, noticed something unusual about a stone pulled out by one of the bulldozers. He had it washed and found it was a 12lb fossilised tooth.

Scientists later decided it had come from a Wust elephant, which had lived about 400 million years ago.

—oOo—

Two South Devon potholers have uncovered a cave system which may well have been closed since prehistoric times.

The discoverers, who were trying to lengthen a passage in the Buckfastleigh cave system, uncovered a narrow gap which one of them scrambled through.

The discovery led to the revealing of some 2,000 ft. of caves and passages.

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Local Society Programmes.

The Manshead Archaeological Society of Dunstable.

A lecture on April 8th held at the "Winston Churchill", Church Street, Dunstable at 7-45 p.m. by R.Hollowell Esq. entitled "Archaeological finds from air surveys and field walks".

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The results of the excavation at Cadbury hill fort in Somerset in 1966 revealed many objects which can provide evidence of habitation by many different people, if not the evidence of one person in particular - King Arthur. Although a vast library including Mallory and Tennyson point to Cadbury almost traditionally as the site of Camelot, a less poetic but more objective authority is John Leland, the 16th century antiquary, who said the place was known to locals as Camelot and "they say King Arthur much resorted here". Recovered treasures showed the site had been inhabited from early Neolithic times onward. The finds included flint axes, bronze objects and iron age pottery but all life there seemed to come to an abrupt end around the time of the Roman occupation.

The archaeological view of King Arthur seems to be that he was an un-named Celtic chief of the post-Roman period who was intent on defending Celtondom (or Christianity). Anthropologists, however, believe Arthur to be more of an ideal, similar to the Jungian conception particularly where reference to the Quest and the Grail is concerned. Further excavations at Cadbury would certainly prove fruitful, but at least £15,000 is required before another dig commences.

Round and About:

Thetford Priory

Thetford is a somewhat quaint town on the A.11 Newmarket to Norwich Road. It has many claims to historical fame, but certainly the most impressive is the extensive ruin of the Priory of Our Lady of Thetford.

Although much neglected since the Dissolution period until comparatively recently when taken over by the Ministry of Public Building and Works, some of the walls and arches even now rear skyward to great height and give some impression of the former splendour of the building.

Founded some 50 years after the Norman invasion of Britain by an old friend of William the Conqueror named Roger Bigod, the building of the church was begun in 1107. In 1114 the monks, who belonged to the order of Cluny, occupied the church, and the other monastic buildings were continued during the rest of the twelfth century.

During the thirteenth century the Priory became a place of pilgrimage for the sick and infirm. The monk John Brame, who died in 1414, has left a record of the curious events that led up to the establishment of the Priory as a healing shrine. An image of Our Lady had been erected over the high altar of the Priory Church and was much worshipped by a certain craftsman of Thetford who was seeking the return of his health from an incurable disease. One day the poor fellow rushed to the Prior and told him that Our Lady had appeared to him in a dream on three separate occasions and requested that he tell the Prior to set about building her a chapel on the north side of the Priory. His story was apparently so convincing that the Prior duly had a wooden chapel erected. The craftsman then returned and said that it was the wish of Our Lady that the Chapel should be of stone. However nothing was done in this respect and sometime later Our Lady appeared in a vision to a woman of Thetford and bid her to instruct a certain monk to urge the Prior to complete the building. The woman ignored the dream but her arm suddenly became paralysed and in a distressed state she went to the monk who duly informed the Prior. He in turn was once again impressed by the events and finally built the stone Lady Chapel, the N.E. angle of which still stands to almost

its original height. The old image was cleaned and set up over the altar. During the cleaning, the head was found to be hollow and contained certain holy relics of saints. These apparently conferred healing powers on the image and the Priory soon became a place of pilgrimage for the sick. John Brame in fact records many miraculous cures.

The Priory prospered and the east end of the church was elaborately rebuilt during the thirteenth century. Various other repairs and alterations were carried out during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

When the last Bigod died in 1306 the estates passed to the crown and subsequently to the Mowbrays. After the Mowbrays came the Howards and the tombs of the first Howard Duke (famous for his victory over the Scots at Flodden in 1513) can be seen in the Priory.

At the time of my visit it was possible to look down into the concrete covered brick vault of the second Duke and see the brick piers which supported the coffin.

In 1536 a move was made for the suppression of the Priory. The third Howard Duke made considerable efforts to save the establishment and he even petitioned the King to convert it into a College of secular Canons.

Alas, the petition failed and on February 16th. 1540 the King's commissioners finally took over the Priory of Our Lady of Thetford.

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A palatial late first century Roman residence which has been excavated over the last seven years at Fishbourne, Sussex, is now believed to have been the palace of the native "subject-king" Cogidubnus, who was appointed "King and Legate of Augustus in Britain" in the first century A.D. and whose capital was Chichester (Novimagus).

In a report to the Chichester Civic Society Excavations Committee Professor Barry Cunliffe, who conducted the more recent excavations, said:

"who owned such a palace we are unlikely ever to know for certain but the strongest claimant is surely the local king. Tiberius Claudius Cogidubnus. As a king and a citizen of senatorial rank he must have owned a fine residence: for anyone else to have lived at Fishbourne in such luxury, on the doorstep of his capital, would have been unthinkable."

Summing up the history of the site, Professor Cunliffe said that below the palace were, first, structures which suggest a military supply base and which might have been used during the conquest of the West Country in A.D. 43 and later some civil development, followed by a small private house with a bath suite - possibly of the period of Nero. During the early Flavian period a considerable change took place, explained Professor Cunliffe:

" A site of a quarter of a million square feet was prepared and a building was erected here more closely comparable in size and architectural grandeur to the palaces of Nero and Domitian than in any other known building in North-west Europe. Its form, interior decoration, and garden imply that a considerable team of continentals skilled in arts hardly known in Britain were taking part in the construction work. "

—oOo—

" Tale Piece "

For those visiting the west country during the coming holiday season a stop-off at a particular Somerset pub, can be rewarding. The hotel in question is "The Angel Hotel" in Frome and is situated half overlooking the market square and half in King Street.

The " Angel" the oldest hotel in Frome, is recorded as being first granted a licence in 1312 but it is believed that parts of the building pre-date this by some considerable time. In recent times two interesting discoveries were made in the "Angel" during structural alterations.

In 1959 Gas Board workmen broke through to an unknown upstairs room that had been sealed off, presumably since Elizabethan times.

However a previous landlady had suspected the presence of such a place. In February 1966, floorboards were being removed in the public bar when a 10ft. deep well was discovered right under where present day darts players customarily played their arrows. A quaint glass bottle, probably 16th century, was also found intact at the side of the well. The well may once again be re-discovered as it was only covered by concrete and not filled in.

An old book, dated 1320, dealing in part with the history of Frome mentions the "Angel" with Honours, and the Poor Rate Book for Frome dated 1680 tells that one, Edward Baylie of Chepe Street, did pay a yearly rate of two pence for a part of "Ye Angel". In 1686 the then landlord John Accourts faced a rate charge of one shilling and sixpence per year but after a petition apparently he was granted a reduction as it is recorded that he paid but six pence per year in 1690. The same sixpenny rate was still paid by one, Pervice de la Court, in 1734, of whom it is said was a descendant of John Accourts but a change of name was made in keeping with an enhanced local family reputation.

One modest claim of "Ye Angel Hotel" is that no colibrity such as Good Queen Bess, Dick Turpin, Bloody Jeff or Old Brown Bess ever visited or slept there but this in no way detracts from the quality of the drink, fare or bed that can be had there to this day.

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Good Hunting!

Forthcoming Events.

- April 25th. Annual General Meeting and Dinner (details in this issue of the Antiquary).
- May 26th. Visit to Colchester Museum and to the town sites, calling also at Coltishall where we will have tea. Costs, £1 per head. Applications (with remittance please) to the Secretary by 14th May.

The Society currently receives a number of Archaeological journals and periodicals. Members wishing to borrow copies should contact the Secretary.

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