

MOLAS LIBRARY



DUA

letter
News

ISSUE No.8

May 1989



INTRODUCTION

This month Dominant House has hit the headlines and will undoubtedly continue to do so over the next few weeks. A finds display and small exhibition about Dominant House will be set up in the Museum Entrance Hall shortly and should help to satisfy some of the public demand for information.

There are still no letters for the 'Letters Page'. Does no-one have any opinions about anything at present?

The deadline for copy for the June issue will be the end of the day on Thursday 25th May.

NEW STAFF

Transferring from DGLA in May - Steve Davies

Resignations in May

Bill Sillar

Jane Baldwin

Resignations in April

David Hollos

Jonathan Rees

Charlotte Haggren

Tony Gnanratnam

STAFF APPOINTMENTS

Mark Hinman has been appointed Senior Archaeologist for 23-26 St Dunstan's Hill.

Portia Askew has been appointed Senior Archaeologist for Section 3\BH in the Fleet Valley.

Al Mackie has been appointed Assistant Excavations Officer from the end of May.

JOB VACANCIES

Assistant Excavations Officer - 1 year Contract
Closing date 12th May

Senior Archaeologist
Medieval and post-Medieval Pottery specialist.
Closing date 12th May

Finds Illustrator - 1 year Contract
Closing date 12th May

MAY DIARY

Thursday 4th May

Developer Presentation for 88-93 Fenchurch Street.

Dave Dunlop will give an illustrated talk to staff in the Boardroom at 4.30pm.

Monday 8th May

The advertised meeting of the Staff Forum has been canceled. In its place Dr Celina Fox will talk on 'Recent Trends in European Exhibition Design'.

12.30pm Ed Room C.

Thursday 11th May

1.30pm Staff site visit to Dominant House

Wednesday 24th May

Sir Lionel Denny Memorial Lecture by Dr Derek Keene:-

A Community and its Identity; the Early Decades of London's Mayoralty. Lecture Theatre 5.45pm.

Admission by ticket only obtainable from the Barber -Surgeons' Hall - 01 606 0741

Thursday 25th May

1.30pm Staff site visit to Dominant House

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING EXCAVATIONS
 TODAY'S DATE: 26/4/89

1989

NAME OF SITE		1989												August						
		24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28
America Square	JM/TN		2	2	2	9	9	9	9	9	9									
Guildhall Yard	JM																			
Dominant House	HB	23	23	20	20	20	3	3	3	3	3									
Thames Exchange	JM	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2									
10 Friar St	TN	10	10																	
Cannon Street Station	ST			5	9	14	14	14	11	10										
Cutlers Court	RE																			
Vintry	RE																			
8-11 Crescent	TN			7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8									
168-170 Bishopsgate wb	MN																			
7-11 Moorgate wb	MN																			
22-25 Austin Friars	TN	15	18	18	18	18	18	15												
Ludgate Car Parks Area A	RE	10	10																	
Ludgate Car Parks Area B	RE																			
Ludgate Car Parks Area C2	RE																			
Ludgate Car Parks Area D	RE																			
Ludgate Car Parks Area E	RE																			
Ludgate Car Parks Area F	RE																			
Ludgate Car Parks Area H	RE																			
Ludgate Car Parks Area J	RE								8	8	8									
Ludgate Shafts 2B wb	RE	3																		
Ludgate Shafts 4A	RE																			
Ludgate Shafts 4B	RE						4	4	4											
Fleet Valley Section 2	RE	13	7	7	21	14	14	14	14	14										
Fleet Valley Section 3/AS	RE			8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8									
Fleet Valley Section 3/BB	RE	20	12	12	12	12	12													
Fleet Valley Section 3/BH	RE	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	8	8	4	4	4	4	4	4				
Fleet Valley Section 4/E	RE																			
Fleet Valley Section 6/LA	RE																			
Fleet Valley Section 6/01	RE			10	10	10	10	10	10	10										
Fleet Valley Section 6/02	RE																10	10	10	
Fleet Valley Section 7A	RE									10	10	10	10	10	10					
Fleet Valley Section 7B	RE									10	10	10	10	10	10					
Fleet Valley Section 7C	RE									10	10	10	10	10	10					
Fleet Valley Section 7D	RE															10	10	10	10	
Fleet Valley Section 7E	RE																			
Fleet Valley Section 7/FL	RE			10	10	10	10	10	10	10										
Fleet Valley Section 8A	RE									15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15			
Fleet Valley Section 8B	RE									15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15			
Fleet Valley Section 8/HV	RE																			
21-37 Mincing Lane	MN																			
52 Gresham Street	MN																			
158-164 Bishopsgate	MN	10	10	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	
23-26 St. Dunstan's Hill	TN			5	5	5	5	5												
BT Bishopsgate	HB																			
BT Blowfield Street	HB																			
1-4 Great Tower St	TN					14	14	14	14	14	14	14								
78 - 79 Leadenhall	HB											10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
34 - 35 Leadenhall	MN									10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	
41-63 Bishopsgate	MN																			
52-62 London Wall Phs I	HB	2	2	2	2	2	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	
Ormond House	TN																			
Innholders Hall	HB	3	3																	
1-3 Castle Court	ST																			
55 Basinghall St	TN		2	6	6	6	6			2	2									
25 Savage Gardens	HB											3	3	3						
TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF REQUIRED		115	105	127	145	164	165	145	134	201	150	123	109	109	106	86	82	62	62	46
TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF AVAILABLE		123	120	123	125	122	124	124	123	123	123									

8 15 -4 -20 -42 -41 -21 -11 -78 -27

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS DIGEST

Excavation

Two new Assistant Excavation Officer posts have been advertised, but only one filled; the other is currently being advertised externally.

Actions taken by the DUA over the palatial Roman building at Huggin Hill are reported elsewhere in this newsletter. As we go to press, the Archaeology Committee of the Board of Governors is considering what further action to take; a more extensive report will be made next month.

Post-excavation

The Finds Section are to begin a drive to compile Appraisal Reports for the 174 sites in need of them. Mike Rhodes has proposed the establishment of a new Antiquities Department to include the DUA and DGLA finds staff and the present Prehistoric/Roman and medieval curatorial departments. This would provide archive curation and prepare exhibitions, thus allowing greater freedom of job movement for all concerned with finds.

Peter Marsden's section (i.e. John Shepherd!) is preparing an assessment of the recently-received W F Grimes archive, on behalf of the Prehistoric & Roman Dept, to see what should be published.

General

The health and safety responsibilities of senior staff, particularly Asst Exc Officers and Project Co-ordinators, is being delineated by Jim Allen. Once the site hierarchy has been clarified, we must extend the clarification of responsibilities to similar officers of the other sections. The DUA and IPCS now has a joint working party on health and safety (chair: JM) whose workings will be reviewed at the next meeting of the museum's H&S Committee.

The Monthly Meeting has been recast as a Staff Meeting to be held every two months on the first Tuesday of each month, generally on the previous model, with larger staff meetings every six months to discuss broad issues.

From 1 May the Training Vote will be administered by two Section Heads: J Maloney and G Egan (standing in for M Rhodes). All applications for financial support and/or time off to attend conferences, courses or research should be made to the Training Committee.

The intended extension of the main DUA Graphics Office in the Museum has been canceled. We are negotiating a one- or two-year sitting tenancy of the two rooms in Ferroners' House. We must centralise our accommodation-seeking activities (i.e. put somebody in charge of it) - but all staff should keep a look out for cheap

Bridge House-like buildings on the periphery of the City. All suggestions, agents' telephone numbers etc, to the EO or JS.

Contract archaeology

We have investigated the potential of the Oxfordshire Unit as bidders for DUA sites in the City. Oxford's policy, according to unit director David Miles, is that in the first instance they only seek to move into areas where archaeological coverage is absent or deficient; and that working in London would present great problems to any outside unit. He would tell us if he were declaring a serious interest. Until that day, which sounds far off, I see no reason why we should not co-operate with the Oxford unit at a low level (e.g. advertising their jobs); any further talks depend upon whether, in the fullness of time, we enter the consultancy arena (at present forbidden by Museum policy).

John Schofield

TRAINING

The next training committee meeting will be on Tuesday 30 May. Please could all applications reach me by Friday 26 May.

Several people have asked about part time and evening courses in archaeology available in London.

The University of London Department of Extra-Mural Studies offer evening certificate and diploma courses.

The certificate is spread over three years. It deals with practical and theoretical archaeology in Southern Britain, from the prehistoric to the medieval period. The certificate is assessed on written course work, field work, and exams.

Classes are available in several areas of London including The Museum and City Lit in Covent Garden. They generally taken by staff from The Museum of London or The British Museum.

The certificate provides a useful introduction to archaeology in Britain. Completion of a fourth year converts the course to a diploma which the University College and North London Polytechnic recognises as an entry qualification for it's undergraduate degree courses.

North London Polytechnic offers a 4 year part time degree in archaeological sciences based on 9 hours attendance a week.

Further details on both courses are available from me in the excavations office or direct from

Centre For Extra Mural Studies,
26 Russell Square,
London WC1B 5DQ.

John Evans
Department of Physical Sciences,
North East London Polytechnic,
Romford Road,
London E15 4LZ.

Susan Greenwood

FINDS DEPARTMENT

Small Finds : April 1989

This has generally been a quiet month for the acquisition of new finds although several interesting items have emerged from sites whose excavation was completed in 1988. Several spectacular wooden artifacts have come from the Fleet Valley sites, including a wagon axle and a toilet seat, both of medieval date. A complete Kingston-type ware jug of previously unknown form has also been recovered. Dominant House has produced several Roman items which are not building material, including some good examples of glass and some intriguing ceramics; it still looks like a demolished building site, however. At London Wall part of a Koan amphora has been found with a Greek inscription which is not undecipherable but is as yet undeciphered.

Recent cleaning of finds has revealed a Roman inscription on a piece of leather from Coleman Street, and the imprint of a gloved hand on a piece of Roman tile from Seething Lane. A few finds continue to be collected at Thames Exchange; the skull of a middle-aged man has been recovered recently: the rest of the body has not been found, unfortunately.

CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

There are currently seven of us in the archaeological section of the Conservation Department, working on various different projects and with differing responsibilities. This can prove to be slightly confusing for people outside the Department, so here is a recap of how our section is organised.

Kate Starling	- Head of Section
Helen Ganiaris	- DUA, DGLA and curatorial collections. Special responsibility for curatorial collections
Helen Jones	- DUA, DGLA and curatorial collections. Special responsibility for DUA and DGLA backlog material
Dana Goodburn-Brown	- DUA current sites
Rose Johnson	- DUA HBMC publication programme (part-time)
Jill Barnard	- DUA HBMC publication programme (part-time)
Rob Payton	- DGLA current sites

We hope soon to have two more conservators in post, one for the Fleet Valley project and one for Pageant.

In addition, each conservator has section-wide duties, so if you have any queries on the following, please contact the people indicated:

X-radiography	- Dana Goodburn-Brown
Analysis	- Helen Jones
Silica gel regeneration	- Dana Goodburn-Brown
Organisation of treatments for wet organics	- Rob Payton
Handling of chemicals	- Rose Johnson
Section's computer records	- Helen Ganiaris

One of Dana's main responsibilities as DUA current sites conservator is to liaise with the Excavations Office and with site supervisors and project leaders on immediate site needs.

In most cases queries about objects should be addressed to the Finds Section primarily, but if an object or a structure needs our attention on site, please do not hesitate to contact Dana. If she is not available, Kate, Helen Jones or Helen Ganiaris should be contacted.

The 'Africa' scoop from TEX88 was identified by the Environmental Department as being of boxwood. Unfortunately, this does not solve the mystery of where it comes from as box grows in both Africa and Europe. Both this scoop and another similar but less ornate one, also from TEX 88 are now being treated and should be fully conserved by mid-May.

The barrel well from Ludgate Hill was filled with expanding polyurethane foam to support it while the area round it was excavated. The foam was poured in spits, with polythene separation layers, to facilitate later removal. Latest news is that the barrel is ready for lifting off site so we will soon if the technique worked . . .

Rose Johnson and Kate Starling both gave papers at a conference organised by the archaeological section of the United Kingdom on co-operation between conservation and finds research. Francis Grew and Geoff Egan also gave papers, so the Museum was well represented.

WORD PROCESSING IN THE DUA

As most of you should now have seen, the Computing Section has circulated a review of word processing packages for exclusive use in the DUA. The reason for the review was to assess packages which accommodated and enhanced the word processing in the DUA, and could replace the seven (7) word processing packages we now use. The standardisation is necessary because none of the systems are now compatible and much of the written archive has to be stripped and re-formatted for even simple features such as bolding and underlining. Reformatting of text to different page sizes and widths is almost impossible from one package to another leaving some text in a very poor state for presentation. Mostly, though, many of the features that we would all like to use, such as text formatting, windowing, indexing, spell checking, thesaurus, etc., are unavailable on most of the systems we now use.

Two word processing packages which are powerful enough, easy to use and learn, run on both of our operating systems, and can include graphics and newspaper columns, were reviewed. For those of you who haven't seen the review, these two packages are Microsoft Word 4 (soon to be upgraded to Word 5) and Wordperfect 5. Other packages were not considered because they did not meet the basic requirements (mostly that of working on both operating systems).

My recommendation was for Word 4, but I included a survey so for users to have a say. The reasons for my recommendation was the ease of use of Word 4, the superior windowing capabilities, the better outlining that could be very useful for writing-up, and the large range of features offered. I was redeemed by an article (which I have circulated) in PC BUYERS GUIDE (April, 1989) where 10 top word processors were reviewed. The article not only recommended Word 5 for our type of use, but largely for the same reasons (Yes, he's blowing his horn. No, he didn't see the article before writing his review).

If you have not seen a copy of the review or gotten a copy of the survey, contact your computer liaison person or the Computing Section.

Robin Boast

ARCHAEOLOGY IN BRITAIN 1989

The Third Annual Conference
of the
Institute of Field
Archaeologists

New Perspectives in Archaeological Survey

Four sessions taking two of the conference's two and a half days looked at the use of various methods of survey to detect and describe archaeological sites. The main concern was the discovery and description of sites with archaeological potential in order to try and ensure their preservation, particularly by inclusion in the Sites and Monuments Record and whenever possible by scheduling under the Monuments Protection Program.

Survey was considered essential in areas where perceptible threats, such as forestry, are encroaching onto archaeologically un-mapped areas, and desirable for a more complete understanding of the distribution of past activity throughout the country. However perhaps the main attraction recognised by most of the speakers was the 'cost effectiveness' of almost all survey techniques combined with the fact that they are non-destructive and therefore repeatable - a largely unspoken assumption in this frequently stated 'value for money' approach was that sites recognised by survey will be protected by the M.P.P. or that the goodwill of developers will be shown in preserving sites or paying for their excavation, assumptions that representatives from outside Southern England were perhaps less able to take for granted (virtually every paper reiterated the need for more finance but in order to avoid repetition I shall try to avoid mentioning this, '.....' may be taken to mean 'someone should provide more money for this')

'Levels', 'zones', or 'grades' of survey became a major concern from the very first paper by Christopher Taylor (R.C.H.M. Eng.), and although each speaker seemed to have developed their own system of classification it was generally agreed that every region should be fully aware of any monuments previously reported in their area and such information should be available in the S.M.R.. Each region should be covered by some kind of basic survey although at present all regions were not able to achieve the same standards, particularly Scotland where resources were very limited and a vast area remains completely un-surveyed. A far higher level of intensive survey using a wide range of techniques was obviously possible and could be pursued in a limited number of small areas particularly where an immediate threat was in evidence, this was seen as desirable as a control for the more rudimentary survey but was described by many of the 'participant bodies and funding institutions' (i.e. H.B.M.C.E., S.D.D., and Cadw) in terms of a luxury that should be left until some future time of less pressure.

The idea that survey could be carried out in areas of immediate threat was referred to as 'Fire-brigade Archaeology' by Humphrey Welfare (R.C.H.M. Eng.) who suggested that the controlling power over survey work of all types was finance and had little to do with the 'independence' of the Commissions, H.B.M.C. or any other bodies. The 'whiff of confrontation' between such departments for the

limited resources available was not beneficial, and he suggested that more clearly defined roles for each of the departments would limit the overlap and consequent squabbling.

Peter Smith (R.C.H.M. Wales.) pointed out that the scope of survey for the S.M.R. had changed radically in recent years to include much more modern features - this had greatly expanded the amount of work as there was a disproportionate number of such features (mines, factories, commercial buildings, houses etc.) this along with an unexpected 10% cut in the annual budget made planing for the future a difficult - pointless? - task

Michael Yates (Cadw) encouraged the use of regular air photography and photogrametry to monitor the preservation of monuments particularly where the pressure of constant visitors can slowly destroy the site One example of the unexpected success of this method was where a farmer had been progressively ploughing closer and closer to a monument, but was intrigued to know how the inspectorate knew about this - he was rather shocked to learn of 'the spy in the sky'.

(I've included a copy of the statement from Gef Wainwright on H.B.M.C.'s policy towards survey which covers most of what he said in his paper)

Philip Claris (Nat. Trust Eng.) stated that the major problem the trust had was knowing what it owned, and the only solution for this was survey - initially this must be a search through existing records and plotting from air photography, but eventually much of the area would have to be covered by field survey and in some areas more detailed field walking and remote sensing would have to be used if the trust was going to be able to plan for the preservation of the 40,000 sites estimated to be on National Trust property

Peter Fowler, the archaeological consultant for the Forestry Commission, spoke for one of the largest Land holders in the country (they have approximately one million hectares). The commission has greatly increased its sensitivity to land management in recent years, indeed it has now agreed to avoid all archaeological sites (not just M.P.P's) during their planting activities. But this puts the onus back onto the archaeologist who have to know of the existence and extent of sites before the Commission can avoid them, and with the limited resources available many areas were as yet unurveyed.....

Roger Mercer (Univ. of Edinburgh) emphasised the value of field survey in raising students understanding of the archaeological resource, training them in archaeological techniques and of its importance for more balanced research. He encouraged the use of survey as a major part of University field work particularly because it was a relatively cheap form of research for universities to undertake and an area in which it was more likely to be able to raise grants - he was emphatic that only by attracting money into universities would they be able to fight off the present Governments attempts to 'rationalise' the 23 departments currently teaching Archaeology throughout the country. These comments initiated

some debate particularly due to the implication that Universities would compete for grants towards survey work by using students (read 'cheap labour') to offer lower bids than 'full time' units would be able to do.

The final part of the first day was devoted to papers on current approaches to survey in Britain (The Scottish Highlands, The Welsh Uplands, The Yorkshire Dales and the Fenlands). All of these employed diverse techniques applicable to the areas concerned with emphasis on field survey in Scotland (where a new class of (living?) site was discovered during the survey), Aerial photography in Wales and Yorkshire and the continual inspection of sections created by the drainage channels of the Fens. The projects were all responding to some threat in their area with the intention of including the 'best' sites in the M.P.P., most speakers emphasised that they were only discovering those sites revealed by the methods they were able to use, and more intensive survey revealed further sites.....

Underwater Survey

Attention was drawn to the potential of underwater (largely Marine) archaeology, which was seen as a natural extension of dry land archaeology - particularly as in some areas buried landscapes as well as vessels have been preserved.

Mark Redknap (Nat. Museum of Wales) emphasised the need for surveys of the sea bed and the need to include the resulting data in the S.M.R. with the aim of pin-pointing areas of high potential for preservation or areas under greatest threat. Although successful remote sensing methods of searching the sea bed are now available, and several units have recently turned their attention to underwater archaeology, this is still a neglected area of survey, in spite of the threat from dredging and salvage activities. Many sites are found by sport divers or known about by fishermen and the first duty for county S.M.R.'s should be to collect all available local knowledge as well as any historic/documentary references and making a study of existing aerial photographs of the coast line and may reveal relatively shallow sites.

Alison Gale (Maritime Heritage Project, Isle of Wight) gave details of survey work conducted around the Island, and how this had not only extended protection of sites under the sea but removed the barrier of the high or low water mark on our understanding of the island's past. By working with local fishermen, divers and oyster dredgers the survey had learnt of many sites and at the same time had been able to educate the people responsible for the most common threat.

Kit Watson (M. of L.) took up the problem of identifying / evaluating sites as a necessary part of the survey if Protection was going to be granted to them. Various attempts at identification of (what turned out to be) a 16th century vessel off the Isle of Wight have been carried out over the past ten years including: a sonar survey, a detailed survey of the exposed remains, a surface collection of artefacts on top of and around the wreck, a 'test pit' into the middle of the wreck, and finally a 'trial trench' was excavated across the

wreck. Each of these had resulted in slightly different assessments of the site - even the position of the prow and stern were uncertain until the final excavation - with the surface collection proving to be particularly misleading. Although the vessel had not been completely excavated to help confirm the results of the 'trial trench' it appears that for the moment the best identification resulted from a comparison of the results of the trial trench with the survey of the wreck.

The Final paper in this section discussed the problem of accurate planning of wrecks during survey and excavation when the only available 'fixed points' are on the frame of the vessel itself imposing problems when it is not possible to plumb bob down from a level tape and water movement causes the tape to distort. The solution proposed was to use a computer program that was able to evaluate all the measurements taken during the survey and suggest the 'best fit' including a measure of the possible error in the survey. This sophisticated method of 'fudging' took all the available memory space of the computer - I've forgotten what type of computer was used.

Aerial Survey

The intended objective of this session was 'to promote discussion with ground-based archaeologists about the effective integration of aerial and terrestrial survey', however apart from a short discussion of the very limited cover in Scotland the session was largely devoted to explaining the current activities and future intentions of those involved in Aerial Survey. Several areas such as the Thames gravels have benefited from Aerial survey, in such areas where there are few upstanding monuments almost all our understanding of the distribution of past settlements is the result of detection from Aerial Photography.

Rowan Whimster (R.C.H.M. Eng.) pointed out that many of the one million air photographs taken for archaeological reasons and five million air photographs originally taken for different reasons but containing archaeological information have not yet been studied for addition to the S.M.R. or transferred onto maps, a necessary preliminary for inclusion in the M.P.P.. A rapid scan of these photographs for the S.M.R. and M.P.P. should be completed between 1994 and 2004 (depending on funding). Plotting from all available oblique and vertical photographs showing archaeological evidence for producing area maps and then creating detailed local records including drawings from paired overhead photographs will take well into the latter half of the next century.

Bob Bewley (R.C.H.M. Eng.) outlined the new classification system to be used by the commissions. While 'crop mark' was no longer considered to be an acceptable description, and was useless for S.M.R. or M.P.P., terms such as Farmsteads, Forts, or Hedges was considered too subjective and the new system was designed to remove some of the bias in recorded descriptions. The new classification is based on the morphology of the features and was also designed so that individual elements in each series are separately described to enhance our understanding of changing land use. Basically the description starts with four categories of;

Enclosures, Linear system (where a series of linear features obviously relate to each other), linear features, and Macula (indescrivable splodges!), these are then further defined by more detail concerning their morphology (rounded corners, length, breadth, number and position of 'breaks' (entrances) in the feature, etc.). Each area will include one or a combination of these elements making up the site complex, in some areas it is possible to distinguish different complexes relating to different periods of occupation due to the changing alignments of the individual elements. So far this system has been applied to surveys in Kent and Hertfordshire, but it is intended to use it in all future areas. While 'every interpretation is capable of re-interpretation' it is hoped that this system will allow greater flexibility in analysis without entailing any radical modification of the basic records. (A description of this system appears in the current edition of *Antiquity*).

In an earlier paper Gordon Maxwell (R.C.H.M. Scot.) had suggested the need for a permanent team of field surveyors to work in advance of the threat of forestry activities. But in this paper he called into question the ability of Aerial Survey to respond to a specific threat (Fire-Brigade Archaeology) when it takes approximately ten years of flying over the same area to encompass a sufficiently wide range of conditions to expose the maximum amount of available information- (oblique light for low relief earthworks, the day or two during which differences in crop ripeness was visible, a dry year for differences or soil water retention to have a visible impact, or a light fall of snow that can respond to different underlying materials or may drift to highlight a different relief from that of the unidirectional morning or evening sun). For this reason Aerial Survey is unable to work like land field survey in response to a threat and must be a continuing on going process if it was to work effectively

Evaluation of Archaeological sites

The need to assess the nature of sites discovered during survey work was mentioned by many of the papers earlier on in the conference (see particularly Kit Watson for underwater) but this session was particularly devoted to the methods and objectives of assessing the nature of archaeological sites.

Paul Chadwick (Berkshire County Council) was keen to point out that this was not just 'trial trenching' re-named, and it became an issue of much debate as to whether it was better to dig a small part of a site to identify its date and possible function, or whether other methods of non-destructive investigation could produce a sufficiently acceptable result for inclusion in the M.P.P. or presenting developers with a reasonably accurate prediction for the cost of archaeological work. Some speakers preferred to differentiate between assessment and evaluation, saying that as archaeologists it was their job to provide the best available interpretation of the nature of the site but it was up to the curators to give a value for the site - although archaeologists have to estimate costs in the case of developers getting the 'go ahead', and some kind of scoring system is implied by the limited number of places in the M.P.P.

Paul Gosling (H.B.M.C. Eng.) emphasised the need for the least possible disturbance as well as the need for evaluation before a

decision for development is made, not in response to the decision having been made. He pointed out that although most of us are aware of the threat to Archaeological sites we are not so aware of the potential to 'defend' them in current legislation; Article 4 of the general development order obliges developers to seek additional information on other interests in the area (including Archaeology) before developing, and the E.E.C. environmental regulation of July 1988 requires planning authorities to take account of the impact larger developments will have on the historic environment. Apparently Virginia Bottomly has made a statement in the commons on the necessity of evaluating the possible impact of the developments currently planned in what is thought to have been the area of the Globe theatre. We must be able to inform developers and planning authorities of the relative importance of the 'red dots' we put on their maps, when the archaeology may be excavated before development and when development must include adequate protection for the preservation of the archaeology.

David Miles (Oxf. Arch. Unit) stressed the variation in the information supplied by different survey methods, for example field walking results can only be understood with relevance to the micro-topography of the area (locating hill wash, dumped materials, gravel islands under peat etc.) similarly crop marks are biased towards sites in the process of destruction - when the archaeology is relatively close to the surface and not masked by deep colluvial deposits, and unless used very intensively Geophysical techniques only work effectively with relatively well preserved structural remains. To evaluate the archaeological potential of an area it is necessary to know the type and date of the soils and geology in which it lies and after careful survey using the most appropriate techniques a sample area can be targeted for excavation by which to assess the results of the rest of the survey.

Roger Mercer (Edinburgh Uni.) gave a brief account of the excavation of Helman Tor, Cornwall stressing how local people had been approached about the excavation and informed of the results and as a result they had developed a greater appreciation for the monument. This means that as well as ensuring legal protection by inclusion in the M.P.P. the site was being effectively monitored by local people - so that the excavation of a very small part of the site has proved the most effective method of conserving it.

Bob Croft (Somerset County Council) explained how most of the developers approached archaeology as a development constraint "O.K. if you say there archaeology how much more will it cost to let us build here?" This leaves the archaeologist with the problem of what value we put on preservation, is inclusion in the M.P.P. the final work on the site. It also left county planning departments with problems when they wish to encourage the right development in the area - sometimes this is a decision between archaeology and jobs as in the case of an open cast mine in Scotland that effectively resulted in 15 lost jobs when it was not given planning permission to extend into an archaeologically sensitive area. Such planning decisions have to be made very rapidly and unless detailed information on the archaeological potential of a site is available it is impossible for the planning departments to use archaeology as a reason for halting an application for a new development.

FROM OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

....members of the DUA abroad

Thailand**BAN DON TA PHET: a cemetery excavation in Thailand.**

A large cemetery site was accidentally discovered during the construction of a new school road, at Ban Don Ta Phet, a remote village in central Thailand, some 100 miles north-west of the capital, Bangkok. The richness of the finds suggested an important site, but it also attracted grave robbers, who plunder such sites for objects to sell in the markets of Bangkok; primarily to western tourists after interesting mementoes of an oriental culture. The Thai's have a well organised archaeological service - The Department of Fine Arts - but it is not yet equipped to deal with all the threats to the country's past. As a result, an archaeological project was mounted by Ian Glover and Bryan Alvey, of the Institute of Archaeology, to instigate a programme of excavation in co-operation with Thai archaeologists. It was also to act as a training ground for the Thais in some aspects of recent archaeological practises.

The site was situated upon a small knoll of high ground, on which the modern village is also set, raising it above the level of the surrounding flood plain. The latter forms the basis of the agricultural production of the area; mainly rice fields, with sugar cane grown on the raised areas above the plain. The present day community covers most of the raised ground of the knoll, but large areas of land lie within the temple grounds and the school playing fields. It was within the latter that the cemetery fell. The school lent us a classroom, somewhat run-down, but with electricity, which was essential for the microscopes and conservation equipment needed to support the retrieval of large quantities of objects during the excavation. The team rented two stilt houses within the village, beautiful teak constructions, and hired a cook; the life-style may have been simple, but it certainly was charming.



The flood plains of central Thailand. The area supports a thriving community heavily dependant on rice growing. The site lay on the slight rise of ground on the horizon (in the centre of the photograph).

Due to the nature of the tropical soil, few traces of bone survived: only where they were in contact with metal objects, which had altered the localised soil conditions, did small fragments survive. Furthermore, the leaching of the soils, over a considerable period of time - particularly by the monsoon conditions - resulted in few signs of stratigraphy. Some textural distinctions could be recognised within the soil, but no clear distinctions were present; the most obvious problem being the lack of grave cuts. To overcome this, every artefact was three-dimensionally plotted, to enable the grave groups to be reconstructed by artefact distributions. This was further enhanced by computer plotting, perfected by Bryan Alvey, during the post-excavation stage. This technique not only allowed us to establish the position of the graves, but also the layout and organisation of the cemetery, and some of the burial practices.

The graves were carefully organised - arranged in rows which did not intersect - suggesting that the cemetery had been developed as part of a single continuous process. The only stratigraphic feature identified on the site, by virtue of the fact that it cut into the concreted natural soils, was a wide boundary ditch, indicating that the burials had been laid out within clearly demarcated land. The artefact plots not only identified the graves as two dimensional spatial distributions, but also suggested, in three-dimensions, that the graves had been formed by earth mounds, rather than substantial below ground features; which makes it easy to see how the regularity of the cemetery was maintained.



An excavation at Lopburi, by the Thai Department of Fine Arts. The site is a Portuguese riverside trading and missionary settlement. Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands and Britain all had trading centres in Thailand during the 15th to 19th centuries, but Thailand has remained an independent country since it was freed from Burmese rule in the 14th century.

Radiocarbon dating, from the small bone traces, suggests that the burials took place around AD600, at a time when Thailand was part of an emerging network of small kingdoms, before the domination of the Burmese rulers over the area. This is a particularly important, and under studied, area of South-east Asian

archaeology, as most of the excavation work has centered on early prehistory, or the development of the large kingdoms from the 9th/10th centuries onwards. As such, the site, and particularly the artefacts from this homogeneous assemblage, were of considerable significance.

The grave goods were diverse. The principal material types were pottery, iron implements (often deliberately bent - ?to prevent robbing and reuse), bronze vessels, and stone jewelry. The latter included jade and semi-precious stone beads, and occasionally fine carvings, such as a double-headed water buffalo. The range of artefacts not only provided a good indication of the character of the society, and the level of material wealth (?within the social elite), but also provided invaluable evidence of trading and exchange patterns. Indeed, many of the items had direct links with India, conclusively establishing such contact, which had previously only been speculated upon, and suggesting that the volume of exchange may have been appreciable.

In addition, technological analysis of the artefacts, particularly those of bronze and iron, which seem to have been locally produced, has greatly improved knowledge of the early technological development of the society.

The excavation had a number of roles beyond that of rescuing the site. It provided a valuable source of income for the local people between harvests, indeed, most of the team was formed from local people who proved to be both skillful and wonderfully friendly. The Thai archaeologists benefited from the contact, but they were not the only ones to do so; none of the British team failed to learn a considerable amount, in either practical terms, in their appreciation of the complexity of the culture, or an understanding of the immense potential that archaeology has within this region. Above all, we shared in an experience that none of us will forget, and hopefully it helped to foster the belief that archaeologists can assist one another without becoming mere cultural imperialists.



Local school children visiting the excavations. The bamboo shelter protects the artefacts, and us, from the strong direct sunlight.

SUMMARIES OF CURRENT SITES



1. 1 America Square

A large excavation took place in 1987 around the Roman city wall and a bastion in the east of the city beneath modern Fenchurch St Station. The wall continued further northwards beyond the excavation area and current work has been carried out in a watching brief as ground clearance around the scheduled remains of the wall are being carried out.

2. 41-63 Bishopsgate

The site lies on the west side of Bishopsgate within the Roman walled city, close to the line of the Roman road, Ermine Street. The site produced traces of structural activity in the form of post holes and a sillbeam slot. Large numbers of pits produced much Roman pottery, including one large pot. Beneath Roman levelling dumps, several struck flint flakes and late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery and some burnt timbers were recovered. Other finds included lock fittings, painted glass and half a shale bracelet.

3. Dominant House

Considerable progress has been made in April in the recording of the public building at Huggin Hill and its associated deposits. Further details about the construction, use and alterations to the large cruciform shaped room have been identified. These include a row of 'H' shaped piers which may indicate a midway point to carry a room division. Two furnace areas have been identified and alterations and additions to the inlets and flues suggest a complex system for the hypocaust. The western apse of the main room area was also blocked at some later date and may have also then been partially demolished. An interesting variation in the heights of the pila (stacks of tiles) may indicate a change in floor level across the room. A good length of timber drain has also been uncovered,

spanned at perhaps four points by brick arches. Other alterations and additions to the building are currently being identified and recorded.

4. 158-164 Bishopsgate

The site lies outside the Roman city walls and adjacent to the line of Ermine Street. Work on the site has uncovered post-medieval brick features and a large area of homogenous garden soil. Cutting into the medieval garden area were three pits lined with horn cores.

5. 10 Friar Street

The site overlies the eastern end of the Dominican Priory known as Blackfriars built in c1279. The excavation has located the walls and foundations of the north wall of the Provincial's Hall and South Dorter. One length of masonry stands to 3 metres in height and includes one complete window with moulded reigate jambs and a Gothic arched head dating to late 13th or 14th century. A 12 metre length of foundation and an external buttress have also been uncovered and it may mean that it is possible to reconstruct the plan of the vaulted undercroft of the building. Several phases of construction have been identified amongst the foundations of the Prior's lodging to the north, but little survives of the east end of the choir of the church itself, due to extreme modern truncation. A number of graves, including a mortar lined grave containing two individuals, one adult shroud and a juvenile lead coffin burial confirm that the area was within the choir.

6. 22-25 Austin Friars

The site lies within the Roman and medieval city, in the Upper Walbrook valley. Timber features uncovered include a water tank with a wooden 'feeder' and a base of chalk blocks possibly acting as a primitive filtration system. A further large timber-lined feature and a well with a double timber lining suggested a use into the late third/early fourth centuries. All three structures were separated by major episodes of dumping, probably indicating prolonged occupation of the site.

7. Fleet Valley

Several excavation areas are currently underway in the Fleet Valley. The area within the Ludgate car parks is nearing completion and one major feature was a wicker-lined pit probably used as a latrine since a three-seated wooden toilet seat lay above, and apparently collapsed into it. One of the areas beneath the Viaduct has uncovered the east side of the Wren-designed post-Fire Fleet canal, and another a number of *in situ* tree stumps, one of which may also have been used as an anvil rest. The area has also produced medieval foundations and floor surfaces. A 11th/12th century axle for a solid wheeled wagon has been recovered, as has a stylised pewter brooch with one stone remaining in the setting and dating to the 13th or 14th century.

8. Cannon Street Station

Northern area

A 5 metre by 3 metre trench for a pile cap has been excavated, and uncovered a 1.5 metre thick Roman east-west ragstone and tile

wall which probably links up with a wall identified in the 1960s, giving a total length of c65-70 metres. Dumping behind the wall probably formed terracing for other structures. A timber box drain ran obliquely through an arch in the wall.

Southern area

Ground works have continued to produce large stone revetment walls and timbers, including re-used late medieval house timbers overlooking the Thames waterfront.

9. 52-63 London Wall

Excavation was completed in the first areas in the first week in April. Analysis of the finds has identified quern stone fragments, a carved bone handle and two unusual glass vessels.

10. Innholders Hall

no report received

RECENT PRESS
COVERAGE

THE TIMES THURSDAY APRIL 13 1989

Underfloor heating in the Roman style



An underfloor heating system for what is believed to have been the largest public baths in Roman London is uncovered during a Museum of London dig at Huggin Hill in the City. The stacks of tiles, called *piliae*, would have supported a floor, allowing hot air from a furnace to circulate underneath.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH,
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 1989

3-seater lavatory discovered in dig

An 11th Century lavatory, believed to be London's oldest, with a wooden seat for three people, has been discovered by archaeologists near the underground River Fleet at the foot of Ludgate Hill, in the City.

A group from the Museum of London is excavating a bomb site which has been used as a car park since the 1939-45 War.

THE INDEPENDENT

20/4/89

Rome underground

Dear Sir,

Surely the answer to the problem of how to preserve the newly discovered Roman remains in London is to do what the Germans have done in Cologne, namely to incorporate the excavated remains into the basement, accessible to the public and to build the office block over the top.

It would be expensive of course, but if the Germans can do it, why not us?

Yours faithfully,

J. M. BARRY

Ipswich,

Suffolk

16 April

Dear Sir,

We have recently visited the Louvre's Pyramid; remains of a castle discovered during the course of construction are now splendidly preserved for public inspection.

Surely it would not require a colossal amount of engineering to preserve the more spectacular Roman discoveries in London beneath the endless growth of offices? I have no doubt the visitors to such sites would more than remunerate the developers for their efforts and at the same time stop them tearing out the heart and history of the city.

Yours faithfully,

ROSSLYN NEAVE

London, SW3



The heat's on... archaeologists hurry with the excavation of the heating system of Roman baths in the City of London

PHOTOGRAPH BY HAMMOND WELLS

THE GUARDIAN
Thursday April 13 1989

Palatial Roman baths excavated

THE CITY RECORDER, Thursday, April 20, 1989

Roman baths find at Huggin Hill

MORE than 200 pilae (stacks of tiles supporting a raised floor) for the central heating system of a large room have been unearthed "in situ" within a Roman building complex at Huggin Hill EC4 by archaeologists from the Museum of London.

A large excavation, funded by the Hammersmith Group, has been in progress since January with the support of the architects, Chapman Taylor Partnership, and the demolition contractors, Gorst Clayton, following trial work in 1988 and prior to redevelopment of the site.

The excavation lies within the area identified in the 1960s as the Roman Huggin Hill Baths. Located directly on the contemporary Thames waterfront, the building was probably the largest public baths complex in Roman London, containing a suite of rooms from exercise areas to cold rooms, warm rooms, hot rooms and plunge baths.

It is not at present clear whether the newly uncovered suite of rooms formed part of the baths complex or part of a magnificent building attached to the baths, but the scale and grandeur clearly indicates a

sophisticated architectural style.

The current excavations have uncovered several rooms, including the complete area of a room 15m by at least 15m. This room contained the underfloor central heating or hypocaust system: over 100 of the pilae, stacks of tiles which supported the floor allowing hot air to circulate beneath, have been unearthed "in situ".

In one small area the original mosaic which must have covered the whole floor is in place, as are the box flues and chimneys which warmed the walls. Immediately to the north of the rooms lay the furnace which fed hot air through the wall and beneath the room.

The original large room was later divided into a second room to the west and another to the east, both with hypocaust systems, leaving a central north-south room with southern apse. To the north, large walls have survived to a height of 3 metres, terracing the hillside overlooking the Thames.

The building underwent several major rebuilds with new walls, furnaces and flue systems.

John Ardill
Environment Correspondent

THE remains of a large Roman building, either a public baths or a palace with private baths attached, are being hurriedly excavated and recorded by City of London archaeologists before a new office block is built.

Walls thicker than the city's Roman defences, classical architecture, fragments of a marble mosaic floor and painted walls, indicate a building of some splendour terraced into the hillside on what was in Roman times the north bank of the Thames, near the later Saxon port of Queenhithe.

Whether a public baths or an official residence, possibly of the procurator (the top financial officer of the provincial government) it was built at great public expense to impress the indigenous population with the civilised values of the conquerors, according to Mr Peter Rowson. He is co-ordinating the team of 23 archaeologists which has been working on the site since January.

A fragment of Purbeck marble inscribed with parts of two words, the letters MAX and NIA, point to either explanation of the building's use. They could be part of a proclamation that the building was erected in the name of the emperor by the *Provincia Britannia* or a private dedication to Jupiter, the archaeologists say.

Many tiles are stamped PRB LON, which stands for Procurator Provinciae Britanniae Londini; that is, built by the procurator of the

province of Britain at Londinium.

Part of what is undoubtedly a suite of Roman baths were uncovered on the site at Huggin Hill, near Mansion House tube station, when an office block was built in 1961. It is now being demolished. The latest excavations have revealed a large cross-shaped room 48 feet wide and up to 80 feet long with apses (domed semi-circular extensions) at the southern and western ends.

More than 100 stacks of tiles, which supported the floor and allowed heated air to circulate, have been found together with the furnace and other rooms. The main room, which was later subdivided, could have been part of the baths or the principal room of a palace. Roofing such a large space with heavy Roman tiles would have been a considerable feat, Mr Rowson says.

The building was erected towards the end of the first century AD, probably around the year 60 in the reign of Vespasian; was extended in the second century; and partly demolished in the third century when clay and timber houses and workshops were constructed within its walls. The walls were probably still standing when the site was reoccupied by the Saxons in the 10th century and the Bishop of Worcester given permission to open a market in an ancient Saxon building known as *hæstowædes stæc* (banan, Saxon and medieval remains have been recovered).

Part of the Roman remains still lie under Huggin Hill and the modern building to the east.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS have excavated what they believe was Roman London's first and largest public bath house, demonstrating that citizens in the First Century AD not only washed regularly but also kept fit in an exercise room and took an early form of sauna in a caldarium or steam room, *writes Nigel Beagrie in Art Correspondent.*

The excavations also suggest that mixed bathing was common until banned by Emperor Hadrian in the Second Century.

The site of the Huggin Hill Roman Baths, by Upper Thames Street, City, was identified as long ago as 1829, but in the first major dig archaeologists from the Museum of London have found an almost perfectly preserved hypocaust or underfloor heating system.

More than 100 pieces of tiles which would have supported the floor of the caldarium have been found, with heating flues, a furnace and 10 metres of flanged and chamfered clay piping.

Although most of the floor has disappeared, a small section balanced on the piers contains parts of what would have been an elaborate mosaic.

Artefacts including Roman oil lamps, bottles, cups, unbroken roof tiles and substantial sections of painted wall plaster have also been unearthed.

The archaeologists have dated the baths to between 70 and 80 AD, making them contemporary with similar baths at Bath, Colchester and St Albans.

The complex would have been one of the first public buildings in Roman London, alongside the Governor's Palace, thought to lie under Cannon Street station, and the basilica or forum at Leadenhall.

Three-metre-high external walls, taller than any sections of the old Roman city wall, have also been excavated.

Unexcavated parts of the complex are thought to house cold rooms, warm rooms, plunge baths and an exercise area.

The excavation, funded by the site's owners, the Hammerston Group, will end in six weeks when the remains will be bulldozed. The Museum of London will remove as many objects as possible.



Picture: EKAY MEHMET

Tiles which once supported a raised floor at the Roman bath-house, being stacked by archaeologists from the Museum of London

Romans' London bath-house had saunas and gym

London's Roman 'palace' under siege

24

An important archaeological find faces destruction.

David Keys analyses the law's confusion. Photographs by Keith Dobney.

THE MOST impressive and best preserved Roman remains found in London this century are to be destroyed within the next few months, because of shortcomings in the law and the lack of a preservation strategy for the capital's archaeological heritage.

The ruins, possibly the palace of the Roman governor of Britain, at Baggin's Hall, Upper Thames Street, near St Paul's Cathedral, face destruction to make way for offices.

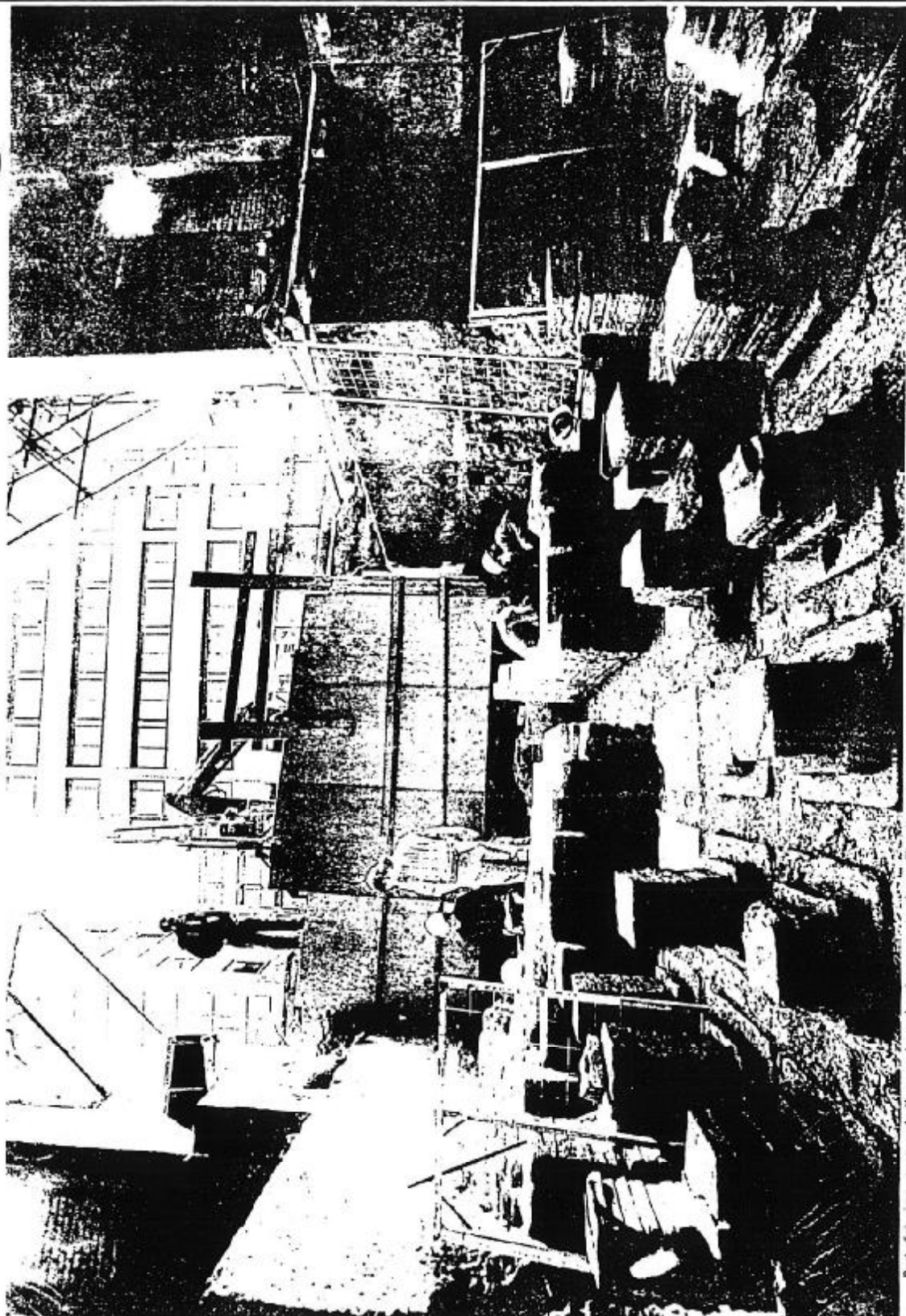
The existence of a 40,000 sq ft complex of Roman buildings in the area has been known since at least the 1860s, and it is a scheduled ancient monument. However, the importance of the ruins increased was not realised until permission for the new office block had been given and the remains were uncovered by builders digging out the base.

Under present legislation, the archaeology and ancient monuments (English Heritage) sometimes has to make recommendations to government Ministers. It has to advise the Secretary of State for the Environment whether sites should be allowed to be destroyed by property developers. But it normally has to do so before archaeologists have carried out a full excavation.

It is a pity that the Secretary of State for the Environment has not recommended that the recent provisions in the Bill be amended to allow the Secretary of State to build the office block, if it could have paying compensation to the developer. No such recommendation is known to have happened before.

Our English Heritage spokesmen admitted "like me, we said the site we all have sought a different solution".

Had speaking on BBC's televis-



Part of the important newly discovered remains that are under threat. The tile stacks of the Roman heating system at the bottom of what will soon be the basement of a new office block in the City of London.

acknowledged the decision to allow the development, stating that the site "had been partly destroyed by building operations in the 19th century."

Of the 5,000-sq-ft section of the building which is being unearched, only 9 per cent was destroyed by plating work for a basement building in the 1930s.

Many archaeologists feel that the destruction of a major site in London has been a disaster just waiting to happen.

Many feel that developers wanting to build in a zone of archaeological interest should be obliged by law to fund a full archaeological assessment, including excavation, before their application to build could be considered.

Further, a ban on restriction on basement construction in known archaeological zones would save the bulk of the archaeological heritage while retaining the square footage of an after-back only marginally.

The School of Architecture, University of Liverpool, said: "The fundamental problem is the lack of positive legislation for

the protection of the nation's past, although we can submit funding for excavation, research and preservation of the site, and the public never gets to see the plot and remains. Developers must be prepared to take risks and accept that they might have to change plans."

Archaeologists must collaborate with developers and acquiesce in the destruction of what they have recruited

their plans if discoveries of great importance are made. The archaeologists find themselves in an awkward position. In order to excavate and obtain archaeological knowledge they must collaborate with developers and acquiesce, under the present system, in the destruction of what they have recruited.

The remains now under threat were probably built by one of Britain's most famous gov-

ernors, Lucius Junius Nepos. The rear complex, probably built around AD 80, stretched 250 feet along the north bank of the Thames, and the front part, completed with fine mosaics, made from locally produced tiles imported from Italy, while the walls were adorned with painted plaster and tiles with Carrara marble.

It is possible that it was some sort of palace, either for the governor himself or the province, or a high-ranking financial official, but it could have been a public bath. It could have been a palace, but the baths would have been for his use and that of his staff.

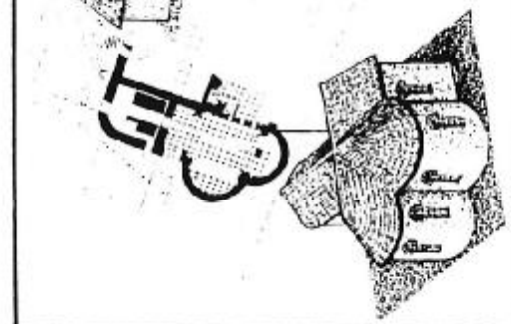
The possibility that the complex may have been the governor's palace is especially interesting in view of doubts which have recently emerged over the long-standing theory that the Roman Street building is a public bath. It fits in with the governor's views on the pacification of the Britons, as re-

lated by his son-in-law, the historian Tacitus.

"Agricola had to deal with people living in isolation and ignorance, and therefore grant to contain them to a life of peace and quiet by the provision of amenities."

Whatever the function of the complex at Huggin Hill, it was almost certainly built by either the Roman government or the provincial council of London.

It was constructed at least partly with materials supplied by the provincial government, such as the tiles, pebbles or puggles found on the building's roof tiles — showing that they were sup-



What the threatened buildings may have looked like. On the right, the bath house. On the left, part of what may have been the palace of Julius Agricola, the Roman governor of Britain.

plied by a brickworks run by the Procurator Praetoriae Britanniae of Britain.

Another clue to the building's high status is a fragment of an inscription which may refer to a Roman emperor.

Professor John Wilkes, the leading Roman scholar at University College London's Institute of Archaeology, believes that the complex was probably connected with the colony's provincial administration.

"The decay and the use of imported marble point to a building complex related to the Roman rulers of Britain, rather than native Britons, appearing to be Roman," he said. "It is a precious find. So much of Roman London has already gone for ever and this site should not be destroyed. It would be a great loss."

The remains include some 100 feet of Roman walls. There are also brick-built arches, apses and the bases of what were probably pillars. The tile stacks of a Roman central heating system are the only study masonry elements and will be removed to the Museum of London.



Some of the finds made at the Huggin Hill site. From left: roof tiles from the Roman procurator's brickworks; fragment of an amphora with an incised graffiti (a pound coin gives the scales); masonry with a Latin inscription; pottery; soil lamps.

THE INDEPENDENT
17/4/89

Scanning for remains

Dear Sir,

Your report "London's Roman 'palace' under siege" (15 April) reflected the dilemma of all archaeologists of not being able to predict objectively the scale and importance of archaeological remains below the ground. However, if today the London Huggin Hill Roman baths were to be evaluated for a Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) by English Heritage, a ground impulse radar scan would be required. This state-of-the-art technology has only in recent weeks been used and was highly successful at York in the Roman palace excavation.

Within a few days and at modest cost, what survives can be evaluated and the decision taken either to leave the site intact untouched, adapt foundations to avoid the remains, or excavate. Thus English Heritage, archaeologists and the developers are able to avoid conflict and save huge costs, plus frustrating long delays for the developer.

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN HOBLEY
Coventry
15 April

THE TIMES 26/4/89

'Governor' wants help for palace

One former "governor" of London pleaded with the Prime Minister for more time to be given for excavating the palace of a predecessor.

Mr Tony Banks (Newham North-West, Lab), the last chairman of the Greater London Council, said: There is an important Roman site in Upper Thames Street, near St Paul's Cathedral, the site of the palace of the Roman Governor, Julius Agricola, former governor of London (laughter).

The site is threatened by office development and the difficulties of English Heritage and the developers about compensation which may be paid for development being kept in abeyance while the archaeological investigation continues.

Will she look at it urgently because it has great significance?

Mrs Thatcher said that she was aware of the site and of its importance. She was sure that Mr Banks would be in touch with the Department of the Environment, under which English Heritage came.

Roman London find of the century faces destruction

By David Keys
Archaeology Correspondent

THE BEST surviving remains of Roman London to be discovered this century have just been unearthed by archaeologists, but the ruins are to be destroyed soon to make way for an office block.

A row has begun over the proposed demolition, with conservationists and politicians urging the Government to act to preserve the site.

The remains form part of a 250ft-long building, possibly the Roman governor's palace or a huge public baths complex, which stretched along the Roman riverfront between what is now Little Trinity Lane and Lambeth Hill in the south of the City.

The remains, located at the western end of the complex, consist of a 2,500sq ft cruciform-shaped double-apsed hall, and a series of service structures, including two furnaces for supplying an underfloor central heating system.

More than 100 of the tile-built stacks which supported the heated floor have survived, as have the green foliage and yellow, blue and white candelabra designs on the garish red and dark brown wall plaster. The cubes of mosaic are of very high quality marble, possibly imported from Italy.

The roof tiles were government issue, bearing the imprint PPBR-LON, which stands for Procurator Provinciae Britanniae Londiniana.

Built in the late first century AD and in use for up to 200 years,



Victoria Cassely, finds supervisor, holding wall plaster from the ruins painted with a stone design. Photograph by Keith Dobney

committee, urged the Government to consider protecting the Roman ruins. "If this site turns out to be as important as present indications suggest, then the Secretary of State should give urgent and earnest consideration to using his powers to ensure that it is properly safeguarded and preserved and that the developers are properly compensated."

"We have here something which is not only of major historic importance, but also potentially a major tourist attraction."

Andrew Faulds, the Labour co-chairman, said it would be "a disaster" if the ruins were destroyed. "The loss of this site is totally unacceptable."

A Hammerson Group spokeswoman said: "We have been given permission by the archaeological authorities to proceed with the development on the grounds that is the part of the Roman site that is being excavated is not significant, given the complexity of the total ancient building."

English Heritage said yesterday: "Had we realised the site was as impressive as it is, we may well have sought a different solution. Unfortunately, without a full excavation, it was impossible to determine the extent of these remains."

"Talks will also continue with the architects to see if any further modifications to the design of the development are possible."

The Museum of London commented: "This site is of vital archaeological importance." The excavations are being carried out by a museum team headed by Peter Rowsome, an archaeologist, and funded by the developers.

English Heritage's problem is that it is obliged to give vital advice to the Government before proper excavations have taken place, so advice often has to be based on guesswork.

Patrick Cornuck, the Conservative MP who is co-chairman of the Commons arts and heritage

Secretary of State for the Environment, to build on the site.

However, Mr Ridley gave permission on advice from English Heritage, the archaeology and ancient monuments quango, which appears to have seriously underestimated the likely scale of the ruins.

The ruins are due to be destroyed in May or June, when the Hammerson Group, starts building an office block. Although the remains are part of an officially protected scheduled ancient monument, the developers got permission from Nicholas Ridley, the

complex covered some 40,000 sq ft — one of the largest Roman structures in Britain. It was split-level, with parts being dug into the slope which ran northwards from the Thames. Surviving structures currently being unearthed include some 300ft of Roman walls — more than a quarter

of which are 7ft to 10ft high.

of which are 7ft to 10ft high. However, Mr Ridley gave permission on advice from English Heritage, the archaeology and ancient monuments quango, which appears to have seriously underestimated the likely scale of the ruins.

THE INDEPENDENT

Friday 14 April 1989

The cost of England's heritage

PITY the property developer attempting to turn an honest penny in the capital and to meet genuine need. London has been a commercial and political centre for more than 2,000 years. As a result it is almost impossible to excavate anywhere within the 600 acres of the City without hitting remains which are of some archaeological importance. Few can or should be preserved *in situ*. But recently demolition work for the Hammerson Group, which plans to erect an office block near Cannon Street station, has revealed the remains of either the Roman Governor's palace or a huge baths complex attached to it. The site has turned out to contain some of the most important and visually dramatic ruins to have been uncovered in London this century.

The Department of the Environment delayed redevelopment for six months from January and the company, of its own volition, made available £475,000 to fund research. Although the area is a scheduled monument, Nicholas Ridley, the Secretary of State, initially gave planning consent for the new office block and for several floors of underground car parking on the advice of English Heritage which judged that it would be enough for the Museum of London to conduct a "record or rescue" operation. This judgement proved wrong. The remains are both more significant and more spectacular than could have been anticipated. They merit preservation, preferably with public access. At least they should be reburied so that future generations can uncover them when the block eventually comes down.

Mr Ridley has the power to revoke his

consent order if English Heritage advises him to do so. However, such advice would be prohibitively costly to English Heritage, which would be liable to pay compensation of several million pounds to Hammerson for any further delays caused by redesigning the building and for the loss of value which would ensue if the block had to be constructed without underground garage space. This crippling financial obligation means that English Heritage will almost certainly not make a formal approach to the department. It has never felt able to do so in the past. As a result, errors of judgement go uncorrected. A simple alteration to the law would ease, if not resolve, the problem. It should be for the department, and not English Heritage, to foot the bill when the Secretary of State accepted a reversal of decision by that body. (The fact that the final decision would rest with the department ought to ensure that only the most meritorious changes of mind were endorsed.)

In recent years developers like Hammerson have become more sophisticated about funding rescue operations on their sites. Their enlightened (if ultimately self-interested) approach should be encouraged, and this means that agreements once made should be adhered to by the authorities in all but the most exceptional of circumstances. It would seem that this is such a case. Before the law is called into play, however, Hammerson could reasonably consider the public relations advantage it could draw from providing tourist access to the remains in the basement of the new building. Such a venture might even prove profitable.

THE GUARDIAN
Wednesday April 19 1989

News round-up

Nigel Fountain

THE GOOD news. Near St Paul's Cathedral archaeologists are working on the finest Roman ruins found in London this century. They are around 1,900 years old and may be part of the palace of the governor of "Provinciae Britanniae" — Britain.

The bad news? They are likely to be destroyed by new property development within the next two months. One man can stop such a move — Environment Secretary Nicholas Ridley. Such finds are rare. Skyscrapers aren't.

