

Antiquity

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PLATE IXa

Editorial

We are glad to publish, as our second photograph (PL. IXb), what may well be one of the most sensational and oft-repeated archaeological photographs, and we are most indebted to Mary Leakey for allowing us to do this and for providing a short note (p. 133) in advance of the full publication of her discoveries. These are the footprints of 'a fairly large knuckle-walking primate', and were found preserved in a bed of volcanic ash at Laetolil, a remote region of Tanzania about 300 miles (480 km) south-west of Lake Victoria. At a conference in Washington in 1977 this find was hailed as 'the discovery of a set of human footprints nearly four million years old, the indelible traces of man's earliest ancestor'.

At the Washington conference Mary Leakey said: 'It is difficult to know exactly what this creature looked like. All we are certain of, from other evidence, is that he was about four feet high, with a small brain area and big jaws and big teeth. He does not appear to have been a hunter. He scavenged meat from dead animals and ate berries and fruit.'

The estimated age of the footprints is between 3.5 and 3.75 million years, dates obtained by using atomic dating methods on the lower level of the ash. Incidentally, the oldest man footprints previously known came from the Upper Palaeolithic caves of western Europe dating somewhere between 100,000 and perhaps 200,000 BC.

Sir Thomas Browne, writing in the seventeenth century, when the creation of the world and man was dated to 4004 BC, said: 'Time we may comprehend: tis but five days elder than ourselves and hath the same horoscope with the world.' Who—archaeologist, historian, philosopher, theologian—would, presented with evidence for man four million years ago, say confidently 'Time we may comprehend'? Certainly not the Editor of ANTIQUITY. Another commentator said recently: 'A time scale of four million years will be almost meaningless to

many people. It is hard to realize that this is two thousand times longer than the period between ourselves and Christ.'

Our editorial photograph (PL. IXa) is the remains of a hut-village in Périgord. In southern France they are usually called *bories*, a patois word, or, in a descriptive phrase, *cabanes de pierres sèches*. Those in the photograph are grouped together around a modern farmhouse half-way between Sarlat and Les Eyzies in Dordogne. The picture postcards say Saint-André d'Allas, and if you go to that village you will waste a great deal of time: go to Allas on the Sarlat-Les Eyzies road, turn off at Thomas, take the road first to the Château of Puymartin and then take the left road up the hill to the occupied farm where these *bories* are. They were the place where Eugène le Roy made Jacquou le Croquant live in his book of that name first published in 1899. Jacquou lived in the forêt Barade, the most beautiful and the poorest part of Périgord, and the peasants of the forêt will tell you that he still exists: that he is always present. To quote from Jean-Paul Chavent's admirable introduction to his *Le Périgord* (Editions Solar, Paris, 1976, £1.70 in Hachette): 'Il est là, dans toutes les manifestations paysannes, portant le drapeau de toutes les revendications sociales, contre toutes les injustices. C'est beaucoup plus qu'un mythe.' He remains a symbol of the past, a piece of folklore, settled in the *bories* which represent a tradition of very high antiquity. They are dry-walled and corbel-vaulted with no timber of any kind, and they occur not only in Périgord but in Quercy and many areas of south-central France—we have seen transhumant shepherds building them in high Cantal; and also in Provence, in Sardinia, Corsica, Spain and many areas of the Mediterranean from Sicily to Anatolia and Syria. For very good accounts of the Périgord-Quercy *bories* see Alfred Cayla, *Maisons du Quercy et du Périgord* (Hachette,

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1973, 116 pp., Frs. 74) and Jacques Freal's book of the same title published by Hachette (undated, price Frs. 63).

These *bories* are, of course, survivals of pre-historic houses—the houses that were being built all over France and western Europe 6,000 years ago, and which may, when houses turned into tombs, have become the origins of passage chambers in southern Spain and on the coasts of Brittany. The man who could build a good *borie* could easily build a tomb at Los Millares and Barnenez, and his grandchildren, in their architectural floruit, could have achieved New Grange or Maes Howe.

¶ Jacquou le Croquant, Robin Hood, Twm Shwn Catti—are they all part of folklore, or do they preserve a legend of the past? Congratulations to the Folklore Society who are celebrating their centenary this year and mounting a special centenary conference entitled Folklore Studies in the Twentieth Century: it will be held in the Royal Holloway College of the University of London, at Egham, Surrey, from 17 to 21 July. Scholars have already said they are coming to this conference from Chile, India, Nigeria, Turkey and the USA, as well as from most West and East European countries. Mrs Elgar is the conference assistant and she should be written to at *The Folklore Society, c/o University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT*.

¶ It is a pleasant coincidence that the publication of Leslie Grinsell's *Folklore of prehistoric sites in Britain* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1976, 320 pp., 16 pls. £7.95) should appear now, as also his *The Rollright Stones and their folklore* (St Peter Port, Guernsey: The Toucan Press, 1977, 16 pp., 6 figs. 30p), in the attractive 'West Country Folklore' series edited by Theo Brown, to which he has already contributed *The folklore of Stanton Drew* (1973) and *The legendary history and folklore of Stonehenge* (1975). His new book analyses all the motifs that occur in the folklore of prehistoric British monuments, and then gives a gazetteer of sites with the lore attached to them. Grinsell has been writing on this subject since his paper 'Barrows and their folklore' was published in the *Sussex County Herald* on 23 January 1931: in 1939 he published in *Folklore* (1, 323–32) his scheme for recording the folklore of prehistoric remains. Nearly 20 years later we have his personal record,

and very valuable and interesting it is. In such a wide-ranging work there are bound to be mistakes. He falls into the common error about Mont Saint-Michel: it is in Normandy, not Brittany (indeed Grinsell puts it in Finistère, 240 km to the west); and he calls the chambered tumulus at Carnac in the Morbihan by the same name when it is really the Tumulus de Saint-Michel. He believes the Dwarfie Stane on Hoy in Orkney, visited by Sir Walter Scott in 1814 and described in Chapter XIX of *The pirate*, to be a prehistoric rock-cut tomb: and presumably he also believes that St Kevin's Bed at Glendalough in Ireland is a rock-cut tomb. We do not believe that either is a prehistoric rock-cut tomb and there are no such antiquities north and west of Champagne. It is sad to have to relinquish the Dwarfie Stane from the list of fascinating names for prehistoric megaliths: at least we have not lost the name of the Fairy's Toot, even though the chambered tomb is gone ('strange noises were to be heard in its interior, and visions, portentous to children, were seen waving in the bushes growing on it', quotes Grinsell); and he has introduced us to the Toothie Stane in Argyll, called, apparently, from the local custom 'for anyone suffering from toothache to seek a cure by driving a nail into the stone at midnight'.

What value is the study of folklore to the modern scientific archaeologist? Hardly any: the folklore of antiquities is of help to the historian of archaeology, who is interested in the ways people have interpreted and invented the past in the terms of their ignorance and knowledge. This is why we find Grinsell's comments on the Druids odd. 'The writer pleads guilty', he says, 'to sharing the prejudice of almost all British archaeologists against these people. In his opinion all or nearly all the "Druid" traditions date from 1600 to 1900 when stone monuments and many other prehistoric sites were attributed to them . . . "Druid" folklore has for this reason been excluded from the Inventory.' What rubbish and nonsense! The Druids have as much claim to the folklore of prehistory as giants and fairies and King Arthur (and how enchanting that the first four figures in this book are simply described as distribution maps of the Devil, Giants, Fairies, and the Arthurian Cycle!).

It seems to us, sadly, that after all these years of work Leslie Grinsell has not faced up to the main question: how much of the material he has carefully recorded is myth—the invented past of the folk; and how much may enshrine, through legend, folk-

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memories of the past? In fact he seems unaware of the difference between myth and legend, except that he accepts the Irish origin of Stonehenge as set out by Geoffrey of Monmouth as 'legendary'. Without any reasonable doubt it is a folk-memory of the transport of the blue stones from Preseli (not Prescelly, please, Mr Grinsell, following outdated nineteenth-century maps). Here is the value of the study of folklore for archaeologists.

☞ We have already referred to the problem of the closure of the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Farnham and the disposal of some of the material to the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum (*Antiquity*, 1970, 86; 1973, 2-3; and 1977, 182). Alas, Lord Congleton writes to say that the situation is far from happy. The Museum is now endeavouring to re-house and re-display the Pitt-Rivers Collection in the Town Mill at Salisbury and has already negotiated and signed an agreement to lease the Town Mill and its buildings. To conclude a lease the Museum must find the financial support necessary to carry out repairs, and begin work by 1981.

The sum required is between £350,000 and £500,000, and Lord Congleton feels, as we do, that a public appeal for so much money is unlikely to succeed. What should happen is quite simple to spell out: 50 per cent of the money required should come from Central Government sources, 12½ per cent should come from Wiltshire County Council funds, 12½ per cent from Salisbury District Council funds, and the remaining 25 per cent be raised by the Museum through its special appeal. We suggest this as a realistic solution to the problem, and we remind ourselves that of the £700,000 recently raised for the building of the admirable new Playhouse Theatre in Salisbury, no less than £450,000 came from public funds (the Arts Council, the Wiltshire County Council, and the Salisbury District Council). The lively arts of the present are obviously worthy of great encouragement, but so are the monuments and remains of the lively past. Stonehenge and Avebury, Silbury Hill and Old Sarum will be here when the ephemeral plays of the present century have vanished. And our descendants in the 21st and later centuries will ask how we dealt with our and their national patrimony. The Government and the local authorities have a duty to see that the Pitt-Rivers Collection is properly housed.

☞ We are saddened by the news of the deaths of so

many of our archaeological colleagues and friends in the last few months. Professor Fuad Safar was killed in a car accident. Professor Sir Max Mallowan says of him: 'He was an archaeologist of international repute, not only for his skill as a digger but also because of his profound learning, which sat lightly upon him. He was a delightful companion and whatever he undertook was achieved with an air of insouciance which made his successes all the more remarkable . . . For many years in Iraq he was the *eminence grise* of the Iraq Antiquities Department . . . His greatest achievement is the excavation of the site of Eridu in conjunction with Seton Lloyd. There was no more delightful companion than Fuad, with his whimsical and infectious sense of fun. He was generous in the aid he gave to all foreign colleagues as well as to his own' (*The Times*, 1 February 1978).

☞ R. S. Newall died on 17 January at the age of 93. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries at the remarkably early age of 25 and took part in the Society's excavations at Stonehenge in the early twenties; he was full of advice and good judgement to Piggott and Atkinson when they re-excavated Stonehenge in the sixties. Stuart Piggott wrote of him (*The Times*, 26 January 1978): 'He was a most charming and entertaining character, with a wide range of unusual knowledge, and a marvellous raconteur. In his company one often thought of that other Wiltshire antiquary and story-teller, John Aubrey, and one also feels that Robert Newall would have liked the comparison.' He was a founder subscriber to *ANTIQUITY* and a great friend and supporter of O. G. S. Crawford, who published his article on Stonehenge in 1929 (*Antiquity*, III, 75-88). After Crawford's death he carried on an amusing and helpful correspondence with Crawford's successor as Editor, and although we never met him, we feel we knew him well through his letters and the views of his friends such as Stuart Piggott, Richard Atkinson, Sir Thomas Kendrick, and Tom Lethbridge. We published a note and review by him (*Antiquity*, xxviii, 27-8; xxx, 137-40) and he commented on the views of Hawkins and Hoyle. Of the axial alignments he said: 'I am *very, very*, doubtful about all the others: that makes 6 of the 8 doubtful, and a total of 11 doubtful out of 23. That seems a lot. What do you think?' (*Antiquity*, xli, 98). Readers of *ANTIQUITY* will know what we think: we have even greater doubts than Newall had.

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☞ Dermot Armstrong Casey died in his sleep in his eightieth year, on 13 September 1977. One of our advisory editors, Professor John Mulvaney, writes: 'A gentle and unassuming man, he made unobtrusive but distinguished contributions to archaeology in England, Pakistan and his natal Australia. He was educated at Eton and the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. He served in the Royal Horse Artillery during the First World War, winning the Military Cross: indeed his guns were probably the first to be unlimbered and fired on German soil. After the war and a brief interlude in the Australian Foreign Service in the United States, he turned to archaeology. He took part in Hawley's excavations at Stonehenge. It was Sir Mortimer Wheeler who recognized his talents as a field excavator and for several years they formed a formidable team. Casey dug at Lydney Park and at Verulamium, where he also directed the excavations of the Belgic site at Prae Wood. In *Still digging* Wheeler recalled Casey's contribution as a field archaeologist, and Australians who worked with Casey in later years would endorse Wheeler's tribute that on a site he was "a master of patient exposition" with a flair for stratigraphic interpretation. He resumed his collaboration with Wheeler in 1944 where he was assistant director of the Archaeological School at Taxila.'

We met him at Taxila and in Delhi and found his company excellent. Wheeler described him as 'one of the most skilful and percipient excavators within my knowledge'. Could there be higher praise from a more reliable source? Mulvaney writes: 'Casey was the most modest of men. He never sought advancement nor did he wish his name to appear as a co-author. He combined a nineteenth-century devotion to science with enthusiasm for prehistory. Endowed with sufficient private means so that he needed no professional position, he was generous to others of his time, equipment and advice.'

☞ G. W. B. Huntingford who died in February of this year was one of the first serious students of the archaeology and ethnography of East Africa. A farmer in Kenya, he acquired a detailed knowledge of antiquities and ethnography, particularly that of the Nandi, about whom he wrote an authoritative monograph. In 1948 he joined the staff of the School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London and in 1966 went to Canada to organize the new Department of Anthropology in the University of New Brunswick. He wrote often

for ANTIQUITY; his last work was an annotated translation of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* which is to be published this year by the Hakluyt Society.

☞ Peggy Burkitt died in March and is buried beside her husband in Grantchester churchyard. She married Miles in 1923, two years after he had published his *Prehistory* and right at the beginning of his teaching career in the Cambridge Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology. Until his death in 1971 she supported him in every possible way with love and devotion. She was a most skilled draughtswoman and Miles Burkitt's books derived much of their value, delight and distinction from Peggy's drawings: we reproduce here one of her drawings



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—it is of an Acheulian handaxe from Hoxne. She was a delightful and generous hostess, and to generations of archaeologists being an undergraduate at Cambridge meant among other things the warm friendship and good counsel of Peggy. It was over tea at Merton House in Grantchester before supervisions with Miles that many archaeologists of our generation and subsequent ones grew up. In a letter when he heard of Peggy's death, Desmond Clark wrote of her innate energy, humour and courage, and her zest for life, and said that Cambridge would never be the same without her. How true.

Mr Eric Houlder, head of the department of history at Pontefract Girls Secondary School, sends us an extract from *The Educationalist* for January 1978. It says:

SAVO Electronics, the British manufacturers of the renowned Whites range of metal detection equipment, are offering a unique package to schools and colleges. Recognizing the need for a responsible approach to the use of metal detection equipment in the field of archaeology, SAVO Electronics are offering a direct purchase deal to schools and colleges. In addition they have a number of detectors available that may be used on loan for limited trial periods. This means that lecturers can now conduct their own archaeological digs with much greater certainty of discovering interesting artefacts whilst at the same time encouraging a responsible attitude among their pupils in the use of detection equipment.

Mr Houlder underlines in red the last two sentences: all of it should be in red, and be read by everyone interested in the preservation of our past. Mr Houlder writes: 'I try to encourage a responsible approach to archaeology among my girls, but what is the point if this sort of propaganda is thrust at teachers all over Britain?' How right he is.

Group Captain C. E. Livock, now retired from the Royal Air Force, and living in Iverne Minster near Blandford in Dorset, writes to us as follows (his letter is dated 11.10.77):

A week or two ago I was talking to Rog Palmer on the Hambleton Hill dig and he was most insistent that I should send you the following story. I have been a subscriber to *ANTIQUITY* for many years and have often been entertained by the editorial comments on the wilder theories of the imaginative fringe of archaeology. In 1930 I was in Borneo looking for

aerodrome sites and on arrival at Kuda in the north of the country I found a rough circle of small boulders on the village green. Had I been in, say, Dartmoor, I would probably have announced to the world the discovery of a Bronze Age site, astronomical observatory or what not. Luckily for me I was saved from any speculation for the site was surrounded by a neat post and rail fence on which was a large notice-board proclaiming: *Oath stones planted as an act of submission by rebel Dusum chiefs after the abortive raid on Kudat in 1900.* These were in fact primitive signatures to a Peace Treaty. As Professor Richmond once advised me—on Hod Hill—'First seek the simple solution.'

Thank you, Group Captain Livock and Rog Palmer.

Professor Atkinson wrote to us in February saying: 'Have you seen an article on megalithic astronomy and the like in a new glossy magazine, for those with more money than sense, called *Quest*, in which you are set up as the great big fuddy-duddy of blind orthodoxy, and I as another such who suffered a lightning conversion to the new Thomism on the road to Stonehenge?' We rushed away at once in the early morning to W. H. Smith on the Cambridge Market Square, hoping that *Quest* was not a magazine that they refused to sell like *Gay News*. All was well, *Quest* was there, and warmly to be recommended in that cold mid-February moment of archaeological doubt.

The article to which Professor Atkinson referred was by someone called William Irwin Thompson, whose next book *Darkness and scattered light* is shortly to be published. The article was called 'The Future as image of the past: lessons from megalithic man.' Here are some sentences from it:

Glyn Daniel is very like the snobbish priest who refused to look in Galileo's telescope because he *knew* what the world was like. . . . It's a marvellous irony that Daniel has become one of the stodgy old cranks he himself debunked in his *The Idea of Prehistory* . . . Daniel refused to change his mind. No doubt his colleagues reassure him over glasses of sherry that his views will prevail over any of the tommy rot argued in the popular press.

He might better heed the example of Professor Atkinson, another prince of the church of orthodox archaeology, who, though known to fume against the lunatic fringe in the pages of the London

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Times Literary Supplement, has had the courage recently to publish a recantation concerning Professor Thom: 'I am prepared to believe that my model of European prehistory is wrong rather than the results presented by Thom are due to nothing but chance.'

Stonehenge was closed to visitors for a short while in the spring while the gravel paths were being removed and the whole areas re-turfed. Now it is open again and the public can walk about on

specially prepared pathways. This is a wise and proper plan and we know that the thousands who visit this great monument every day (it is second to the Tower of London in visitor figures) will keep to the pathways. Congratulations to the Department of the Environment for this scheme.

As a tailpiece we reprint, with the kind permission of *Punch*, this amusing Mahood drawing which appeared in their 7 December 1977 number.



'Some of them seem to have forgotten that their forefathers—the Picts, Danes and Romans—all entered the country illegally!'

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1952-1976

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PLATE IX (a): EDITORIAL
Remains of a hut-village ('cabanes') at Saint-André d'Allas, Dordogne, France

See pp. 89-90

Photo: René



PLATE IX (b): PLIOCENE FOOTPRINTS AT LAETOLIL, NORTHERN TANZANIA:
The left foot is on the left side, followed by the right foot

See p. 133