

## ANTIQUITY

millennium B.C., and onwards, alongside Greece and Rome, to the brightening dark of its medieval morning. What remains to be seen is whether anyone will take it. But we shall be ready for those that will; and indeed we have not lacked time for preparation. The need for something of this kind in Oxford began first to be pointed out (as Dr Joan Evans has reminded me) by Arthur Evans in 1888—just seventy years ago. Yet the tortoise, in the end, did win the race; and we shall try.

C. F. C. HAWKES

### THE SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY

In the summer of 1957, at a meeting held at Burlington House under the chairmanship of Sir Mortimer Wheeler, a new national archaeological society was founded. This, the Society for Medieval Archaeology, exists to further the study of Britain's post-Roman history by encouraging research into the surviving material evidence. The Society's activities will encompass the archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon period in Britain, in all its aspects. The period after the Norman conquest will be treated within more strictly archaeological terms of reference, so that attention will be focussed on fieldwork and excavated material rather than on those studies of art and architecture to which other societies and journals are already devoted.

The Society was founded in the belief that a centralized medium of publication would stimulate and unify contributions from the various disciplines involved. Thus, its chief purpose is to publish a journal in which the problems and results of archaeological, historical, numismatic and linguistic studies of the medieval period in Britain will for the first time be stated and discussed together. The archaeology of the European mainland will be treated in so far as it bears on the British problems and material. In short, this publication, which is to be called the *Journal of Medieval Archaeology*, is intended to be truly national in scope and international in significance.

The Society will arrange an annual week-end conference. The first of the series was held in March 1958 at Sheffield, its subject being the relationship of history and archaeology in the study of the Middle Ages.

There will be an annual general meeting in London. In December 1957 a paper entitled *Some Comments on the Miniatures and Ornaments of the Lindisfarne Gospels* was read to the first of these meetings, by the President, Mr R. L. S. Bruce-Mitford, Keeper of British and Medieval Antiquities in the British Museum.

The other officers of the Society are : Secretary, Mr D. M. Wilson, of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities in the British Museum; Editor, Dr D. B. Harden, Director of the London Museum; Treasurer, Mr J. G. Hurst of the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments of the Ministry of Works. Sir Cyril Fox, Sir Thomas Kendrick, Sir Frank Stenton and Sir Mortimer Wheeler are Honorary Vice-Presidents.

Membership is open to all who are interested. The subscription to the Society, including the *Journal*, for ordinary and institutional members is £2 2s. od.; for *bona fide* students under the age of twenty-five £1 1s. od.; and for two members of the same household £3 3s. od. (entitling them to full privileges of membership and one copy of the *Journal* jointly). Further particulars can be obtained from the Secretary, at the British Museum, W.C.1.

### ARCHAEOLOGY IN WALES

There is good news for those who practise archaeology in Wales or who want to know about the ancient history of western Britain. At long last, the University of Wales has established a Professorship of Archaeology, and we welcome Mr R. J. C. Atkinson, at

## NOTES AND NEWS

present Lecturer in Archaeology at Edinburgh, as Professor of Archaeology in the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire at Cardiff. It may come as a surprise to many readers of *ANTIQUITY* outside Great Britain that a University of Ancient Britons has waited sixty-five years before it has recognized officially the study of its own remote past. The ghosts of Edward Lhwyd and Sir John Rhŷs will haunt with pleasure the hall at University College, Cardiff, when Professor Atkinson gives his inaugural lecture.

### THE SCHAFFHAUSEN CELTIC EXHIBITION

The Keeper of Antiquities in the Ashmolean Museum kindly points out that our note on the Schaffhausen Exhibition in the last number of *ANTIQUITY* was misleading in one detail. Three objects from Oxford were exhibited (although they did not appear in the printed catalogue), namely the Minster Ditch scabbard and two bronze 'spoons' from Penbryn. We are glad to be able to add the Ashmolean to the very small list of those museums and private individuals who sent material from Britain to this Celtic Exhibition.

### THE ANGLO-SAXONS AND THE B.B.C.

*Two years ago the B.B.C. arranged a series of special broadcasts on Roman Britain, and last year a similar series on the Anglo-Saxons. This year it is to be the Normans. These broadcasts are seldom discussed outside the broadcasting review columns of the daily and weekly papers; yet serious discussion is wanted and welcomed by producers of these programmes and of The Archaeologist on Network Three and Buried Treasure on B.B.C. Television. We are happy to print here the comments of Miss Rosalind Hill of Westfield College on the Anglo-Saxon broadcasts.*

The work of the B.B.C. in stimulating a popular interest in archaeology has been an unqualified success. Indeed, we have reached the stage when archaeologists have to be cautious in mentioning new discoveries for fear lest the inrush of enthusiastic spectators may hinder their work.

Can the same interest be aroused for the study of history, and in particular for the history of England between A.D. 597 and 1066? In a recent series of broadcast talks the B.B.C. obtained the services of a body of learned men, each of them a first-rate authority in his own field, who held eight discussions on the subject of Anglo-Saxon England. The result, according to evidence obtained by the producers, was to give great pleasure to people with some knowledge of the subject, but not to capture the imagination of the general public. My own limited researches among university students tend to confirm this opinion. Those who knew something of the outlines of Anglo-Saxon history were interested, even to the extent of regretfully foregoing their suppers. Those who knew nothing of the period were completely baffled.

It was unfortunate that the course was started in the middle of the period with the reign of Alfred, 'the one person in whom the [English] sense of belonging can be personified'. Most English people under the age of forty have been brought up without any strict training in historical chronology, with the result that their ideas of history are inevitably muddled. Nevertheless, most people understand a story better if it has a beginning, a middle and an end. The use of the 'flash-back' seems to be of doubtful value even in romance, and it can be extremely unsafe in history unless the student has already grasped the main outlines of the period. An intelligent person with no specialized knowledge could not but be interested to hear an expert lecture on Bede's Northumbria or Alfred's Wessex; he could hardly be expected to assimilate a few scholarly remarks on both, presented in reverse order with no very clear indication of the relationship between them.

The whole popularity of the 'Brains Trust' or 'Any Questions' programmes seems