

Editorial

ELSEWHERE in this volume appears a review of the great *Atlas d'Archéologie de Picardie* recently published by R. Agache and B. Bréart. This work has a truly fundamental and revolutionary importance for all who are interested in ancient landscapes, and is a magnificent culmination to the work of fifteen years of flying. (Also, and incidentally, it deals a blow to the validity of the conventional distribution-map of villas or other rural sites comparable with that being dealt in this country by the discoveries of intensive field-walking; both techniques give a completely new picture.) The coloured maps at 1: 50,000 will be a revelation to anyone whose attempts to visit archaeological sites in France have been guided by the Michelin series. It is reported that Mr Agache's flying programme has had to be restricted by ill-health; all who know his work will join in sending him good wishes for the future.

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H.M. Stationery Office has resumed the publication of Department of the Environment Archaeological Reports with No. 9, the report on Ian Stead's excavation at Winterton. This is a large and well-produced volume, but it is difficult to see why it should cost £25 when volumes of identical size and shape are published by the Society of Antiquaries for £14. Indeed, the *Principles of Archaeological Publication* published by the Department of the Environment in 1976 contained a recommendation that subsidy should be used to keep down the cost of excavation monographs. This has not been implemented. It would be interesting to know how many copies of Winterton have been sold.

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No. 103 of this year's epigraphic part of the Roman Britain report (p. 446) records a lead tank from Icklingham, Suffolk, the third from the site; two at least of them are Christian (the first, found in 1726, is lost). The discovery was briefly reported in *Britannia* iii (1972), 330, and the subsequent excavations of the Suffolk Archaeological Unit were noted in *Britannia* vi (1975), 262. The site is now to be published in *East Anglian Archaeology* Vol. iii; a preliminary note by Mr S. E. West points to the likelihood that the small building 6.70 by 4.60 m and the plastered tile base 10 m to the east on the same axis represent a Christian church and baptismal *piscina*. In a rural context close to a large villa the possibility is important, as is the suggestion of a preceding pagan shrine demolished. In view of the lack of circulation liable to affect the new media of archaeological publications now proliferating, wider publicity is given here to these ideas.

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To any archaeologist who has to work with plans or compare dimensions of structures from different plans, a recent development must cause inconvenience. This is the tendency of draughtsmen to insert on a plan a drawn scale of only token length, quite inadequate for actual use. They should remember that the purpose of a scale is to be measured from; a scale ideally should be as long as the longest distance on the drawing which is likely to be measured, and should be so subdivided that measurements of *any* length can easily be taken from it. It is surprising how few published plans have scales which measure up to these requirements. Few people nowadays trouble to complement their metric scales with foot scales; but there are three reasons for continuing the practice of displaying imperial as well as metric scales. One is that metres still mean little to a surprising number of people, and to attempt to dragoon them for their own good is arrogant. The second is that in most archaeological periods people built in multiples or fractions of feet, and their intentions or techniques cannot easily be penetrated in metres. The third reason is that there is a great corpus of plans already published in this country with foot scales, and it is a pity that a little laziness should be allowed to make comparisons difficult.

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The Haverfield Archive in the Ashmolean Library has been put in order and catalogued. It consists of material collected by Haverfield primarily for his work on Roman Britain, comprising notebooks, manuscripts, typescripts, plans, photographs and letters; the majority is of the period before 1920, but it has proved impossible to separate material compiled by M. V. Taylor, e.g. for the Victoria County Histories. Two catalogues have been prepared, the first topographical by (old) county and site, the second an author index (e.g. of letters, etc.). The Library also contains source material for the Roman Britain reports since 1924 which have appeared in *JRS* and latterly in *Britannia*. Another important archive is that of the Richmond papers in the same library. These also are now sorted and catalogued.