



East Dorset Antiquarian Society

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NEWSLETTER – December 2022

Wishing everyone a MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

As before, items in the newsletter aren't necessarily in the order they're announced below.

Thanks very much to Andrew for the summary of Richard Hobbs' Zoom talk on **Hinton St Mary Mosaic: Fieldwork and Excavations** last month. This month we have 'Redefining the Neolithic Map: recent work on Cranborne Chase and the Avon Valley' with Mike Gill of AVAS, Wednesday 9th at 7:30pm. Mike will look at the detective work needed to find possible new sites, surveying them and what AVAS have found, some of which overturns previous views.

Andrew has also written about the **EDAS Conference: The Rise and Decline of the Druce Farm Roman Villa 60-650CE**. Another item from Andrew covers the well deserved nomination of Lilian for Archaeologist of the Year in the *Current Archaeology* Awards: **Vote for Lilian**. As Andrew says about the monograph, it's a personal triumph for Lilian, but he's too modest to mention just how much has relied upon his support over many years.

Neil Meldrum's 15th article (October newsletter) looked at developments in China after the Zhou Dynasty succeeded the Shang in 1046 BCE, taking us through the 'Western Zhou' period and the first part of 'Eastern Zhou' rule. His 16th contribution takes us from 481 BCE, into the period when the major Chinese philosophers came to prominence: **Ancient China – the later Zhou**.

I thought it was time that Alan's very long-running **Weblinks** (and his **Highlights**) series was numbered in recognition of its longevity (not sure why I didn't before). He started providing them in the October 2017 newsletter so, if I can count, this month's edition is number 52. Wow. **View from Above** started a couple of months earlier but is 'only' on number 49 this time as a few months have been skipped. Wow again, and many thanks to Alan, Jo and Sue for informing and entertaining us for so long.

I'm grateful to Sue Elmer, who provided information, photographs and links, for the article on **Ravensworth Castle**, initially found on a Facebook page (which I don't use). I've done a bit of extra research to put together this article. I also have to thank Darius Robey, a friend of the Society who lives in Virginia, for the article **Study of coins suggests that Emperor Sponsianus was real**. Darius spotted an article online that related to the Roman province of Dacia, an area he's been interested in since he spent some years living and studying in Romania, which pretty much encompasses ancient Dacia. Sponsianus appears when the Roman Empire was in turmoil, with a rapid turnover of emperors and usurpers. A coin of Emperor Quintillus (AD 270) found at Druce illustrates this as he only lasted a few months at most.

From the Archives 5 continues the review of early Dorset Proceedings and, of course, there's the **EDAS Programme** and **District Diary** at the end.

Geoff Taylor

Hinton St Mary Mosaic: Fieldwork and Excavations: Lecture by Richard Hobbs

The November talk was delivered by Richard Hobbs, the curator of the British Museum Romano-British collection, and trustee of the Roman Research Trust which made a significant donation towards the Druce Roman Villa post-excavation costs. Unfortunately, a threatened rail strike resulted in last-minute change of plan and the talk was delivered over Zoom. Nevertheless, we had a good turnout of 61 people.

Richard explained that the iconic mosaic was discovered in 1963 by the local blacksmith. It was cleared by Dorset County Museum and lifted for preservation by the British Museum. There followed a limited examination of the site in 1964-65 which concluded that the mosaic floor had originally furnished a pair of rooms in a substantial building that appeared to have flourished in the 4th century. The layout of the mosaic room resembles a Roman *triclinium*, or dining room, and it was thought likely the building was a villa, but it had been badly damaged by stone-robbing and ploughing. Because of the stunning central roundel some thought the building might have been a church or other Christian complex. The coins from the site were mainly from the period 270-400, and the absence of samian pottery suggested that the site was first occupied after the early 3rd century. No finds were dated earlier than c. 270CE.



The mosaic, seen here in a British Museum image, is a continuous floor measuring 8x5m and covering a bipartite room, with two large panels joined by a small decorated threshold. It is largely red, yellow and cream in colouring. The larger floor has a central roundel *emblemata*, pictured below, containing a togate figure with a *Chi-Rho* monogram behind the head and two pomegranates symbolising everlasting life. It is surrounded by four lunettes and four quarter-circles.

The monogram is one of the earliest forms of Christograms, formed by superimposing the first two capital letters – chi and rho – of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ (Christos). The outer corners depict four more male togate figures, whilst three of the other panels (or

lunettes) depict hunting scenes and the fourth shows a tree. On stylistic grounds the mosaic has been dated to the 4th century and attributed to the workshop of Durnovaria (modern Dorchester). There is a very similar bipartite room at Frampton villa but this is flanked by an apsed mosaic, the threshold to which bears the only other example of a Chi-Rho symbol to have been discovered in a British mosaic.

The identification of the figure remains in question. If it is a representation of Christ, why is the rest of the mosaic so 'non-Christian' in its choice of subject? Perhaps more puzzling is the placement of Christ on the floor – was it appropriate to have been able to walk over Christ's head? Given that the Chi-Rho symbol was also used as a symbol of good fortune at the time, might the bust rather represent someone else, perhaps a Christianised Roman emperor, such as Constantine the Great or Magnentius, who both had strong associations with the symbol? Certainly the facial features, especially the hair and chin, compare with sculptures of the



emperor Constantine like that here. In the four corners are male figures who have been described as the four winds, the four apostles (Mathew, Mark, Luke and John), or even the four sons of Constantine. The areas decorated by hunting scenes, possibly representing the rich bounty of God, are also areas where people could walk without standing on the figures.



The panel in the smaller room is 5.0x2.4m. It has the central circle, shown below, containing an image of characters from Greek mythology: the ancient Olympian God Bellerophon riding Pegasus and killing the Chimera monster, a fearsome fire-breathing mix of lion, goat, and snake. This has been interpreted as a Christian allegory representing the triumph of good over evil, of Christ defeating the enemy (the Frampton mosaic also has a Bellerophon and Chimera scene in the smaller part of its bipartite room). The two side rectangular panels again feature scenes of hunting.



In 2021, 60 years after the mosaic had been found, English Heritage permitted archaeologists to return, to re-evaluate the site. The excavation was limited to six evaluation trenches, positioned to address two questions: 1) to establish the extent and condition of the underlying archaeological remains; 2) to begin to answer some of the questions regarding the context of the famous mosaic and the building complex to which it belonged. The evaluation revealed that the mosaic room seemed to be part of a larger high-status masonry building in the north-eastern part of the scheduled area. The buildings identified by previous geophysical surveys were Romano-British, but were likely to have had agricultural functions. There is very little evidence for occupation at the site prior to 300, and it seems to have been occupied until the end of the 4th or the early 5th centuries.

In 2022 the team returned for a larger excavation, with 3 trenches positioned from the results of the 2021 archaeological evaluation, as well as the 1964 excavation and 1996 geophysical surveys. Much more is now known about the settlement at Hinton St Mary:

- The room with the Chi-Rho mosaic was probably not connected to other rooms, or buildings.
- To the SE, the room was connected to a boundary wall, which separated two cobbled surfaces.
- A long rectangular building was located some 8m to the SW of the mosaic room. It was c. 34m long, with 6 or 7 rooms of the same size, each 4.7m wide, and a narrow corridor or portico on its SE side facing onto an open yard.
- The end room (room 1) was decorated with a mosaic floor (see below) that had suffered badly from plough damage. Surviving parts include a black-and-white border section, black triangles and a few smaller black, white and red cubes which suggest a central panel and possibly a figurative feature. The adjacent room featured a hard mortar floor.
- Fragments of plaster from rooms 1 and 2 indicate that their walls were painted.
- The excavation confirmed that there was no occupation at the site before c. 300, and the evidence suggests the Roman buildings were constructed and occupied from c. 330-340 and continued until at least the end of the 4th century.

The results show that the previous plan of the buildings must be changed and that thoughts of a Romano-British villa have to be reconsidered. The site is quite late – an elaborate building with the finest mosaics and wall decoration that money could buy. Previously the area comprised open fields and it was occupied only for not much more than 50 years up to the end of the Roman period. It is now considered possible that the building was an early church/chapel, a mausoleum or even part of a monastic community.



These buildings are of very great importance for the study of the Roman period in Britain: they may provide unique evidence for the spread of Christianity in late Roman Britain and, possibly, of one of the earliest Christian communities in Roman Britain.

Finally Richard mentioned other Roman sites that contain Christian references:

1. **Frampton, Dorset:** has a bi-partite mosaic with Chi-Rho symbol. It also features a roundel with Bellerophon that was possibly constructed by same mosaicist as Hinton St Mary. The room had an apse and was likely to be the dining room.
2. **Fifehead Neville, Dorset:** another mosaic arranged to cover the floor of a bi-partite room with a bust of a man. Was this Bacchus or even Christ? It is again likely to have been laid by the same mosaicists based in Durnovaria.
3. **Lullingstone, Kent:** also has an apse featuring Bellerophon and Chimera, plus designs representing the four seasons. On the same estate there is a villa, a mausoleum, a medieval chapel, a bath-house and a granary. There is also an example of a Chi-Rho monogram on painted plaster.

There are no known free-standing churches in Britain from this period. There is a possible building in Silchester that is often considered a church, but it is dated to the late 3rd century which is generally considered to be too early for such a structure, although it is similar to examples in mainland Europe.

Richard explained that the project will continue in 2023 and will focus on two sides of the mosaic building. EDAS enthusiastically offered to provide resources if any are needed.

Andrew Morgan

Plans for the Hinton St Mary Mosaic

In 2000 the British Museum erected their superb new roof to cover the previously open courtyard. As a consequence of this major building work it was decided that the Hinton St Mary mosaic should be moved.

The previously intact mosaic, which was fixed to the museum floor, was levered up and dismantled into pieces by Museum staff. Chris Smith, the former Director of 'Art Pavements' which moved the mosaic from Dorset, was outraged "...an act of vandalism....completely unnecessary ..". The pieces are now stored in boxes in the museum vaults with only the central Christian portrait on display in the Gallery.

The Association for the Study and Preservation of Roman Mosaics has protested and stated that "the mosaic possibly contains the only known representation of Christ in an ancient pavement, it is of unique importance not just in Britain but in the context of the Roman Empire as a whole, and merits being displayed in its entirety.... The full meaning of the pavement can be appreciated only if the whole of it is visible."

There is an on-going discussion about whether the mosaic can be returned to Dorset. In 2019 the British Museum stated that that the mosaic would be returned to the Dorset County Museum, but with a replica for the head, as the original would be "loaned to museums worldwide". This approach raised obvious objections and the issue has yet to be resolved.

Andrew

EDAS Field Trip to Kent 2023

A short note to update you after the item in last month's newsletter and the subsequent 'round robin' email to everyone. I'm pleased to say that we had a good response and are pretty much up to our limit of 24 intrepid explorers. Because of the availability of our helpful contacts, we've moved the trip back a day, so that it will now be Sunday to Sunday: 18th-25th June – centred on Sandwich till Wednesday and then on Maidstone.

If you do decide you'd like to come please let me (Geoff) know and I'll put you on the waiting list – there may be spaces as a few of those who are interested aren't yet sure they can make it.

Geoff Taylor/ Phil D'Eath

EDAS Conference: The Rise and Decline of the Druce Farm Roman Villa 60-650CE

On 26th November EDAS held a conference at Bournemouth University to launch the monograph of the Druce Roman Villa Project. Publication of the monograph is a personal triumph for the author Lilian Ladle, and it has already been recognized as an important contribution to the study of Roman Britain. It is also an impressive achievement for the society, whose members provided the resources and expertise required to complete the field work (approx. 4,884 man days), and several members made significant contributions to the post-excavation tasks and preparation of the monograph.



Miles opening the conference



Lilian and Mark consider future opportunities



Andrew showing possible sources of paint pigments

Thanks are offered to all the speakers, especially our guests: Miles Russell, who opened the conference, and Mark Corney, who provided the final talk, as well as Denise Allen and Clare Randall, who explained the results of their post-excavation work. The other speakers were EDAS members who had worked on the project for many years.

PROGRAMME

1.30 SESSION -1: Miles Russell (Chair)

Welcome	Miles Russell
Background - the project	Andrew Morgan
Early Roman Dorset	Miles Russell
Development of the Villa	Lilian Ladle
Sunken Room (N3)	Andrew Morgan
Roofing Materials	John Bithell
The Mosaics	Phil D'Eath
Painted Plaster	Andrew Morgan

3.00 REFRESHMENTS

3.30 SESSION -2: Mark Corney (Chair)

Pottery and Metal Finds	Lilian Ladle
Coins	Geoff Taylor
Kimmeridge Shale	Sue Cullinane
Glass	Denise Allen
Animal and Human Remains	Clare Randall
Late & Post Roman Britain	Mark Corney
Q&A	All
CLOSE	Lilian Ladle

The conference was a great success judging by the enthusiasm and feedback from the audience, who numbered over 100. Some of the comments:

Sue Pinyoun "Just wanted to thank you both for a fantastic afternoon for the Druce launchwhat a truly great time we had during the days, months and years(!) we all worked together on site - happy, happy days!"

Miles Russell "...it was a great conference and I really enjoyed it. All the papers were really interesting (and, to be honest, I could have happily sat there all day)".

Amanda Ridout "What a wonderful afternoon. We learnt so much and all the experts were fascinating. And a fitting tribute to mother's interest in the project"

Clare Randall "...it was an excellent afternoon. I had something else the following day where a couple of attendees turned up and told me how much they enjoyed it and how impressed they had been".

Diana Hall "That's the second excellent conference EDAS has organised in the last two months, well done." [Note: the other being a Day School held on 8th October at Wimborne St Giles about the All Hallows Project]

It is exactly eleven years since a small group of EDAS members first visited Druce Farm. We had been invited to investigate Roman building material found in the plough soil.... little did we know. Whilst the project work is coming to an end the story will continue as there are many exciting research opportunities that can use material recovered from the site.

Andrew Morgan

VOTE FOR LILIAN

In recognition of the exceptional contribution Lilian has made to UK archaeology she has been nominated for the prestigious Current Archaeology Awards as

2023 ARCHAEOLOGIST OF THE YEAR.



Voting is open to everyone and is very easy; you don't have to subscribe to the magazine. It is available from 1 December to early February at www.archaeology.co.uk/vote.

The winners will be announced at the *Current Archaeology Live!* 2023 conference, to be held at UCL's Institute of Education on 25 February (more information on the conference can be found here: www.archaeology.co.uk/live).

A History of Dorset in 40 Objects: Thanks very much to those few who responded with thoughts on things that they felt represented Dorset's history – people, buildings, sites, landscape features, artefacts, etc. We still need more input from members so we can give a representative list. PLEASE email vanessaa.joseph@gmail.com with your views – a single item is great, a 'top 10' would be brilliant.

The December **CBA Wessex Newsletter** is [HERE](#). This month's issue has, amongst others, articles on the Druce Monograph launch conference, Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum and on Bournemouth Natural Science Society & Museum.

Weblink Highlights November 2022

Not many weblinks this month, although I have had to stop collecting early as we are moving and do not know if we will have the internet up and running before the deadline. As you might imagine we have been busy sorting and packing (and disposing!) so my only comment on this month's weblinks is that it is good to see a Dorset item.

[A comment from Geoff: the Mail Online breathlessly reports that Cleopatra's tomb might have been found. Within days the rather more considered item below it in the list, quoting the same archaeologist, reports that the Mail's 'tunnel that might lead to the tomb' is an aqueduct for the ancient town. You can draw your own conclusions.]

Alan Dedden

November Weblinks – No. 52

Rare Medieval Script Discovered On Stone Carved By Scotland's 'Painted People'

[Rare medieval script discovered on stone carved by Scotland's 'Painted People' | Live Science](#)

Mary, Queen Of Scots Ate Only The Best When Jailed

[Mary, Queen of Scots: jailed monarch ate only the best, papers reveal | British Library | The Guardian](#)

Stunningly Well Preserved Bronze Statues Found In Italy

[Ancient Rome: Stunningly preserved bronze statues found in Italy - BBC News](#)

Earliest Known Canaanite Sentence From 3,700 Years Ago Decoded

[Mystery of ancient language solved as 3,700-year-old sentence decoded | Metro News](#)

Has Cleopatra's Tomb Been Found?

[Has Cleopatra's tomb been FOUND? | Daily Mail Online](#)

Vast Tunnel Found Beneath Ancient Egyptian Temple

[Vast tunnel found beneath ancient Egyptian temple | Live Science](#)

Amateur Historian Finds 600 Year Old Coin In Newfoundland

[Amateur historian discovers 600-year-old English coin in Newfoundland - CNN Style](#)

Celtics Ruler's 2,000-Year-Old Ring Kept In Cupboard For 28 Years

[Celtic ruler's 2,000-year-old ring kept in cupboard for 28 years - BBC News](#)

Ancient Spanish Artefact Could Help Trace Origins Of Basque Language

[Hand of Irulegi: ancient Spanish artefact could help trace origins of Basque language | Spain | The Guardian](#)

Hundreds Of Mummies And Pyramid Of An Unknown Queen Found Near The Valley Of The Kings

[Hundreds of mummies and pyramid of an unknown queen unearthed near King Tut's tomb | Live Science](#)

Celtic Gold Coin Hoard Stolen From German Museum

[Celtic gold coins worth 'several million euros' stolen from German museum | Germany | The Guardian](#)

Dorset Metal Detectorist Finds Medieval Ring Estimated To Be Worth £40k

[Medieval ring worth £40k unearthed by metal detectorist - BBC News](#) (the sale information is [here](#))

Study of coins suggests that Emperor Sponsianus was real

In 1713, a hoard of Roman coins was unearthed in Transylvania, dating from the mid-3rd century. Several depict emperors from the period, including Gordian III and Philip the Arab. However, four of the coins,



gold *aurei*, bear the name 'IMP SPONSIANI' and the image of a previously unknown leader, Sponsianus, who is otherwise unattested in Roman sources. Dispersed among various collections across Europe over the centuries, the coins were considered the work of sophisticated fraudsters, but a recent analysis suggests that the coins are indeed authentic, dating from the Crisis of the Third Century.

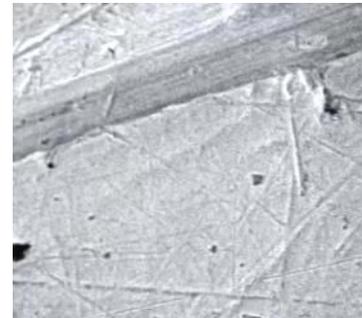
The work was led by Professor Paul Pearson, of University College London, who gained access to a coin kept in the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow after corresponding with Jesper Ericsson, the numismatics curator. The analysis was initially quite simplistic in scope, simply considering that the gold coin is unusually heavy (10.02g) compared to the coin of Philip (4.30g). If the find were indeed a forgery, its weight would make the coin valuable for the gold alone. "If it's a forgery, that's a big outlay to start with," stated Pearson.

Further examination at high magnification found that the coins showed similar patterns of wear and tear to genuine coins, which suggests that they had been in circulation for several years. Minerals on the surface of the coins were consistent with them having been buried for an extended period. Overall, Pearson concluded that the coin of Sponsianus is genuine.

Who was this mysterious emperor? It is important to examine the geopolitical context of Roman Dacia during the mid-3rd century AD when Gordian and Philip flourished. Even from the time of Trajan, Rome's hold on its territory north of the Danube had always been precarious.



By the 240s the Goths, with their Carpien and Scythian allies, were well on the way towards establishing their dominance in the Roman province. There was also a lack of stability in the empire as a whole, with plagues and an economic crisis being compounded by a series of popular generals raising the standard of revolt and seeking power in Rome.



The Danubian provinces were fertile recruiting ground for the Roman legions. It is unsurprising that many usurpers and potential usurpers were of Romanized Daco-Thracian extraction. One would-be usurper, Aureolus, grew up as a herdsman in Dacia before becoming the *phronistes*, or Master of the Imperial Horses, for Emperor Gallienus in the 260s. It is speculated that his subsequent rebellion against Gallienus stemmed from his resentment of the Dacian garrison being withdrawn from the province to better protect Italy. This would imply that there may have been regional tendencies in the empire, as Rome's control became increasingly tenuous.

Sponsianus may have held similar sentiments. Gold mining was an important industry in Dacia, with Ampellum (Zlatna) and nearby Alburnus Maior (Roşia Montană) being home to important mines that are still rich today. The large coins may have served to reassure a Romanized population that lived in a collapsing geopolitical situation. While Emperor Aurelian is traditionally understood to have withdrawn the Roman administration from Dacia during AD 272-273, the raising of inscribed monuments in the province had already virtually ceased by AD 260.



The stylistic issues with the *aurei* support a post-260 origin, as the province likely suffered from a brain drain of skilled artisans who fled south into Moesia. Sponsianus likely flourished during this period, as a local post-Roman warlord, a Daco-Roman Syagrius (northern Gaul) or Ambrosius Aurelianus (Britain) without anyone to preserve the tale of his deeds. It is likely that, like Aureolus, he too failed, unable to protect the military and civilian population of Dacia from the turmoil that would engulf the rest of the empire over the next couple of centuries.

Darius Robey



Ancient China – the later Zhou

We left the previous article at the end of the Eastern Zhou 'Spring and Autumn Period' in 481 BCE. The Zhou territory had split into around 150 statelets, conducting constant minor wars among themselves. The Zhou kings had long lost temporal power, but even their ritual and spiritual authority as the 'Sons of Heaven' was being undermined as the notion spread that the Ancestors and Heaven were not supremely powerful. The demands of conflict and the increasing freedom from centralised spiritual authority had, though, led to improvements in technology, increasing artistic achievements and developments in philosophical and spiritual thought.

These developments continued more strongly in the succeeding period of the 'Warring States'. The view spread that reliance could no longer solely be placed on the proper performance of religious practices; the belief that Humankind was chiefly responsible for its own destiny started to take hold. And it was these notions that began to give rise to the subsequent humanist, religious and temporal movements characterising the Chinese Axial Age – a period when broad changes in religious and philosophical thought occurred in a variety of locations, not just in China.

The later Warring States Period, saw the gradual consolidation of the large number of statelets into seven competing kingdoms, continually at war with each other. Large, permanent, standing armies developed, warfare became endemic, quite non-ritualised, widespread, cruel and ruthless. At the same time, there were great advances in farming techniques and irrigation. This inevitably resulted in increased population pressures. And again, as so often happens in history, an era of warfare and disruption was coupled with an era of philosophic and artistic brilliance, and of technological achievement.

The Warring States 260 BCE



Whilst, initially, most weapons were still of bronze, iron was increasingly being used. The crossbow, battering rams and catapults all became far more effective and efficient; a museum in China even has the mechanism of the first known repeating crossbow, found in a 4th century BCE tomb. The Zhao developed cavalry warfare, particularly as a response to invasions on horseback from the nomadic peoples to the north. This, too, was the period of prototypes for the Great Wall, as shown on the map – defences against northern tribes.

Warring States weapons: Gold and silver inlaid crossbow fitting (British Museum); crossbow and 'ballista' bolts; model trebuchet (Military Museum of China); iron and bronze swords.



Lacquerware, often including gold and silver inlay, became finely developed, whilst ornamental jade carvings displayed some of the finest craftsmanship. The range of applied decoration for the first time included pictorial subjects, such as hunting scenes, chariots and horsemen. Pottery had continued Shang traditions, but expanded greatly in the variety of shapes and finishes during the Warring States period.

As well as the improvements in agriculture, the communication system was also greatly improved through the construction of new roads and canals. Coinage had developed from the use of cowrie shells in the Shang Dynasty, through cast bronze in the shape of spades and other tools. By the time of the Warring States, some of the states were using 'knife money' but ring shaped money then developed.



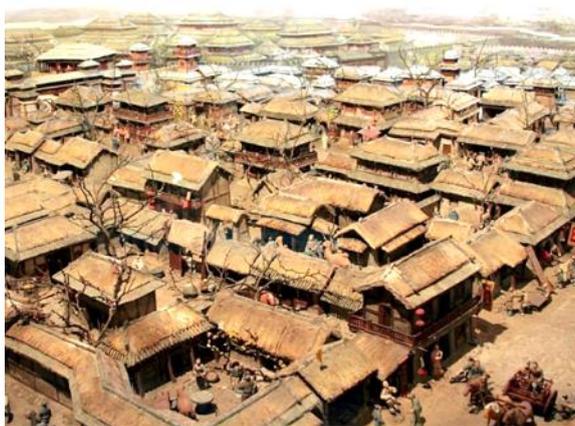
Warring States artistic achievements:

- Lacquerware painting from a tomb, dated to 316 BCE
- Detail of a large inlaid faceted bronze jar, sold at Christies in March 2022 for \$2.76m
- Knotted dragon pendant, 3rdC BCE (Metropolitan Museum of Art)
- Painted pottery *dou* vessel (Luoyang Museum)



However, what we would recognise as coins didn't come until the succeeding dynasty. The Chinese writing system developed further from its fairly primitive beginnings in the Shang period, and this was the time when chopsticks came into use. This was a time when many of the things we see as essentially Chinese developed or were developing, including improvements in medicine (perhaps vital with the constant warfare!). For example, Bian Que developed his four principles of diagnosis – look, listen, question, and feel the pulse – still widely used today and the basis for traditional Chinese medicine.

Trade was increasing but, as before, there was still a fairly limited mercantile economy in China. New towns were growing related more to economic priorities, although the ancient Chinese cities hadn't been founded for economic reasons but around the temples devoted to the ancestors. This was certainly the case for Zhengzhou, one of the Zhou capitals, of which this is a reconstruction based on archaeological evidence. Descriptions of building archaeology look and sound little different to the preceding period, with one or sometimes two stories mainly of wood (though Laozi mentions a 9-storey tower).



But the defining feature of the Eastern Zhou period was that the philosophical and religious foundations of all later Chinese society were laid down, much in the same way as ancient Greek philosophy (which was pretty much contemporaneous) laid the foundations of Western Society. In this Chinese Axial Age, roughly 600-221 BCE, three doctrines became paramount. Confucianism and Daoism both sought to establish ways of achieving harmony against a background of social and cultural change, whilst Legalism instead sought a method of complete political and social control.

The greatest of all the ancient Chinese philosophers was undoubtedly Confucius (Kong Fuzi) 551- 479 BCE. His doctrines were initially set out in the *Analects* – essentially practical and to an extent humanist. Sons should honour their fathers, people should be loyal, truthful, polite and humane, and treat others as you would wish them to treat you. Rulers should be attuned to Heaven's Mandate and rule by moral example; laws and punishments only invite evasion or worse. In a sense it was an idealistic doctrine

brought about by the violence and anarchy of the times. But it was (and still is) a doctrine conducive to a society untrammelled by the demands of a jealous god or gods!

The tomb of Confucius in Qufu, Shandong Province. There are no contemporary portraits of him.

There is little in the *Analects* about death, the afterlife or gods. But Confucius did not reject religion; for him sacrifice and the rituals should be properly performed to ensure a harmonious existence and continued moral behaviour. But Confucius's emphasis is always on the importance of ritual (Li), precedent and doing the correct and righteous thing (Yi), goodness and chivalrousness (Ren), forgiveness or fairness (Shu) and to conform with the 'Dao', the universal law, or the universe itself.

For Confucius, 'the Way' was the way of tradition and the past. Confucianism is about community and how to live in harmony, so different from the Greek concept which has dominated Western culture, where a much greater emphasis is placed on the individual and then, through Christianity, the individual's relationship with God.

Daoism is an older philosophy than Confucianism, and was initially encapsulated in a text known as the *Daodejing*, purportedly written by Laozi (also written as 'Lao-Tze') in the 6th century BCE, although he is a semi-legendary figure who some historians believe was active two centuries later. The basic concept of early Daoism was withdrawal from the world; the ideal was to live in accordance with Nature, not man-made law. Fundamental Daoism brought everything down to a kind of nihilism – an anarchist view that if there was no government then one could be happy. The Daoists had a philosophy of inaction: human moral ideas are a reflection of human depravity; for Daoists Confucian statements of the rules of propriety are really a reflection of moral disorder.



A statue of Laozi at the foot of Mount Qingyuan, Fujian.

Confucianism and Daoism might seem diametrically opposed, yet they are complementary – there is a touch of Yin Yang here. Both sought for people to live in harmony, but by different avenues. Daoism was sympathetic to the common people's belief in the unseen spirits of nature, but the objective of both doctrines was to bring life into harmony with the 'laws of the universe'. The Dao is seen as the source of everything, the ultimate principal underlying reality; quite different from the Abrahamic view of God, it is a cosmic force rather than a supernatural personality. Daoism is an attempt to understand the nature of reality, the working of the natural environment.

At this time there were a large number of schools of philosophy known as 'The Hundred Schools of Thought'. Some, like Mencius, were more attuned to the development of Confucianism, others more attuned to Daoism and the mystical side of life, like Zhuangzi. Some, such as Mo Di, were attuned to the equivalent of ancient Greek rationalism; although there is no evidence of any direct contact between China and Greece at this time, there may well have been indirect connections, especially through India.

The third main, and quite different, philosophy of the period was that of the Legalists. Shang Yang, c. 350 BCE, introduced the concept of Legalism into the state of Qin. The basic concept, later expounded as a philosophy by Han Fie in Qin, was that it was everyone's duty to live and work for the ruler and the benefit of the state. People were not to think for themselves, but blindly obey and work to enhance the state. But more of this historical experiment, the Qin state and Legalism's profound effects on it, next time, and of the events leading up to the First Emperor, Shih Huang Di.

Neil Meldrum/Geoff Taylor

View from Above No. 49: Casterley Camp

*Photo by Sue
Newman
and Jo Crane*



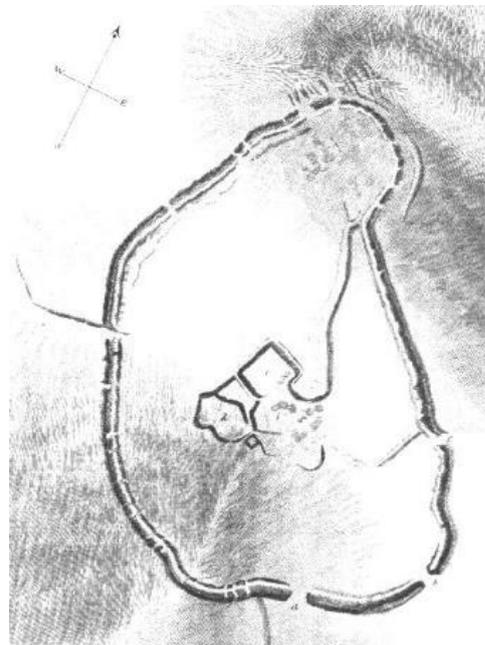
Casterley Camp was mentioned in Jo's talk to EDAS in January 2018 as showing the marks of occupation, well into the Roman period. They're revealed by the fairly rare differential thawing of different features, even though the interior was ploughed up to 2006.

The 'camp', an incomplete Iron Age univallate hillfort, is near Upavon in Wiltshire, 11km north of Stonehenge. It's actually on the Avebury to Stonehenge long distance path.

Prior to the hillfort being built there was clearly activity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age, with finds including a polished flint axe head, a hammerstone and 4 burials.

A series of enclosures within the 25ha (62 acres) hillfort date from the Late Iron Age, and may have been associated with stock control, though religious functions have also been suggested. Its location and relatively small ditch and banks (there are traces on both sides of the ditch) have given rise to the view that its function wasn't defensive. However, Iron Age finds suggest that occupation was of relatively high status.

The plan shown was drawn by Sir Richard Colt Hoare in 1810, alongside excavations by William Cunnington. His excavations, and later work, identified an area of Romano-British occupation. Finds there included samian and New Forest wares, coins from Claudius to Constantine I and bronze artefacts, such as pins and tweezers.



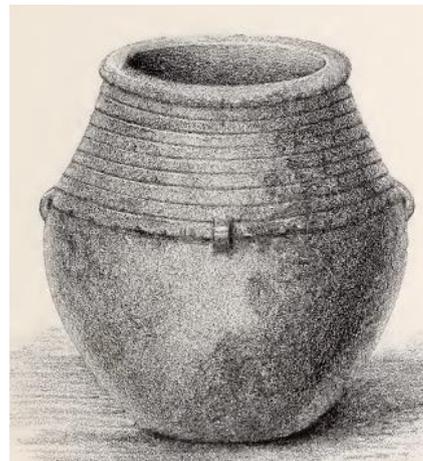
Geoff Taylor/Jo Crane

From the Archives 5

Volume V of the Proceedings was apparently published in 1884, though I've not been able to find out why two years were missed.

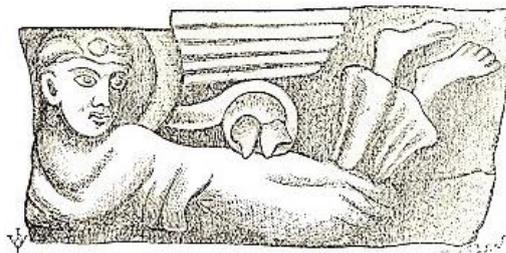
As you might imagine, the writing reflects attitudes we would often find abhorrent today, such as "... the English, with all their colonising and civilising energy, have little or no influence over the native races, and whenever their power is suspended from any cause, a retrograde step is the result." Similarly, the approach to archaeological investigations leaves a great deal to be desired compared with now, for example in the "opening of barrows", though the recording of location and finds does appear to be improving slowly.

An article in this edition covers records of some Dorset barrow excavations going back almost a century, with records generally becoming more extensive as time passes. It does, though, seem to be 'two steps forward and one back'. Three barrows excavated not long before could probably be identified from the description, but details of the fourth are insufficient, whilst two barrows from four opened elsewhere are 'dismissed without notice'. There are, though, reasonable descriptions and good drawings of the different types of urn, though sizes are unclear, as well as fair details of the human remains found. It does seem that knowledge about the barrows and their contents is growing, so perhaps the destruction has to be seen as the price to be paid to learn more.



In the previous article in this series I was somewhat scathing about Rev. William Barnes, known for his poems in Dorset dialect and whose statue stands outside St. Peter's Church in Dorchester. A lack of rigour in checking basic facts and a rather fanciful approach in two articles in the 4th Proceedings undermined his reputation as very knowledgeable about the past. In fact, reading his 5 papers in this volume of the Proceedings leads me to think that I wasn't scathing enough (which isn't to comment on his linguistic skills and other accomplishments). In essence, he seems to have taken ancient legends completely at face value, used similarities to Welsh words as the basis for interpreting Roman and later place names and events, and mixing up different periods. One example is taking the legends of the early Welsh ruler Moelmud as the basis for stating that Roman roads were actually much earlier routes (of course, some were). A pity, as it is clear that he had wide knowledge in a variety of subjects.

In contrast to Barnes' poorly set out articles is one by J.O. Westwood concerning a sculptured stone of an angel in St Michael's church at Winterborne Steepleton (modern usage puts a "u" in Winterborne, but not for villages further east along the valley like Winterborne Monkton). He describes and pictures the carving, clearly builds up evidence of similar sculptures and illustrations with the reasons for their dating, then concludes that it remains from the earlier Saxon church, dating it to the late 10th or early 11th centuries. The Royal Commission dated it to the first half of the 11th century.



Finally, there are details about the 1685 Monmouth Rebellion 'rebels' which, it seems, weren't known in 1884. The author bought a manuscript at auction in Dorchester, almost by accident, which proved to contain information about 2,611 people suspected of involvement in the rebellion and who were presented at the Assizes in Dorchester, Taunton and Exeter. The document, a copy of a 'Presentment' (formal presentation of information to a court), wasn't held by the British Museum despite attempts to obtain the original or a copy, but the author kindly donated it to the nation; I imagine it will now be in the British Library. Later accounts presumably allow for this information, so I won't repeat it here, but if anyone is particularly interested I can send you a copy of the article.

Geoff Taylor

Ravensworth Castle

Sue Elmer provided me (Geoff) with what I thought was an interesting article from the Facebook page of Yorkshire Archaeological Aerial Mapping to show what sophisticated aerial scanning techniques can do to help reveal past landscapes and sites. The problem is that there are two Ravensworth Castles, and it was all too easy to confuse them.

The first one is in Tyne and Wear, on the western outskirts of Gateshead. It seems to have first been built in the 12th century (probably called Ravenshelm) and subsequently rebuilt in stone, suggesting the site was important and the owner wealthy. Much later it was turned into a mansion which retained only a couple of the castle towers and a connecting length of curtain wall. This fell into ruin in the 20th century, partly due to the ground sinking into the workings of the huge coalfield below it. One claim to fame is that it was owned by the Liddell family, and Charles Dodgson (aka Lewis Carroll of course) took a photograph of Alice Liddell there around 1860 when she would have been about 8 years old. It seems odd that such a strong castle should have been built only 3 miles from the new castle in Newcastle, whose stone keep was constructed in the 1170s.



But that's all off the point as the mapping work was actually done on Ravensworth Castle in North Yorkshire (perhaps the clue was in the name of the mapping company!), close to the border with County Durham. This is another slight puzzle, as this motte and bailey castle is only 4½ miles from the large Norman castle on the bluffs over the River Swale at Richmond (itself not obviously guarding very much). It's suggested that this was "a disputed border area between Yorkshire and the North", but exactly when that was is uncertain as, indeed, is much of the history of the site.

The original castle was built in the 11th century, presumably with wooden buildings, although the owner isn't recorded. He must have been fairly important, or perhaps the area provided good hunting, since King John is recorded as visiting in 1201. In the 14th century it was owned by the Fitzhughs, and it seems likely that they replaced any remaining timber buildings with the local sandstone. It is also likely that, late in that century, the First Baron Fitzhugh developed the marshy area to the north of the castle into a pleasure garden. He certainly enclosed 200 acres in 1391 to create a park.



The castle site was well defended by surrounding marshy ground, which was developed into a deep and wide moat. The only access was via a causeway, now usually less than obvious in the overgrown grounds. The gatehouse guarding the entrance was substantial and, in fact, is the main remaining structure shown in the photograph. The aerial photograph after the hot, dry period this year does serve to make the gatehouse and likely causeway fairly clear (this and the following images are 'Credit: YAA Mapping'). Little or nothing seems to be left of the keep, chapel with a bell tower and strong curtain walls that are known to have been there, though the remains of buildings are clear in the photograph.

The castle started to be dismantled in the 16th century, with the stone used for nearby buildings. JMW Turner visited in 1816 and made 3 sketches, which can be seen on the Tate Gallery's site but are rather too faint to reproduce here. That summer was one of the wettest on record, which presumably deterred Turner from

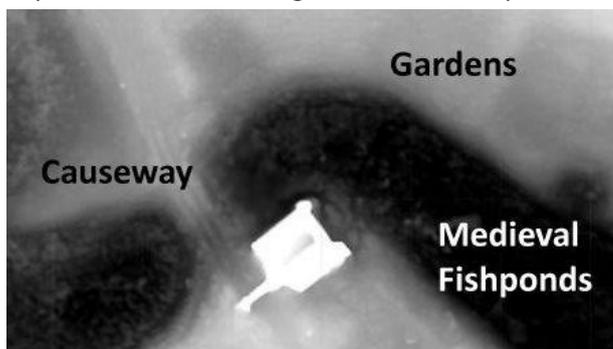


doing more work or painting any of the scenes, though the sketches do show that the ruins looked much the same then as now.

The whole site is Scheduled and the remains Listed Grade I, but the masonry is in poor condition and the site is classified as 'At Risk'. The following is taken directly from YAA Mapping's information:



Luckily the owners wish to remedy the issues and YAA were asked to fly a full site survey in summer 2022, particularly of the tops of the surviving masonry. They used the opportunity to fly a full spectral range of techniques and their images are a unique combination of Digital Elevation Models (DEM), Thermal, Differential Reflection and other trickery. "I can confidently say that this is the most impressive series of images we have ever produced:



from the ornamental gardens emerging from the undergrowth to the causewayed entrance, to the curtain wall – long gone but revealed by this combination of imaging techniques. We can see the gardens, the fishponds, the buildings and the walls; defences such as wall towers are again revealed [and] the more mundane domestic buildings."

Sue Elmer/Geoff Taylor

EDAS PROGRAMME

Unless otherwise stated, and subject to any coronavirus restrictions, lectures are from 7:30 at St Catherine's Church Hall, Lewens Lane, Wimborne, BH21 1LE.

2022			
Wed 14 th December	Lecture	Mike Gill	Redefining the Neolithic Map: Recent work on Cranborne Chase and Avon Valley long barrows
2023			
Wed 11 th January	Lecture	Julian Richards	The last wild Britain: the Mesolithic people at Springhead
Wed 8 th February	Lecture	Neil Meldrum	Ancient China
Wed 8 th March	AGM & lecture	To be announced	Subject tbd – recent EDAS work
Wed 12 th April	Lecture	Peter Cox	40 years of archaeology in Dorset
Wed 10 th May	Lecture	Clare Randall	The manor of Putton and the potential of medieval archaeology in Dorset

DISTRICT DIARY

2022

Wed 7th December	The last wild Britain: Mesolithic people at Springhead	Wareham Society	Julian Richards
Thu 15th December	Hengistbury Head: From the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age	AVAS	Hayden Scott-Pratt

2023

Wed 18th January	Meyer: a rebel with a cause	Wareham Society	Graham Knott
Thu 19th January	Bronze Age - Iron Age houses	Blandford Society	Olivia Britter
Thu 19th January	Experimental Health: Cræfting a Better Wellbeing	AVAS	Megan Russell
Wed 15th February	Rockbourne Roman Villa	Wareham Society	John Smith
Thu 16th February	Predicting the location of Neolithic Sites	Blandford Society	Alex ...
Wed 15th March	Update on Hadrian's Wall	Wareham Society	Mark Corney
Thu 16th March	Medieval ...	Blandford Society	Cindy ...
Thu 16th March	Impacts of environmental/ climate change on human communities over 800,000 yrs	AVAS	Alex Brown and Sander Aerts
Wed 19th April	What's in a name? A history of Wareham through street names	Wareham Society	Lilian Ladle
Thu 20th April	The Congresbury Kiln Assemblage.	AVAS	Amy Thorp
Thu 20th April	Archaeology and Mental Health	Blandford Society	Megan Russel
Wed 17th May	Dorset Churches	Wareham Society	Gordon Le Pard

Archaeology Societies

- **Avon Valley Archaeological Society:** <http://www.avas.org.uk/>
Meetings at Ibsley Village Hall, BH24 3NL (<https://ibshleyhall.co.uk/>), 7:30pm 3rd Thursday of month except June, July & August. Visitors £3.50; membership £10 pa.
- **Blandford Museum Archaeology Group:**
<https://blandfordtownmuseum.org.uk/groups-and-projects/archaeology-group/>
Meetings normally 7:30pm 3rd Thursday of each month September to May at Blandford Parish Centre, The Tabernacle, DT11 7DW. Visitors £3; membership £10 pa.
- **Bournemouth Natural Sciences Society:** <http://bnss.org.uk>
Events at 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth BN1 3NS; lectures Tuesday 7:30pm/Saturday 2:30pm.
- **The Christchurch Antiquarians:** <https://christchurchantiquarians.wordpress.com/>
No lecture programme but involved in practical archaeology projects. Membership £10 pa.
- **Dorset Natural History & Archaeology Society:** <http://www.dorsetcountymuseum.org/events>
Events at various locations in Dorchester, usually ticketed
- **Wareham and District Archaeology & Local History Society:** Their website isn't updated but they are on the Wareham Chimes site [here](#), or contact Karen Brown at karen.brown68@btinternet.com. Meetings at Furzebrook Village Hall, BH20 5AR, normally 7:30pm 3rd Wednesday of each month except July & August. Visitors welcome for £3; membership £10 pa.