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Editorial Notes

THE lure of buried treasure is no new thing. We have all been thrilled by stories of pirates' hoards and the like, and of the elusive scrap of paper that recorded where the pieces of eight or the jewels were buried. Probably the last thing an excavator would expect to find would be a clue to hoards buried nearly two thousand years ago; it is just too bad that when one such actually is found it should turn out to be a delusion. Here is the sad Story of the Two Copper Rolls found in 1952 in a cave in the Desert of Judah.¹



They were found by an expedition organized by Palestinian archaeologists digging in the famous Qumran caves which produced the scrolls of biblical texts, and consisted of two rolls whose metal had all been converted into brittle oxide. After prolonged experiments it was decided that, as they could not be unrolled, they should be cut into strips with a rotary saw of the type used to split pen points. The operation was successful, and no part of the text was lost in the process. The work was carried out by Professor H. Wright Baker, of the Manchester College of Technology, and the strips have now been placed in the Jordan Museum at Amman. The document is dated by the character of the writing to about the middle of the first century of the Christian era. It contains a list of about sixty treasures and describes where they are hidden. The caches are scattered all over Palestine, but chiefly in Judaea and more particularly in Jerusalem, in the Temple precincts and in the cemetery of the Kedron Valley. They are supposed to have been deposited in cisterns, pools, tombs, cairns and such-like places. Sometimes the sites are those traditionally associated with well-known persons, such as the cairn of Achan who was stoned in the Valley of Achor.



These are typical descriptions: 'In the large cistern which is in the Court of the Peristyle, in a recess at the bottom of it, hidden in a hole opposite the upper opening: 900 talents'. 'At Zadok's tomb underneath the pilaster in the exedra: a vessel of incense in pine wood, and a vessel of incense in cassia wood'. The last item describes the position, in a hole near Zadok's tomb, of 'a copy of this document with explanations, measurements, and all details'. The total amount of the treasures exceeds 6,000 talents, equivalent to more than 200 tons of silver and gold! It goes without saying that the document is not a

¹ Based upon an article in the *Biblical Archaeologist* for September, 1956, by J. T. Milik, by kind permission of the Editors.

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historical record but belongs rather to the genre of folklore. It is best understood as a summary of popular traditions set down by a semi-literate scribe—a member probably of the group of hermits who lived in the caves nearby and presumably associated with the Essene community. The document is unlikely to be in any sense Essene or official, but a private effort, perhaps the work of a crank. Parallels of the same or a later date are known to scholars. Though its historical value is negligible its linguistic interest is regarded as considerable. To the account summarized above we would add that traditions of buried treasure are not confined to Palestine but occur all over the world, particularly in relation to ancient tombs. They probably arose from the fact that in prehistoric and even later times (at Sutton Hoo for instance) intrinsically valuable goods *were* buried with the dead, and no doubt occasionally dug up by treasure-hunters, who have ruined thousands of ancient sites by their random diggings.



To go to an entirely different subject:—A discussion has arisen about those volumes of essays called, in the country of their origin, Festschriften. These are printed and presented to eminent scholars by their colleagues, usually on their sixty-fifth or subsequent birthdays. Having himself been honoured by the presentation of a Festschrift, the writer of these Notes is naturally somewhat handicapped in the discussion; but he hastens to say that, like others of his colleagues, he regards it as the highest honour that a scholar can receive, for it is given for merit by those best able to judge of it. The trouble is that for many reasons the contents of Festschriften are sometimes unknown to those who might profit by them. They are a pleasant way of showing honour to a scholar of eminence and standing, and they give him great pleasure. On the other hand, in these days of costly printing, their publication should be carefully considered not only from the financial point of view but also for their contents. Often the volume becomes a miscellaneous collection of essays of very varying quality about a large variety of subjects with no kind of unity. Indeed the very merits of the recipient—his wide range of interests—may contribute to this lack of unity; for contributors' interests will also range widely. Essays that are valuable in themselves are apt to become buried and forgotten because they appear in isolation from their normal context, the relevant learned periodical. But a practice is coming into fashion which avoids this danger; it consists in dedicating a particular volume of a periodical or journal to a scholar. The Festschrift offered to Professor Childe last year, for instance, was a regular (but rather bigger) number of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*. Thus unity of subject is obtained and the cost of publication very considerably reduced. The bibliographer then knows where to look for a paper, and librarians are saved from the troublesome business of classifying miscellanea.



If this is not possible, then surely the volume offered should be strictly confined to one subject, however widely treated, and that subject should be related to the known interests of the scholar concerned. The size and cost of the volume should be kept within reasonable limits. The volume recently offered to Miss Hetty Goldman is an example of this kind of Festschrift. It is called *The Aegean and the Near East*, is published by J. J. Augustin (Locust Valley, New York, 10 dollars), and consists of twenty-two essays all falling within the scope indicated by the title, and a bibliography of Miss Goldman's writings. The subject of Festschriften has been fully discussed and the pros and cons admirably stated, with detailed statistics, by Dorothy Rounds and Sterling Dow in the *Harvard Library Bulletin* (Vol. viii, 1954, 283–94).

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ANTIQUITY is read by many librarians; we therefore take the opportunity of asking them if they have ever come across a book, regarded as lost, that would be of great historical interest if it could be found. It is about the Canary Islands and was published at Caen by Lancelot de Maloisel in 1632 (see De la Roncière, *Découverte de l'Afrique au Moyen Age*, Cairo, 1925, ii, 3, note 2). It appears that these islands were re-discovered in 1312 by some shipwrecked sailors coming from Cherbourg. They were commanded by a Genoese serving under France who had changed his name from Lanzeroto Malocello to Lancelot Maloisel. The island of Lanzerote was called after him. In 1632 the family, then firmly established as Norman squires and still bearing the name of Maloisel, printed at Caen 'a little discourse claiming for Lancelot, rather than for that other Norman, Jean de Béthen-court, the distinction of being the first conqueror of the Canaries'. Lancelot was said to have ruled [Lanzerote ?] for twenty years, after which he was turned out by a revolt of the islanders.



Librarians and all our other readers are reminded that copies of the General Index of ANTIQUITY, vols. 1 to 25 (1927-51), are still available and may be obtained from the Publisher (H. W. Edwards, Ashmore Green, Newbury, Berks, England) on receipt of a cheque or notes for £2 10s. (\$7.50). This Index is in fact rather more than just an Index, for it covers a period of great archaeological progress, rich in research and discoveries, many of which were duly recorded and discussed at the time in ANTIQUITY. The illustrations are regularly used by writers of books and articles, who will find this Index useful for quickly locating any they may be in need of. The hundreds of reviews of books, indexed separately, will be found invaluable by bibliographers and students generally. The Index is in fact also an epitome of a period and a useful book of reference.



We are asked by the Keeper of the Museum of English Rural Life (7 Shinfield Road, Reading, Berks., England) to say that he is trying to locate all known examples of Roman and Early Iron Age ploughshares and coulter, and would be glad to have details of them. To make this easier a form will be supplied, giving headings (with explanatory diagrams) of the information required. Research on the subject is being done by Mr F. A. Aberg of the Museum, and the results of this enquiry will also be sent to the International Secretariat on the History of Agricultural Implements, which is located in Copenhagen.



The Editor receives many letters of enquiry from readers of ANTIQUITY and others. He always tries to answer these to the best of his ability, whether they are about archaeological matters, or about choosing a career, or the best place to go for a holiday. It helps considerably if a stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed, and he might add that this is essential when manuscripts of proposed articles are sent to him. We would remind our readers that ANTIQUITY has not the advantage of a large staff; indeed it has no staff except the Editor and Publisher. One of the ways in which our readers can help is by sending in their subscriptions when they are due, which is now. Subscription forms are only inserted in the copies of those subscribers who have not yet paid them; so if there is one in this number it means that you have not yet paid. The sending out of reminders consumes much time and money, which would be better employed. Thank you!