Antiquity

VOL. LIV No. 212 NOVEMBER 1980

Editorial

In our last issue we included a statement on an inserted sheet which we now repeat. It said: 'We much regret to give notice that inflation and especially the mounting costs of printing, block-making, postage and ancillary activities have compelled us, most reluctantly, to put up the price of ANTIQUITY so that, from 1 January 1981, it will be £12.00 or $35.00 for the annual subscription, and £5 or $12.50 for a single copy. We shall explain in detail the need for this increase in the November Editorial. Meanwhile subscribers who pay by Banker's Order are being advised individually by post of the new rates, and we much hope that they will return the new orders in good time for them to be processed. We should like to thank you for your past support and trust that despite the higher charges you will continue to find ANTIQUITY indispensable.'

Now that we come to write our November Editorial there is little more to be said. When this journal was founded by Crawford in 1927 the annual cost of the four issues was £1.00. The postage on a letter was one and a half old pence; it is now twelve pence and is said to be going up. It looks as though our new subscription of £12.00 reflects accurately the devaluation of the real value of money over the last half-century. We manage to pack a great deal into an issue, and the three issues of one year contain just under a quarter of a million words, the equivalent of six volumes in the *Ancient Peoples and Places* series which would now cost more than £50. The subscriber to ANTIQUITY at the new rates is not doing too badly, and we will see that he is given the best possible value for his money. All of us, as we grow older and our real money shrinks, must make economies, and subscriptions to journals and learned societies, and the friends of this and that museum, come soon under our axe. We know that we shall lose subscribers when they hear of our new rates; but every year we gain new subscribers. We have faith in the future and know that no serious archaeologist, and no archaeological museum or library, can afford to be without ANTIQUITY.

Tributes have been paid to the biological work of Dr Francis C. Fraser in notices in *The Times*, *The Proceedings of the Royal Society*, and the *Journal of Zoology*. It is fitting that an appreciation of Fraser's contribution to the study of animal remains from archaeological sites should be made in these pages. Dr Juliet Clutton-Brock, who was a student working with him, writes:

Dr Fraser joined the staff of the British Museum (Natural History) in 1933 and worked in the Osteology Room until he retired in 1969, except for a seven-year period when he was Keeper of Zoology. From the end of the war until 1967 Fraser identified and wrote reports on the animal remains from many of the most important excavations carried out in Britain at that time. These included Star Carr, Thatcham, Staple Howe and Hod Hill. Although his main interests and research work lay with cetology (the study of whales), Fraser was always fully aware of the value of animal remains in archaeology, and in 1946 was instrumental in obtaining, for the Museum, Dr Wilfrid Jackson's foundation collections of animal bones from pre-war excavations.

Between 1955 and 1967 Dr Fraser, with the help of Judith King, examined animal remains from more than 50 sites excavated by the then Ministry of Public Buildings and Works (now the Department of the Environment), and he answered some hundreds of queries from archaeologists and students (of whom I was one) on all aspects of osteology. Dr Fraser was a brilliant functional anatomist who could put life into any bit of old bone.

His friends and colleagues were shocked and saddened by the news of the sudden death of Ole Klindt-Jensen on 13 June at the early age of 62. He had just finished a heavy day's work in the Moesgaard Institute in Jutland which he had created and brought to such success. He waved goodbye to his staff and drove off to his home in

Aarhus. Two minutes later and before he had got to the main road, he had had a heart attack and was dead before his car crashed into one of the fine trees that line the road west from the Institute.

Brought up in Bornholm, which he loved, and where he did very extensive archaeological work, he was a student in the University of Copenhagen and his early research work was on Denmark during Roman times. He was for 15 years museum-inspector in the National Museum at Copenhagen, working under Brønsted; these two men got on very well together. His *Foreign influences in Denmark's Early Iron Age* was published in 1950, his *Keltisk Tradition i Romersk Jernalder* in 1952, and his *Bronzekedelen fra Brå* in 1953; these three books were reviewed by the present Editor in this journal (*Antiquity*, XXIX, 1955, 137–40) where they were referred to as 'scholarly, well-written and excellently illustrated'. In 1961, when Glob succeeded Brøndsted as Director of the National Museum, Klindt-Jensen went to succeed Glob as Professor of Northern Archaeology and European Prehistory at Aarhus. Glob had already proposed that the lovely eighteenth-century chateau/farm of Moesgaard should become a centre for archaeological and ethnographical studies. It was left to Klindt-Jensen to turn this proposal into fact, and to create the Institute for Prehistory, Medieval Archaeology, Ethnography and Social Anthropology, which together with the University Museum, which was moved out from the city of Aarhus, made Moesgaard one of the best and most interesting centres of archaeological activity in northern Europe. Moesgaard will for ever be a memorial to Klindt-Jensen, and we, who knew him so well, will remember a kind, busy, imperturbable, scholarly, distinguished man who could always set his cares aside and walk down through the woods to the Skovmølle Kro (which the Institute owned) and, over snaps and *aeggekage*, survey the world archaeological scene with knowledge, generous interest and warm sympathy.

He had been honoured in his own country by being made a Knight of the Dannebrog, and was awarded an OBE by the British Government—the official citation was published only just two days before his death. In 1966 he was made Secretary-General of the Congress of Prehistoric and Protohistoric Sciences and carried out his job with great efficiency in the Nice Congress in 1976. He had for the last few years been heavily involved in the arrangements for the Mexico Congress in 1981: we had been with him at Zeist for the inter-congress meeting of the Permanent Committee, and, at his instigation, had organized the meeting of the Comité Exécutif in Cambridge in June. It was a few days before he was setting out for that meeting that he died.

He shared with us a great interest in the history of archaeology and we were able to persuade him to write his *History of Scandinavian archaeology* which sets out, in a clear way, the great achievement of the northern nations in the development of prehistory. Together we planned a conference on the history of archaeology and this happened in Aarhus in 1978 as part of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the University of Aarhus. The papers and discussions are being published by Thames and Hudson under the title of *Towards a history of archaeology*. They were being edited, as the conference was organized, by Klindt-Jensen and ourself, but now he can no longer be involved it is proposed to dedicate the book to his memory. We ourself have taken the initiative of suggesting to Professor Wandel, Rector of Aarhus University, that there should be established a Klindt-Jensen Memorial Lecture in Archaeology and Ancient History, and this idea is being canvassed with approval.

The 1981 Mexico Congress will, we hope, be a great success. There have been suggestions that the 1986 Congress should be in London, which was host to the first post-world-war conference in 1932, but no doubt there will be other suggestions. Will someone tell us, since we are interested in the history of archaeology, why it took a decade and more to recreate the Congress? We look back to the London Congress of 1932 and those splendid meetings in Zurich, Rome, Hamburg, Prague, Madrid, Belgrade and Nice. Let us take a hard look at the whole structure of these Congresses: we meet colleagues, and some interesting papers are read; but the number of participants is too large and the participants are so often accompanied by their wives and families. Klindt-Jensen often discussed this problem with us and we felt there ought to be a firm restriction on the numbers of people attending the conference—a quota for each country and a clear statement that wives and families were not part of the official Congress. Our view is that the whole circus is too large. We view the Mexico Congress with misgivings; let it be the last in this style, we suggest, and let us organize a

new style with annual meetings of specialist groups; one year might be a Palaeolithic Conference, the next Neolithic, and so on; and during five years all sections would be represented and colleagues would meet each other. We propose to the Permanent Committee in Mexico a congress spread over five years in five different places, each doing the work of a fifth of the present overburdened Congress.

☙ The Electors to the Disney Professorship of Archaeology in the University of Cambridge have appointed Colin Renfrew, at present Professor of Archaeology in the University of Southampton, to succeed the present holder in October 1981. The present holder warmly welcomes this appointment and remembers 1962 when he had the pleasure, in St John's, of teaching (and being taught by!) the present Professor of European Archaeology in the University of Oxford and the newly elected tenth Disney Professor. There have been, out of the ten Disneys, four Fellows of St John's College, and the ninth and tenth Disneys record this piece of parish gossip with pleasure. The University of Cambridge has also created a personal Chair for Dr John Coles, who is now Professor of European Prehistory.

☙ It was a great pleasure in the fall of last year to revisit Harvard and to see the new Tozzer Library in the Peabody Museum. This is surely the best archaeological and anthropological library in the world. Its card index of authors, subjects and books is of outstanding value. We looked up our own entries and discovered items that we had completely forgotten about (and perhaps some of them wisely). But here is an archive which no serious research worker in archaeology can or should neglect.

It was not such a pleasure to visit the archaeological shelves of the main bookshops in Eastern America—the Coop in Harvard, and Brentanos, Doubleday, Scribners and the Strand in New York. We see in America, even more clearly than in England, the infiltration of lunatic rubbish into our serious, sensible, archaeological shelves. The good, sound, respectable books on archaeology in general, and American archaeology in particular, sadly jostle with madness, folly and utter foolishness. We have often spoken about this in these columns and many have thought it was an Editorial quirk. It is nothing of the kind: it is a statement of the danger that threatens archaeology, when it is becoming, very rightly, more popular and more properly understood than ever before. The danger is that the general public and the ordinary reader cannot be shown how to distinguish between carefully argued theories and established facts on the one hand, and fantasy and folly on the other.

But all is not lost. The voice of sanity and good sound scholarship sometimes triumphs and there is no better example of this recently than Volume 47, no. 2—the spring 1979 issue—of *Vermont History: the Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society* (whose offices, library and museum are in the Pavilion Building, Montpelier, Vermont 05602), a journal which may not appear regularly on the breakfast tables of all readers of ANTIQUITY on this side of the Atlantic. Yet this issue should be read by everyone worried by the present spread of mythical ideas about pre-Columbian America, and anxious to combat, with hard facts, the pseudo-scientific excesses of the Fells and von Dänikens of this world. It consists of two articles, and they are very important. The first is entitled 'Vermont's stone chambers: their myth and their history', and is written by Giovanna Neudorfer who is Vermont's first State Archaeologist; the second is called, intriguingly, 'Celtic place names in America BC', and is written by Dr W. F. H. Nicholaisen, who was from 1956 to 1969 Head of the Scottish Place Name Survey of the University of Edinburgh, and is now Professor of Education and Folklore at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

Let us quote Miss Neudorfer's conclusions in her words: 'Since at least the 1940s', she writes, 'distinctive stone structures in the Northeast variously called chambers, huts, caves, beehives and root, cellars have provoked questions about their age and cultural origin. Recently the hypothesis that the chambers are remnants of an ancient civilization has gained popular support. Widespread publicity has contributed to the uncertainty and added a degree of sensationalism to the discussion . . . In the summer of 1977 the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation undertook a study of these stone chambers found in many areas of Vermont. While the study was limited to Vermont, structures of this type have a widespread distribution, having been identified in all of the New England States, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky.' The survey listed and

studied 52 stone chambers in Vermont and concluded that they were root-cellars or chimney supports dating from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Miss Neudorfer concludes with these words: 'While there appears to be no evidence of ancient pre-Columbian European settlement in Vermont, it does not mean that ancient European settlements may not be identified in the future . . . Much of what is sometimes thought "exotic" or "mysterious" proves to be commonplace after a modicum of research. While there are still many archaeological puzzles in Vermont, the stone chambers are not among them.'

In his *America BC: ancient settlers in the New World,* Professor Barry Fell declared roundly that 'about three thousand years ago bands of roving Celtic mariners crossed the North Atlantic to discover and then to colonize North America', and these delusions are repeated in his *Saga America* reviewed by Professor Marshall McKusick in the previous issue of ANTIQUITY (July, 1980, 154–5). Among other things Fell claims place-names as evidence. Nicholaisen's paper is an analysis of his claims and a complete destruction of them. Here are his conclusions: 'Fell . . . has failed to demonstrate that there are ancient Celtic place names in New England. This failure derives mainly from the numerous errors which he has made with regard to Scottish Gaelic, from his chronological, semantic and morphological distortions, and from his negligence with regard to the wealth of material, both informative and interpretative, available with regard to the Algonquian names of his choice. Sloppy methodology and frequent violation of basic scientific principles have never been a good foundation for the establishment of satisfying results and onomastic research is no exception in this respect. In so far as Fell's theory of the presence of Celts in New England depends on his place name evidence, he has no case.'

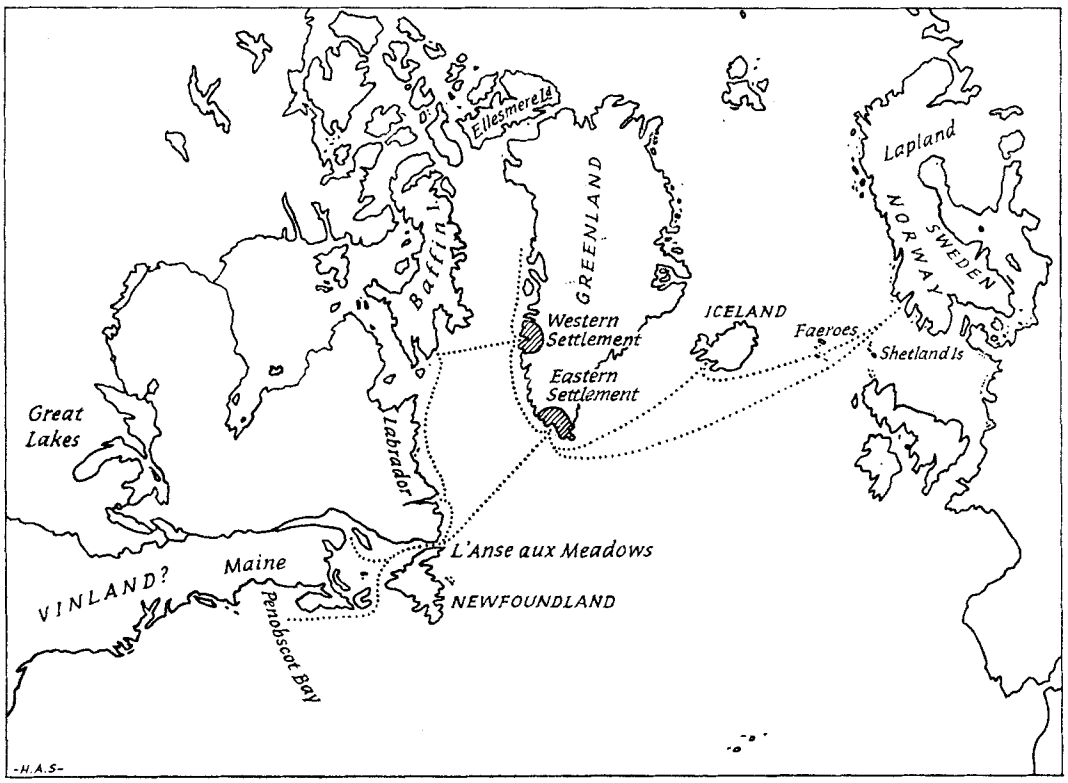
Archaeologically this is the year of the Vikings. The British Museum arranged a remarkable exhibition in conjunction with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York—the first time these two great museums have engaged in such a joint venture. The exhibition was in London during the spring and early summer and will be in New York in the autumn. It was designed to show all the facets of the Viking character and admirably succeeds. Books on the Vikings have been pouring from the presses; among these special mention must go to the British Museum guide and catalogue of the Exhibition: *The Vikings* by James Graham-Campbell and Dafydd Kidd (London, British Museum Publications, 1980, 199 pp., 115 illustrations, over half of them in colour, £8.95). *Popular Archaeology* devoted most of its January 1980 number to this subject. In that number David Collison wrote an article, entitled 'Viking Real-Estate', dealing with the fake evidence for Vikings in America from the Kensington Stone to the Spirit Pond Runes. There are now three pieces of real evidence for the Norse in America, L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland, the finds from Ellesmere Island, and the Maine penny. The work of Helge and Anne Stine Ingstad at L'Anse aux Meadows was at first greeted with incredulity: but their work has been confirmed by independent excavations by the Canadian Parks Department. We have already referred to the Ellesmere Island finds (*Antiquity*, LIII, 1979, 90–1) which included Norse chain mail, a clinch nail and part of a set of folding balances. 'Aside from L'Anse aux Meadows and the Arctic trade material', said Dr Robert McGhee of the Archaeological Survey of Canada, 'there is nothing else in North America which can seriously be considered as evidence for Norse contact.'

But now there is the eleventh-century silver penny from Maine, and the story of this curiosity has been told by Peter Seaby in two articles, (1) 'The first datable Norse find from North America?' in *Seaby Coin and Medal Bulletin* no. 724 for December 1978, pp. 369–70 and 377–81, and (2) 'A Viking penny from New England' in *Popular Archaeology*, 1980, 32–4. Peter Seaby is Chairman of the famous London coin-dealers, B. A. Seaby Ltd of Audley House, 11 Margaret Street, London, W1N 8AT. The coin was found in 1957 by two amateur archaeologists digging an Indian site at Naskeag Point on the coast of Maine; it was a shell-midden site in the Penobscot Bay area of Hancock County. At first thought to be a coin of King Stephen, it has now been identified as Norwegian, struck in the reign of King Olaf Kyrri who reigned from 1067 to 1093 AD. How did this penny turn up in a rubbish dump in Maine? Seaby says, 'Our Norse penny from Maine was the only non-Indian object from the bone midden at Naskeag Point. Had an Indian or Eskimo travelled the 900 miles or so from the

Newfoundland settlement? This seems unlikely, although the coin may have been traded as an ornament from hand to hand by nomadic trappers and traders. It seems just as likely that a Greenlander's ship may have reached the good anchorages in the Penobscot Bay area and engaged in trade with the local Indians. It may even have been seized from a Greenlander in an Indian attack, or found on the corpse of a settler who was a victim of starvation, disease or shipwreck.' A fascinating story spelt out graphically by Seaby in the maps illustrating his two articles; we reproduce a version of them here.

A small but worthwhile book should be read by those interested in the truth and untruth about the Vikings in America. This is Jeffrey R. Redmond's *Viking hoaxes in North America* (New York: Carlton Press Inc., 1980, 64 pp., 6 pls. $3.95). The author is a research student in Scandinavian studies in the University of California at Los Angeles, and the book is very properly dedicated to Erik Wahlgren who has written a foreword. Redmond deals carefully with all the main issues, but it is a paragraph in Wahlgren's foreword that needs wider circulation; here it is:

For seventy-five years linguistic scholars have known perfectly well that the famed inscription from Kensington, Minnesota, was a modern forgery. But it took a tape-recorded confession finally released by the Minnesota Historical Society to dispose of the matter for true believers. 'Viking' halberds and battle axes found in the mid-west have been conclusively dated as of fairly recent manufacture—indeed some of the former are implements for cutting plug tobacco, with the hinges removed. The Scandinavian relics now in the Royal Ontario Museum are authentic eleventh-century products but, alas, they were brought over from Norway in 1923 by a gentleman whose father owned them. The incredible Vinland Map, in which I very much wanted to believe [*so did the Editor of 'Antiquity'*] is now known to be a forgery from the 1920s. The principles of physical science that permitted a solution to the hoax were perfected five years ago in Chicago. Last year the science of metallurgy determined at length that the so-called Drake Plate, allegedly 400 years old, was another forgery, presumably planted by students to please their history professor, who had hoped for just such a find. The recently uncovered 'Viking runes' from Spirit Pond at Popham, Maine, have been made the mainstay of an elaborate and utterly untenable



cryptogram theory. Carved in characters derived from the Kensington inscription, the message is a quasi-Scandinavian gibberish with humorous and perhaps pornographic indications. For a novelty, the inscriptions are accompanied by pictures of some of the objects described in the Icelandic sagas about Vinland, along with a map of the coastline *as it appears today*. The 'Viking runes' of Heavener, Oklahoma, have had a change of venue, since the original defenders of the Viking Faith have found it more romantic to label them Phoenician. An electrical engineer says they are Norse cryptograms which he alone can read. A Harvard zoologist [*this is the foolish Barry Fell whose loony books sell so well—Ed.*] knows they are ancient African, and he alone can read them. A Berkeley ethnologist is content to see them as American Indian carvings. But E. von Däniken would be able to prove that they were carved eons ago, by folk who zeroed in on us from the intergalactic void.

One of the last things which Professor R. de Valera did before his deeply lamented death two years ago was to produce a revised edition of his predecessor's book on *Antiquities of the Irish Countryside* which Sean P. O'Riordain first published in 1942 with the Cork University Press. The 3rd, 4th and 5th editions have been published by Methuen in London and New York, and there is no better guide to Irish antiquities than this 5th edition. O'Riordain would have been proud of how his work had been improved and brought into a modern context. Dr Valera's Preface is short and succinct, but in his last paragraph he has something of great importance to say that is new, and deals fairly and clearly with that unsatisfactory aspect of modern archaeology which is called astro-archaeology or archaeo-astronomy, and we quote his last paragraph:

Those who are familiar with archaeological literature of recent times may be surprised or disappointed that I have given short shrift to theories concerning exact orientation and standardized measurement in regard to megalithic monuments—tombs, circles and alignments. These theories often imply a deep and detailed knowledge of complex astronomical phenomena and a grasp of mathematical procedures on the part of man in megalithic times. They are supported by an array of figures, formulae, statistics and computer procedures with which most archaeologists are less than adequately acquainted. However, all too often the mathematics can be shown to be faulty and logic and simple commonsense to be lacking. There is now available a large body of evidence from Ireland which indicates a broad adherence to general orientation customs in certain classes of tombs and circles which is readily explained in terms of the general knowledge of ordinary country folk of the main directions such as we would nowadays call North, South, East and West. Many Christian graves and churches are roughly aligned east and west and the ill luck attending the man who extends his house westwards is proverbial still in parts of Ireland. No detailed observation or precise alignment is implied in these and no such implication is required to explain the orientation of megalithic monuments. One wonders if it is not part of a tendency apparent in many spheres in recent times—to seek after and even invent the spectacular, the mysterious, let alone the occult, beloved of modern media of communication. There are surely enough mysteries in life without creating more. Knowledge of our roots should be firmly grounded, not set in fantasy. I think O'Riordain, *ar dheis De go raibh se*, would approve.

ANTIQUITY, from its inception in 1927, has always been concerned with air photography and its founder was more responsible than anyone else for teaching the world that its past could be seen from the air. He had two most distinguished successors, Major Allen, who was, alas, killed in 1941, and Dr Kenneth St Joseph, who has been Curator and subsequently Director in Aerial Photography in the University of Cambridge from 1948 until his retirement in 1980. He has been Professor of Aerial Photographic Studies at Cambridge since 1973.

ANTIQUITY has published, and has been happy so to do, some of the results of the work of St Joseph and his staff over the last 16 years in our series 'Aerial reconnaissance: recent results'. Professor St Joseph retires this year and we bring our series to an end at the same time. We have been able, with his ready cooperation, to publish remarkable discoveries from the air of man's ancient past. There have been rumours recently that the Cambridge University Department of Aerial Photography was to be swept away. Happily this is not so, or not so for the immediate present. The organization so successfully created and developed by St Joseph has been prolonged by the University for five years under the direction of Dr David Wilson, hitherto his assistant, whose contributions to archaeology and air photography are already well known, and none of us should forget at this moment the brilliant work of Squadron Leader Douglass who, as pilot of the Cambridge University

photography aircraft, has not only made this work possible but has added enormously to its success.

It is perhaps not generally known that the Cambridge Department has done extensive photography in countries outside Great Britain, namely in Ireland, Northern France, the Netherlands and Denmark. We are sometimes told, by ill-informed politicians and journalists, that research in universities is often a waste of money. The work done by the Department of Aerial Photography in the University of Cambridge in the last 32 years is one of the most interesting and important contributions to our knowledge of our past and to our common understanding of the past of North West Europe.

☙ *British Archaeological Reports* have long established themselves as one of the most valuable series of archaeological publications in this country. They have now embarked on a new venture: *The Cambridge Monographs in African Archaeology*. This series, which will form part of the BAR International Series of Monographs, will be under the editorship of Dr John Alexander, and Dr Anthony Hands, the founder and one of the two General Editors of BAR, says that he hopes to produce a steady flow of perhaps three to six volumes a year. The first volume in this ambitious and interesting new series is now published: it is by Dr Nwanna Nzewunwa, of Port Harcourt University, and is entitled *The Niger Delta: Aspects of its Prehistoric Economy and Culture* (BAR International Series 75, 1980; 267 pp., £10); and may we remind you of the address of BAR? It is *122 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7BP, England.*

☙ We have said how delighted we were that at long last there was going to be a published edition of John Aubrey's *Monumenta Britannica* and we printed an advertisement in our July 1978 number, which, we hope, made libraries and museums immediate subscribers. Now it is out, edited by John Fowles with Rodney Legg as annotator. It is a lavish large-folio buckram-bound facsimile of 552 pages, a must for all libraries and museums, and a delight for all archaeologists who can afford it. Naturally a most expensive book: £95 or $250, but worth every penny, every dollar. The edition is limited; the publishers are the *Dorset Publishing Company, Knock-na-cre, Milborne Port, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 5HJ.*

☙ It was a very happy idea to ask Dr J. N. L. Myres to give the tenth John Myres Memorial Lecture and it was an excellent idea of this distinguished son of a distinguished father to devote his lecture to his father's activities in the 1914–18 war. The result: *Commander J. L. Myres RNVR: The Blackbeard of the Aegean* (Blackwells, Broad Street, Oxford, 36 pp., £2.00,—something that every archaeologist and ancient historian must have whether their own lives were in peace or war—and which war?). It is an account to be read concurrently with T. J. Dunbabin's admirable and generous obituary notice of the great man in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* for 1955 (pp. 349–65). Re-reading that obituary, we see how well Dunbabin captured the nature and achievement of the man we always called Johnny Myres. 'It is unlikely', wrote Dunbabin, 'that this mastery of so many branches of study will often be rivalled: for he was a specialist in all, a classical archaeologist, a prehistorical archaeologist, an ethnologist, geographer, and geologist, and was at home also in the literature of other sciences. His quick, wide-ranging mind could fertilize one of these disciplines from another; but all were related to one end, the study of man and his setting on the earth.'

When we were writing *A Hundred Years of Archaeology* for Duckworth immediately after the 1939–45 war we wrote to the great man because we thought that *The Cretan Labyrinth; a retrospect of Aegean Research* (his Huxley Memorial Lecture for 1933) was one of the best things ever written about the history of the development of classical archaeology. We had more than one meeting in north Oxford and at one of these meetings were told that he had given tea many years ago to Tommy Thomsen, son of the great C. J. Thomsen who created the Copenhagen Museum and opened it on the basis of the Three Age System in 1819. Tommy Thomsen told Johnny Myres how his father had decided to organize the Copenhagen Museum and so create modern archaeology. We felt then, in the late forties, and we still do, thirty years later, that we were linked through Johnny Myres to the beginnings of archaeology in north-western Europe.