Editorial

VOLUME I was—not without some birth-pangs—published punctually on time in December 1970. At that date about 670 subscribers had been enrolled. The latest figure available at the time of going to press with the present volume is 1,026. We cannot rest content until we have doubled this number, for we need an income of at least £4,000 to produce a full and worthwhile volume; all our readers are invited to persuade others to join the Society.

The past year has seen the celebration of Sir Mortimer Wheeler's 80th birthday. It is not our purpose to write either a profile or an encomium, for others have done this very well already; but the occasion should not be let pass without recalling the great advances in the control and recording of British excavations developed and diffused by him. The present volume contains an account of an excavation of the early 1930's; its director was a scholar of great distinction whose learning was second to none. The contrast in character between the surviving records of this excavation and those normal today is enormous. Professor Donald Atkinson was no novice to excavation: he had learnt his technique from Bushe-Fox at Wroxeter and Richborough; but the methods he used at Caistor were by then outmoded. There are several lessons to be learnt from this. One is the need for directors of excavations to travel about and see what new methods others are developing; indeed, varied experience is valuable at all levels. Another is the necessity of drawing plans and sections on the spot and of checking them in the field. These field records should be carefully preserved since they are primary evidence: at their best they may allow later reinterpretation, as Professor C. F. C. Hawkes reinterpreted Pitt Rivers' records (*Arch. Journ.* ciii (1947)). Nowadays the National Monuments Record, Fielden House, Great College Street, London S.W.1, forms a suitable repository, and is ready to house originals (or to make copies when a museum houses the originals).

But there is more to the satisfactory after-care of an excavation than these simple precautions. The pottery and other finds need to be marked as well as stored. Unmarked pottery is a menace; paper bags develop fatigue and ultimately may spill their contents; plastic ones, if air tight, may be dangerous in other ways especially to labels inside. The finds should be marked in such a way that they can be related by later workers to their context: excavators do not live for ever. There are various ways of doing this, the simplest being merely to label the container: but this is not safe and it is highly desirable to label each sherd. One school of thought uses a code, such as 71AA: this has the merit of brevity, but subsequent utility depends upon knowledge of the code which may be lost or known only to the excavator, or, worse still, may be identical for two or more sites. There are instances of pottery in certain northern collections which has been attributed to the wrong site through misinterpretation of such a duplicated

code. It is submitted that at least the name of the site or a recognizable abbreviation of it should be used, whatever else is added. The writer of these notes has come to label his finds with an abbreviation of the site-name and year (e.g. VER 56) plus site letter with trench and layer numbers (VER 56 A XII 2). These can be understood as long as the note books and/or section-drawings survive, but to make certain it is often wise to indicate site letters and trench numbers on published drawings: layer numbers will in any case appear on the sections and the writer has learnt by hard experience never to alter these in the interests of a spurious neatness or later logic: even if all the pottery is re-marked, the effort is unnecessary and productive of muddle. This of course cannot be done with code-letters which are not so well adapted to appearance on published drawings, sometimes being unique to each find.

Some interesting problems are raised by Professor K. Jackson's study of the place-names of the British Section of the Antonine Itinerary published in Volume I. There are several place-names containing the element DURO ('a common British and Gaulish place-name formant which appears to mean "walled town, enclosed town with gateways" as distinct from "fortress" proper town by the Alder Swamp'; Durobrivae (Rochester and Water Newton) 'the walled town with Bridges'; and Durolipons (Cambridge) 'the walled town on which is **dūno-*'). The most prominent are Durovernum Canterbury) 'the walled the Overflowing Boggy River'. All four towns were indeed provided with walls, but archaeological evidence shows that (with the doubtful exception of Water Newton) in no case was the wall constructed before the late second century; at Canterbury the defences can be dated to the late third, and at Cambridge to the fourth century. At Rochester the wall was preceded by a bank (*Arch. Cant.* lxxxiii (1968), 75), but not it seems at the others; the bank at Rochester is itself of the late second century. It is interesting to speculate in what circumstances and at what date these place-names arose. The towns can hardly have been nameless until the defences were built or have changed their names then: indeed Ptolemy writing *c.* A.D. 150 records Canterbury as Darouernon (the equivalent of Darvernum), a date well before the walls in question.

How can this be explained? Rochester is known to have been the site of a Belgic mint and was therefore probably a royal oppidum; Canterbury has produced no evidence of a contemporary mint but was the site of a large Belgic settlement. Cambridge too has Belgic occupation, but none is known at Water Newton. No Belgic defences have been found at any of these sites although they may have existed; but if they did exist they will have been in earthwork not masonry. If the names were derived from native earthworks one might rather have expected a name in *-dunum*. There remains a possibility that the names may have been transferred to the towns from neighbouring comparatively short-lived Roman forts of the early period, and that the walls and gates in question were fort gates and fort ramparts of timber and of turf. There is a known fort at Water Newton, and good reasons to suspect others at Canterbury, Rochester and Cambridge.

This explanation relieves us of the need to suppose that there were pre-Roman bridges over the Medway at Rochester and over the Nene at Water Newton, but it also raises the wider question of how Roman military stations obtained their names. The fact that most of the names known to us are native, both in this country and on other frontiers, is not in itself surprising, for obviously most places had names already and in any case the most common origin is a river name. But this particular group is peculiar, in that here it is not the place or the river but the actual Roman fort which is given the Celtic name. Were fort names given by the inhabitants of the surrounding district, were they dubbed by Celtic auxiliaries (in which case we might have a clue to their first garrison), or did the Roman field-commanders, perhaps half-playfully, themselves adopt Celtic terminology? An amusing modern analogy for this last practice is provided by the wartime airfield in northern Kenya called 'Ndege's Nest'—ndege being the Swahili word for bird. But the most likely explanation is that in the first stages the Romans called a fort by its operational name, such as 'Castra Sabini',[1] and at a later stage enquired of the locals what the proper name of the place might be—by which time the correct answer would indeed be: 'Durobrivae'.

One of the most striking developments in British archaeology since the war has been the appearance of numerous local groups of devoted amateurs, many of them doing valuable work in rescuing threatened sites and in pursuing research. However, there is a corollary of this activity which is less welcome, namely the ever-increasing production of news-sheets and similar ephemeral publications, usually duplicated. These often contain interim, or even final, reports on excavations and not infrequently the results fail to be published in regular journals. Sometimes this may be because of pressure on editors' space, more often, perhaps, because excavators, having put pen to paper once, are inclined to see their responsibilities at an end. It should surely be recognized that proper publication means presentation in printed form in an appropriate journal or in a monograph. Few archaeologists, whether amateur or professional, can see more than a tithe of the ephemera regularly, though central repositories exist at the Society of Antiquaries and in the National Monuments Record. Even so, some of these publications slip through the net and it is high time that the situation was organized more effectively. Eventually, only larger local journals with sympathetic editors—and perhaps produced by cheaper printing techniques—will solve the difficulty. Meanwhile the situation could perhaps be relieved slightly if a central body, such as the C.B.A., were to issue a consolidated list of ephemera and to see that complete archives of them are more widely available at designated repositories throughout the country.

CORRIGENDUM TO VOL. I

On p. 113 the scale for FIG. 13, Nos. 4–11 should read $(\frac{1}{1})$.

[1] Compare the wooden *tabula cerata* found at Valkenburg bearing the address Tigiirni [ ]lo mil(iti) C(o)hor. III Gallor(um). W. Glasbergen, '42 n.C', *Jaarboek der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen 1965–66*, 18.