

## Editorial

PLATE XVII

We print as the first plate of this number a photograph of Louis Leakey who died on 1 October 1972 and whose remarkable career we have already briefly referred to (1972, 266-7). It is surely one of the most characteristic pictures ever taken of him. He is dressed in his old boiler suit, holds a *Deinotherium* molar in one hand and a fossil elephant tooth resting on a squashed khaki hat in the other. He is smiling, and as Sonia Cole says in her recently published biography of him entitled *Leakey's luck*, 'his eyes are bright with excitement at the latest finds from Olduvai'. The photograph was taken by Melville B. Grosvenor and was first published in the *National Geographic* of January 1973 as part of his obituary notice in which the National Geographic Society's president, Dr Melvin Payne, described him as 'a beloved friend—a powerful, brilliant, hulking man who dedicated his life to pushing back the horizons of the past, no matter what the cost to his health'. We are grateful to the National Geographic Society and to Dr Melville Grosvenor for permission to reproduce this photograph, which, incidentally, occurs only on the jacket of *Leakey's luck* and is not included, as it should have been, in the plates in the book.

Leakey had published the first volume of his autobiography, *White African*, in 1937, and we were able to read there of his dual upbringing as the son of a Christian missionary who felt himself a Kikuyu and was initiated into the tribe as 'Wakaruigi, son of the Sparrow-hawk', and the famous story of his admission to St John's College, Cambridge, armed with a document (which, alas, can no longer be found in the College) testifying to his competence in Kikuyu signed with the thumbprint of Senior Chief

Koinage. The second volume of his autobiography, *By the evidence: memoirs, 1932-51*, was published at the end of 1974.\* There will, alas, be no third volume from his own hand, but Sonia Cole has written his whole story from his birth in 1903 to his death three years ago. In addition to the material in *White African* and *By the evidence*, Sonia Cole draws on her own wide personal knowledge of the Leakeys and their work, and the manuscript of Mary Leakey's hitherto unpublished book *Valley of the wild sisal*.

*Leakey's luck* is an excellent and workmanlike piece of writing; it is long and detailed as befits what will be the main sourcebook for the work of the Leakeys in East Africa up to 1972. It is a sympathetic, understanding and fair portrait of a man described by the publishers of *By the evidence* as 'one of the great men of this or any century'. Sonia Cole writes of him, 'he packed more into his sixty-nine years than ten ordinary men would in their combined lifetimes. He was one of the most versatile scientists of his generation, even in an age when specialization had not yet become the god that it is today and it was still possible to be archaeologist, anthropologist, anatomist, palaeontologist and zoologist all at the same time. He was renowned in each of these roles, but they by no means exhausted his repertoire; he threw himself into anything that aroused his curiosity, which was just about everything that lived or had once lived . . . Louis's life had not been easy, and very often he was disillusioned by the behaviour of his fellow men, but he never lost his basic faith in humanity.'

\* The bibliographical details of this and other books mentioned here will be found below (p. 172)



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*The late L. S. B. Leakey*

*See p. 165*

*Photo: Melville Bell Grosvenor, National Geographic*

She writes at all times with clarity, fairness and understanding, and portrays Louis Leakey as he was, warts and all. She is particularly good on the most difficult problem, the so-called Kanam-Kanjera 'scandal'. The Editor remembers well the conference convened in St John's College, Cambridge, by the human biology section of the Royal Anthropological Institute on 18–19 March 1933 and the subsequent *affaire Boswell*. Boswell was at the Cambridge meeting and put his name to the conclusions of the geological committee. But, having brooded over it all since, he stressed the advisability of obtaining further geological evidence from Kanam. Leakey persuaded the Royal Society to send Boswell to Kenya and study the evidence for himself. Here is Sonia Cole's comment:

How often in the months to come Louis must have wished he had kept his mouth shut; for the Battle of Boswell, fought on the field of Kanam in January 1935, was to prove disastrous. Percy Boswell, Professor of Geology at Imperial College, is said to have had a somewhat contradictory character, emotional, inclined to be humorous, almost obsessively concerned with professional conduct. He came from a poor background and may have suffered from the proverbial chip on his shoulder even after he had risen to the dizzy heights of FRS . . . His vendetta against the Kanam mandible—and against Louis—was no doubt prompted mainly because of his insistence on scientific exactitude, but perhaps jealousy was another motive. In addition, Boswell championed the Piltdown mandible and so was unable to accept a jaw with a chin in the Lower Pleistocene.

The Boswell visit to East Africa could not be arranged until January 1935. By that time the writer of these words had become a pupil of Louis Leakey and had been invited by him to join his next expedition to East Africa. His tutor, who was later to be Sir James Wordie, counselled successfully against this course, and advised a talk with O. T. Jones, then Woodwardian Professor of Geology at Cambridge. He was the man who set H. H. Thomas on the course of research which led him to identify the foreign stones of Stonehenge as coming from southwest Wales. We went to see him with diffidence,

having only two cards to play, namely first that we were fellow countrymen, and secondly that John Daniel, the Editor's father, and David Walters, who taught him science at school, had been contemporaries of O.T. Jones at the small and insignificant grammar school at Pencader in north Carmarthenshire. Jones went straight to the point: Leakey was a brilliant man who would do brilliant things, but was brash and rushed to conclusions, and was operating in an interdisciplinary field where every specialist would be against him. 'He will work out his own destiny' he said, 'and it will be a great one. Don't join his bandwagon now. There is something very fishy about Piltdown [this was the Michaelmas Term of 1934]. I don't think there is anything fishy about Kanam and Kanjera, but some will pretend there is.

Boswell reported most unfavourably on Leakey's work and that great and kind man Alfred Haddon, who more than anyone else had created the Cambridge School of Archaeology and Anthropology, and had taught Leakey, wrote to his former pupil:

I have been shown Boswell's report to the Royal Society and also your field report and I must confess that I am disappointed at the casual way in which you deal with the matter. So far as I can gather it is not merely a question of a mistaken photograph, but a criticism of all your geological evidence at Kanam, Kanjera and Oldoway . . . It seems to me that your future career depends largely upon the manner in which you face the criticisms. I am not in a position to know to what extent they can be rebutted by you with scientific evidence, but if you want to secure the confidence of scientific men you must act bravely and not shuffle. You may remember that more than once I have warned you not to be in too much of a hurry in your scientific work as I feared that your zeal might overrun your discretion and I can only hope that it has not done so in this case.

Boswell's infamous letter appeared in *Nature* on 9 March 1935. In it he said: 'Unfortunately it has not proved possible to find the exact site of either discovery [i.e. Kanam or Kanjera] since the earlier expedition neither marked the localities on the ground nor recorded the sites on a map . . . Moreover, the photograph of the

site where the mandible was found . . . was, through some error, that of a different locality; and the deposits (said to be clays) are in fact of entirely different rock (volcanic agglomerate). . . Thus, in view of the uncertain location of the Kanam and Kanjera sites, and in view also of the doubt as to the stratigraphic horizons from which the remains were obtained and the possibility of the distortion of the beds, I hold the opinion that the geological age of the mandible and skull fragments is uncertain.'

It is amazing that Leakey survived as a responsible scholar after Boswell's attack: incidentally Sonia Cole is wrong in supposing that St John's College lost faith in him; their Fellowships are normally for three years and he was exceptionally renewed for a further three. Leakey lived to prove that his perhaps hastily published Kanam-Kanjera finds were all right and Boswell was wrong. It was Boswell who was cut down. At a meeting of the Geological Society of London, O.T. Jones made mincemeat of a paper that Boswell had given on tectonic structures in Wales, making it clear that Boswell did not know the elementary principles of structural geology. As a result of this Boswell resigned his professorship, and had a nervous breakdown from which he never recovered.

Sonia Cole writes with a fine sense of humour and tells us many curious episodes in the Leakey saga. It is almost unbelievable that Olduvai was discovered by an absent-minded professor with a butterfly net, yet in 1911 an entomologist from Munich called Kattwinkel was so intent on pursuing an alluring specimen that he fell three hundred feet down a spectacular gorge: Olduvai is invisible from the plains above until one is standing almost on its very edge. And how fascinating to learn the origin of the name of the site called Apis Rock. The Masai called it Nasera. Allen Turner accompanied Louis Leakey and Donald MacInnes on a reconnaissance to Nasera, and Louis was in a great state of excitement at finding a stagnant pool at the rock shelter. 'There's water!' he cried. Turner looked at it with distaste and said 'That's not water, that's ape's piss.' And Apis Rock it has been called ever since.

Leakey was always especially interested in

the Piltdown affair. He firmly believed that the refusal of many scholars (including, as we have mentioned, Boswell) to accept the authenticity and antiquity of Kanam and Kanjera was in part due to their conviction that modern man could not have existed at such an early date and must have an ape-like ancestry. Piltdown fitted the pattern of a character half-ape, half-man. While we have no recollection of Leakey suggesting Piltdown to be a forgery, and there is no suggestion of this in Sonia Cole's book, he was immensely suspicious of the remains. In the second edition (1934) of *Adam's ancestors* he wrote: 'If the lower jaw really belongs to the same individual as the skull, then the Piltdown man is unique in all humanity . . . It is tempting to argue that the skull, on the one hand, and the jaw and canine tooth, on the other, do not belong to the same creature. Indeed a number of anatomists maintain that the skull and jaw cannot belong to the same individual and they see in the jaw and canine tooth evidence of a contemporary anthropoid ape.' He referred to the whole affair as an enigma. In *By the evidence* he says 'I admit . . . that I was foolish enough never to dream, even for a moment, that the true explanation lay in a deliberate forgery.'

Once the forgery had been demonstrated, Leakey was as intrigued as most people as to who was responsible. He did not accept the solution proposed by many that Charles Dawson was the hoaxer. He was convinced that it was first of all a practical joke played on Dawson by Teilhard de Chardin. When, argued Leakey, Teilhard found that Dawson had taken the material to the British Museum, he told Dawson that he had himself tricked him. Dawson then said they must continue the hoax together to see to what extent the pundits could be taken in. 'From then on,' wrote Leakey (*in lit.*), 'Teilhard and Dawson continued jointly with the hoax, with Teilhard playing the more important role of providing more of the fossils and helping with the chemistry.' In 1972 Leakey was engaged in completing a book in which he set out these theories and he discussed the whole affair with us fully in conversations and letters.

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We differed in our views of Teilhard's role and we based our views on Teilhard's letters. If we may treat these as a primary source, Teilhard met Dawson between 1 July and 25 July 1909. On the latter date he describes how he took 'my new friend, Mr Dawson, the geologist, to the cliffs to show him the iguanodon tracks'. The first mention of Piltdown is in a letter of 26 April 1912. 'Last Saturday, my geologist friend, Mr Dawson, came for a visit. He brought me some prehistoric remains, flints, elephant and hippopotamus, and, especially, a very thick, well-preserved human skull which he had found in the alluvium deposits not far from here.' [The Jesuit seminary at Ore Place, Hastings.] A letter from Bramber dated 3 June 1912 gives an account of Teilhard's first visit to Piltdown (first according to our reading of the evidence from his letters). He wrote:

We planned an excursion to the famous alluvial deposits at Uckfield (north of Lewes): the prehistoric remains I mentioned in one of my letters over a month ago came from there. I began with a hearty English breakfast in Mr Dawson's very tidy home: it's a very comfortable dwelling nestling right in the middle of the ruins of the old castle which overlooks Lewes. Mrs Dawson is an Irish woman born in Bordeaux. One son is in the colonial army in the Sudan and is cluttering up the house with antelope heads.

I was received cordially. Around 10 o'clock, we were in Uckfield, where Professor Woodward joined us. He is director of the British Museum's palaeontology division, and is a little man with salt-and-pepper hair, plus a rather cold appearance. At three o'clock, armed with all the makings for a picnic, we started off in the car. After going across Uckfield Castle's grounds, we were left off on the hunting ground; a grassy strip 4-5 metres wide, which skirts a wooded path leading to a farm. Under this grass, there's a centimetre layer of gravel which is gradually being removed to be used for roads. A man was there to help us dig; armed with picks and sifters, we worked for several hours and finally had success. Dawson discovered a new fragment of the famous human skull; he had already three pieces of it, and I myself put a hand on a fragment of an elephant's molar; this find made me really worth something in Woodward's eyes. He

jumped on the piece with the enthusiasm of a youth and all the fire that his apparent coldness covered came out. To catch my train, I had to leave before the other two had to abandon their search.

In September Teilhard returned to Uckfield with Dawson and Woodward and it was then that he found the canine tooth of what was thought to be Piltdown Man. It is just possible that the finding of the canine tooth was a piece of legerdemain by Teilhard who was known to be a practical joker and a conjurer of ability. This is certainly what L.S.B.L. thought. We think he cannot have started the whole affair and accept the letters to his parents as truthful accounts of what was happening. Teilhard was not involved in Piltdown until on 26 April 1912 his geologist friend brought him the thick well-preserved human skull. Teilhard was certainly *not* the person who *started* the Piltdown hoax; here we are entirely against L.S.B.L. But did he improve on it? The whole incident of the canine tooth stinks and we all wait to hear Professor Weiner's considered views on that strange day, 30 August 1913.

We are certain that Teilhard was not involved in the beginning of Piltdown: he just could have been curiously involved in the affair of the canine. Leakey insisted to the last on Teilhard's complete involvement. Writing to the Editor on 11 September 1972 he said:

Dear Glyn,

Thank you for your letter of 25th August from France. Many of the points you make on pages 1 and 2 are easily answerable. I will answer them as soon as I can. I still do not think your facts are all correct and certainly not that 'the 3rd June 1912 was the first time that Teilhard was at the site'. There is a record somewhere in a letter of his of *seeing* Dawson collect two pieces of skull.

Anyway, I will write further. Also you make no comment of the time when Teilhard found one of the best artefacts.

Yours sincerely and in haste,  
Louis

He died three weeks after writing this letter and there was no further communication.

Of his book about Piltdown and Teilhard, Sonia Cole writes: 'After his death Mary [Leakey] was very anxious to prevent its publication: Louis had no new evidence to put forward and she felt that the imputations he made would damage his reputation—she was far more concerned about Leakey's reputation than about Teilhard's' (*Leakey's luck*, p. 399). Sonia Cole's own comment is this: 'Louis had no real evidence, only a hunch: Teilhard had once told him that Dawson, the main suspect, was not responsible, but had refused to elaborate' (p. 375).

☛ Professor Merrick Posnansky of the Department of Archaeology of the University of Ghana, writing at the end of April of this year, sends us these interesting comments on what we said about Historical Archaeology in an earlier editorial (1975, 4–5):

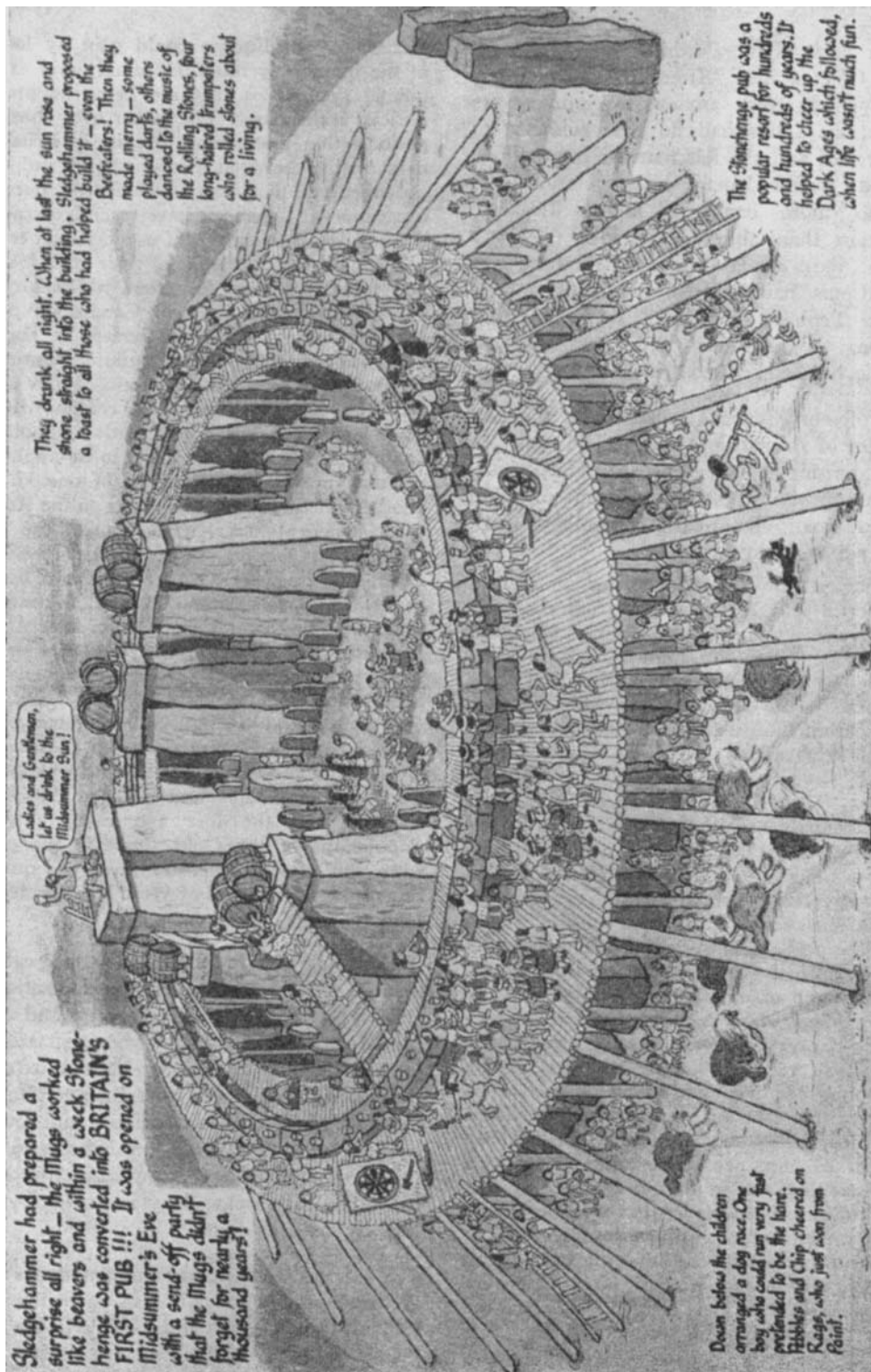
You singled out the work being undertaken in America and Australia. In tropical Africa where archaeology is not as compartmentalized as in Europe or America, quite a lot of historical archaeology has been undertaken, very often by the self-same archaeologists who dig sites ranging from the palaeolithic. Recent examples of such excavations are Cape Coast Castle (English, seventeenth to nineteenth century), Bantama (Dutch, similar period) and Fort Orange (Dutch, seventeenth to nineteenth century) in Ghana; Fort Jesus (Portuguese, sixteenth to nineteenth century) in Kenya; Patiko (Anglo-Egyptian late nineteenth century) in Uganda; and various Portuguese sites in Zambia which are post fifteenth century. There are no separate journals for such work but articles have appeared in the *Uganda Journal*, and the *South African Archaeological Bulletin* in particular. Excavations with foreign volunteers have proved very popular on the forts as one can combine documentary sources and archaeological research. One such excavation is planned at Fort Ruycaver, a Dutch fort on the Ankobra river in Ghana next December–January, a rather exciting site in that it is the only fort known to have been blown up by its occupants in 1659 rather than accepting surrender.

It has to be remembered that a lot of African Iron Age archaeology involves sites which are contemporary with the 'colonial' sites on the coasts. I feel that many students of Iron Age

archaeology in Europe could gain by looking at the intensively multidisciplinary and experimental approaches that are being adopted in African archaeology. The rather over-conscious periodization that seems to exist in Britain in demarcating between post-medieval and post-post-medieval has been avoided. At our own excavation at Begho we have recently excavated dye pits which went out of use less than twenty years ago since knowledge of their exact location and form had been forgotten, whilst Mr McIntosh of Trinity College, Cambridge is excavating recently collapsed houses in Hani to illustrate certain aspects of building continuity, and to help interpret Begho walls of four to five centuries earlier. Perhaps the reason why the term Historic has not been widely adopted in tropical Africa is that it tends to be applied to colonial or settler archaeology of one kind or another whether Islamic colonists on the Kenyan coast, where James Kirkman used the term (*Antiquaries Journal*, 1957, xxxvii, 16–28), or Europeans elsewhere, rather than to a definite period in a well-defined area. It is probably more sensible to think in terms of later African archaeology as a whole rather than dealing with it on a national basis. The fringes of the Historic/Protohistoric frontier in Ghana, at least, were very vague and the cultural interchange that existed between literate (historic) communities on the middle Niger in Mali, and the peoples to the south in Ghana, and between these same societies and the fort and castle (historic) populations of the Gold Coast in the period from the fifteenth century onwards, provides one of the fascinations of West African archaeology.

We think that Professor Posnansky can rest assured that the apparent periodization of British archaeology is a slow, sure and determined way to prove to everyone that archaeology is the study of the material culture of the past at all times and its transmutation into history. The growth of societies and journals dealing with medieval, post-medieval and industrial archaeology is a welcome proof that the myth that archaeology is prehistory (still held by some) is dying.

☛ It is easy to write bad and mad books about archaeology and megaliths in particular; it is difficult to write good and sensible books about



They drank all night. When at last the sun rose and shone straight into the building, Stodgehammer proposed a toast to all those who had helped build it — even the Exe-faters! Then they made merry — some played darts, others danced to the music of the Rolling Stones, four long-haired frumpeters who rolled stones about for a living.

The Stonehenge pub was a popular resort for hundreds and hundreds of years. It helped to cheer up the Dark Ages which followed, when life wasn't much fun.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
let us drink to the  
Midsummer Sun!

Stodgehammer had prepared a surprise all right — the Mugs worked like beavers and within a week Stonehenge was converted into BRITAIN'S FIRST PUB !!! It was opened on Midsummer's Eve with a send-off party that the Mugs didn't forget for nearly a thousand years!

Down below the children arranged a dog race. One boy who could run very fast pretended to be the hare. Fishes and Chip cheered on Rags, who just won from Point.

megaliths: we had thought it impossible to write really funny books about megaliths and archaeology, but this has now been done. Bertil Almqvist was a Swedish author, artist and journalist who died at the age of 70 in 1972. He created the Stones family—Dad, Mum, the boy Pebbles, the girl Chip, with their dog, Rags, their horse Trigger, and their cow Daisy. His books, first published in Swedish, are now being published in English in London by Sidgwick and Jackson, and *The Stones explore Britain* (1975, £1.10) is one of the funniest books—quite apart from its exquisite archaeological humour—we have read for some time. The story is deliciously simple: the Stones land at Hastings in 1466 BC; Pebbles, Chip, Daisy and Trigger were captured by the Beefeaters and carried off to their Bronze Age village 'by the mouth of a river Avon which would be hard to find because many British rivers have that name.' Father and Mother Stone enlist the help of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson and they meet up with the Mugs (so called because they made beakers from clay), get friendly with their chief, Sledgehammer, get the captives released and then all go to Stonehenge which the Mugs are just completing. The Mugs worshipped the sun and they celebrated the Sun Festival on Midsummer's Day... Sledgehammer has prepared a surprise... within a week Stonehenge was converted into BRITAIN'S FIRST PUB. It was opened on Midsummer's Eve with a send-off party that the Mugs didn't forget for nearly a thousand years... They drank all night. When at last the sun rose and shone straight into the building, Sledgehammer proposed a toast to all those who had helped build it and they danced to the music of the Rolling Stones, four long-haired trumpeters who rolled stones about for a living. Then there are other excruciatingly funny things like the annual steeplechase ending in a stream called Beaker's Brook, and the discovery that the trilithons are the origins of cricket and erected to the inventor of the game, namely, Davy Crickett whose dates were 1836–1786 BC.

By kind permission of the publishers we



reproduce here a drawing of Holmes and Watson, and of the opening of the Stonehenge pub. The originals are in colour. Another Stones adventure has already been published in English in which the family goes to America, and there are more to come with adventures to Egypt, Russia, the Olympic Games, Majorca and the Moon. They are more to our taste than the Asterix books, and deserve equal success. The combination of archaeological knowledge and a brilliant evaluation of English humour is quite remarkable.

¶ The second and final circular advertising the IXth International Congress of Pre-historic and Protohistoric Sciences was sent out in May. The Congress will be held in Nice from 13 to 18 September 1976 under the Presidency of Professor Lionel Balout, with Professor Henry de Lumley as Secretary-General. Final registration should be made not later than 1 December 1975 to Professor de Lumley, *Laboratoire de Paléontologie Humaine et de Préhistoire, Université de Provence, Centre*



## ANTIQUITY

*Saint-Charles, 13331 Marseille, Cedex 3, France.*

☞ We have only just seen the first number of the new journal *Paléorient* published at the end of 1973. It is described as an interdisciplinary review of prehistory and protohistory of southwestern Asia. It is edited by S. Renimel and published by the Librairie C. Klincksieck, 11, rue de Lille, Paris. Volume I for 1973 was priced at 75 francs, and so was Volume II for 1974; from this year onwards there will be four numbers a year and the annual subscription 140 francs (\$30). The first issue has a message of greetings by R. J. Braidwood in which he says: 'All colleagues committed to

the increase of knowledge of mankind's prehistoric and protohistoric past will salute the appearance of this journal... We wish *Paléorient* a long and fruitful life.' We are happy to support those good wishes.

**By the evidence: memoirs, 1932-1951** by L. S. B. Leakey. *New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974. 276 pp., 8 pls., 2 maps. £2.95.*

**Leakey's luck: the life of Louis Leakey, 1903-72** by Sonia Cole. *London: Collins, 1975. 448 pp., 31 pls., endpaper maps. £5.50.*

**The Stones explore Britain** by Bertil Almqvist. *London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1975. 24 pp., including drawings in colour. £1.10.*

☞ Articles being prepared for publication in the next two numbers of ANTIQUITY include Philip Betancourt, 'The end of the Greek Bronze Age—a local cause?', R. M. Clark, 'A calibration curve for radiocarbon dates' (presenting us with an objectively derived calibration curve for radiocarbon dates which will be of great value to all archaeologists), Mrs S. Shennan, 'Branč: the social organization of an Early Bronze Age community', Garrett Olmsted, 'The Gundestrup version of Tain Bó Cuailnge', Borislav Jovanović, 'Copper mining and metallurgy in the Vinča group', G. J. Wainwright and V. R. Switsur, 'Gussage All Saints: a chronology', Joan Frayn, 'Home baking in Roman Italy', and Ian Whitaker, 'The Scottish kayaks reconsidered'. Future notes include a rejoinder by H. McKerrell and V. Mejdahl to the criticisms by Martin Aitken and Joan Huxtable of their work printed in this number (pp. 223-6

below), R. J. Harrison, Salvador Quero and Mari Carman Priego on 'New evidence for Bell Beaker copper metallurgy in Spain', R. W. Chapman, 'The Bell Beaker problem—a solution?', M. M. Ripinsky, 'The camel in ancient Arabia', Anthony Clark, 'Geophysical surveying in archaeology', and Stuart Piggott, 'New chariot burials from the Urals'.

We take this opportunity of reminding all who send us manuscripts for consideration that there is a very great pressure on space. They should be kept as short as is convenient with lucidity; they should be double-spaced; should follow our house-rules for bibliography (no footnotes: references Harvard system); and be accompanied by postage for return of rejected manuscripts—of which, alas, there were forty-five in the first six months of 1975 (some of which we should have liked to publish were there space).