

REVIEW

The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial: A Handbook. By R. L. S. BRUCE-MITFORD. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{4}$. Pp. 85 + 36 pls. + 31 figs. London: Published by the Trustees of the British Museum, 1968.

The Provisional Guide to the Sutton Hoo Ship Burial, first published in January, 1947, was a notable achievement, following as it did so soon after the end of the War, when alone it was possible to begin a critical examination and assessment of the finds, a process not yet complete. In the preface to the first edition of the Guide, it is disclosed that a definitive catalogue was planned, and this is in fact nearing completion. Nevertheless, the need remained for an account of the find and its significance for a wider public than that which would be likely to feel the necessity to study the four volumes of the larger work.

The Guide ran to ten impressions, the fifth (1956) providing some measure of revision in the light of further research; even now, however, the author has not found necessary any great measure of recantation of opinions expressed in 1947.

The text is, as stated in the Preface, 'substantially rewritten and enlarged'; it is a readable and lucid account of Britain's greatest treasure.

The survey of the site in 1965-66, in preparation for the recent re-excavation of parts of the area, gives a much more detailed picture than its counterpart in the Guide, showing at least fifteen and possibly seventeen tumuli compared with eleven previously recognised, and indicates that the re-use of an existing Bronze Age burial complex may be in question.

The account of the finds, naturally after twenty years of study, contains fresh facts and conclusions. The monochrome plates, and the line drawings are adequate, though some of the latter are perhaps a little less pleasing, owing to a reduction in scale, than those in the Guide. The colour plates, however, do less than justice to an excellent publication. The great gold buckle, 'the finest piece artistically amongst the Sutton Hoo jewellery', has a rich orange tint which belies its description as of a 'paler gold' than some of the Vendel pieces, and its appearance is not enhanced by the heavy shadow; preoccupation with the merits of complementary colours in providing contrast no doubt accounts for the Mediterranean blue background of the shoulder-clasp, and the reproduction of the purse-lid, 'the most gorgeous of the finds', is a tragedy; how it came to be passed for publication is a mystery.

The bare possibility that the Sutton Hoo ship might, in favourable conditions, have been capable of employing sail, is an academic

point; it may be worthy of mention, though there is no sign of any provision for stepping a mast, but it seems rather a pity to stress the point by the inclusion of Åkerlund's reconstruction when other relevant illustrations formerly in the Guide have been omitted from the Handbook.

The vital question, 'Who was He?', still cannot be answered with certainty, but Redwald, surely always the most likely candidate but for the difficulty presented by earlier views of the dating of the coins, now seems to be regarded as a possibility as the numismatists revise their estimates, but Dr. Bruce-Mitford does call attention to the further obstacle, so neatly evaded in the case of other possibles, that there seems 'no reason why his body should not have been placed in' the ship.

As a volume for the bookshelf, and for reading and reference, the Handbook is a most satisfying production; two minor misprints can be corrected in future impressions.

N.S.

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REPORT FOR 1968

Membership:—During the year 36 Ordinary and 14 Associate members were elected. Resignations accounted for 2 Life, 32 Ordinary and 8 Associate members, resulting in a net increase of 8.

At the year's end membership was:

Ordinary members	418
Associate members	143
Life members	37
Honorary members	7
Institutions and Libraries	72
	677
	—

Excursions:—The following excursions were held:—

	May	25	Clare, Church, Priory, town houses and Iron Age camp.
	June	22	Halesworth, Church, Gothic House, Social Club, Dairy Farm and town houses; Metfield, Church and village.
57	July	6	Yaxley, Church and Hall; Bedingfield, Flemings Hall; Debenham, Church and Guildhall; Thelveton ^{Abbey Farm.}
	July	20	Ixworth, Church and Abbey; Hepworth, Reeves Hall; Hinderclay Church; Wattisfield, The Old Manse and Walnut Tree Cottage.
	Sept.	7	Polstead Church; Thorington Hall; Nayland, various houses and Court Knoll; Wisington, Church and water-mill.

Lectures:—Members were able to attend a number of lectures held by the Bury St. Edmunds Past and Present Society. Lectures held jointly with the Ipswich Historical Society included:—

	March	12	'Burgh Castle' by Charles Green.
	April	9	'Excavations at West Stow' by Stanley West.

Finance:—Our holding of £1,000 in 3% Funding Stock (cost £802 17 6d.) was redeemed this year at par, showing a capital gain of approx. £200. This, together with an additional £200 from current account, has been invested in a further loan with Hunts. & Peterborough County Council. Our total holding in this loan, now renewed at 8%, amounts to £2,200 yielding an annual income of £176.

A legacy of £10 has been received under the will of the late Frank Girling, a member of many years standing.

Cash in hand shows an apparent decrease of £500 but £200 has been invested; income tax repayment on covenanted subscriptions (£100) and on dividends (£30) for 1968 is outstanding, as is also the sum of £65 for sales of *Proceedings* and publications. Our financial position is therefore little changed and continues healthy.

The Excavation fund has been of assistance in the 'dig' at Snape, where the recently acquired caravan has provided accommodation and shelter for volunteer helpers during an uncertain summer.

SUFFOLK INSTITUTE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

				<i>Receipts</i>					
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Bank Balances: 31 December 1967	...	...	...				631	12	10
Subscriptions:									
Ordinary members	...	...	...	500	4	6			
Life members	...	...	...	—	—	—
							500	4	6
Investment Income:									
Hunts. County Council Loan	...	...	...	67	15	6			
3% Funding Stock	...	...	...	30	0	0			
							97	15	6
Bank Interest:									
Lloyds Bank	...	...	...	29	17	6			
Trustee Savings Bank	...	...	...	26	8	11			
							56	6	5
Legacy:									
The late F. A. Girling	...	...	...				10	0	0
<i>Proceedings and Publications, Sales</i> 71 19 0									
<i>Excursions and Lectures Receipts</i> 13 5 0									
Redemption, 3% Funding Stock (cost: £802.17.6d.) 1,000 0 0									

£2,381 3 3

				<i>Assets</i>					
				£	s.	d.			
8% Hunts. & Peterborough C.C. Mortgage Loan	...	...	...	2,200	0	0			
Lloyds Bank and Trustee Savings Bank	...	...	...	115	19	0			
							£2,315	19	0

EXCAVATION

In hand, 31 December 1967	...	...	...				99	13	10
From General Funds	...	...	...				50	0	0
Bank Interest	...	...	...				2	12	9

£152 6 7

OF ARCHÆOLOGY

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1968

	<i>Payments</i>	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<i>Proceedings</i> : vol. xxxi, pt. 1:							
Printing and Postage					767	0	0
Excavation Fund					50	0	0
General Printing and Stationery					34	1	5
Subscriptions to Kindred Societies					13	0	0
Donations:							
Friends of Abbot's Hall Museum		50	0	0			
Friends of Ipswich Museums		5	0	0			
Friends of Moyses's Hall Museum		5	0	0			
					60	0	0
Library:							
Periodicals (2 years)		10	0	0			
Book Purchases		2	11	0			
Binding		12	8	6			
Duplicating Catalogues		5	18	8			
Removal Expenses		5	0	0			
Honorarium to Librarian		10	0	0			
					45	18	2
Excursions and Lectures:							
Expenses		37	6	11			
Insurances		7	5	9			
					44	12	8
Office Expenses:							
Postages, Telephone, Cheque Book					25	12	0
Removal Expenses:							
Stock of <i>Proceedings</i> etc., Ipswich to Farnham, Surrey		25	0	0			
Investment: Hunts. C.C. Mortgage Loan					1,200	0	0
Bank Balances: 31 December 1968					115	19	0
					£2,381	3	3

I have audited the books and accounts of the Society and, in my opinion, the accounts give a true and fair view of the state of the Society's affairs as at 31 December 1968.

1 March 1969

JOHN STORER, *Honorary Auditor.*

FUND

Repairs to Caravan		26	5	10			
Snape Excavation:							
Towing Caravan		4	17	6			
Travelling Expenses		42	15	0			
Incidentals		1	6	4			
In hand, 31 December 1968		77	1	11			
					£152	6	7

NEW MEMBERS ELECTED DURING 1968

- Aikman, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. C., Whalebone Cottage, Rattlesden.
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