

Editorial

Professor Jocelyn Toynbee died on the last day of 1985 at the age of 88. Among her several fields of scholarly interest she numbered the study of the art of the Roman provinces and produced the two most substantial works to appear so far on the art of Roman Britain. Within the overlapping fields of art history and archaeology her breadth of learning was outstanding, as is well revealed by her earliest book *The Hadrianic School* of 1934. Jocelyn Toynbee was the most distinguished British member this century of the long-established tradition which combined archaeology at its most humane with art history at its most sensible. For her, the historical and human significance of an object or a design was of vastly more importance than purely aesthetic considerations. The broad sympathy with which she wrote was thus the most readily recognizable feature of her scholarship, as well as the most attractive.

One of the most gratifying features of the past year has been the publication of major studies on two legionary fortresses, Inchtuthil and Cáceres el Viejo. Both are publications of excavations carried out decades ago, Inchtuthil by Professors Richmond and St. Joseph in the nineteen-fifties and sixties, Cáceres by Adolf Schulten between 1910 and 1930. The Inchtuthil report has long been eagerly awaited by students not only of Roman Britain but of the Roman Empire and the army at large, and its appearance completes the publication of I.A. Richmond's major excavations. Cáceres is equally welcome as the first modern account (albeit of a rather summary excavation) of a Republican legionary fortress in Spain, written by Professor G. Ulbert and handsomely produced as one of the *Madriдер Beiträge* of the German Archaeological Institute. It is good news that both sites are to be further examined in the next year or so.

A reviewer in this issue asks: Who reads excavation reports? An equally and pertinent question, in the case of some publications, is: Who *can* read excavation reports? Several reports have recently appeared which can be read or referred to with extreme difficulty or not at all. At the heart of the problem is the current (and much needed) emphasis upon the storage of data not requiring publication in centralised archives, often in computerized form, thus allowing the published report to present a full summary of the principal results of the work. Unfortunately, enough attention is not always given to the maintenance of clear links between the published record and what has been relegated to an excavation archive. At best this is irritating; at worst it can make the report unusable. The common failing is the lack of any correlation between objects or features dealt with in the publication and their archaeological context as set out in the archive. It seems almost axiomatic that so obvious a relationship must be accessible to any serious reader of an archaeological report. Yet in four major publications of the past two years it is not immediately possible to locate artefacts in their appropriate stratigraphical positions. It is right and proper that more economical ways of publishing large enterprises should be explored. But the ultimate record must be usable as it stands.

A related matter is the use of microfiche in archaeological publication as a means of dealing with the proliferation of specialist data. Thus far, *Britannia*, in common with most national journals in Europe, has not resorted to microfiche in any of its articles, there being no academic or financial reasons for doing so. Microfiche is not only a cumbersome and inefficient way of presenting and storing data, it is no longer (if it ever was) a cost-effective way of dealing with a growing problem. The rapid spread of computer-setting and of associated savings in printing-costs have considerably undermined the financial argument in

favour of microfiche. Only in circumstances in which very large quantities of fiches are generated is there any real saving. The academic case for microfiche has never been convincingly put, while the development of retrievable computerised data and the still more recent advance of on-line information services have already begun to make the process look decidedly dated. It has not proved to be as convenient and flexible a vehicle as is needed for archaeological publication. In the medium term the electronic journal, from which articles are available as print-outs on demand, seems to offer a more effective, and much cheaper, way of making available archaeological data and, at the same time, removing from journals the unreadable (but necessary) lists and tables which any sizeable report breeds. That device has already arrived for some of the sciences, but not yet for archaeology. Even when it has, there will still be a need for the conventional journal format for a long time to come, for as long, at least, as mind wishes to communicate with mind and not merely computer with computer.