

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEXTILES NEWSLETTER

ATN no. 4, 1987

EDITORIAL

The areas of research covered in this issue of the *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* vary considerably. There is a survey of textiles which have recently been found in Ireland. Further afield there is a brief note about Meroitic and Roman finds from the Sudanese site of Geili, and some further information about the Pharaonic Egyptian site of Tel el-'Amarna. In addition to these notes about recent or current excavations with textile finds, there are also two contributions on clay weights from archaeological sites which are often described as 'loom weights', plus a note on the re-identification of a silk textile from the Roman period which was found at the Hungarian site of Szöny (Roman Brigetio). These notes are followed by what have become standard entries, namely miscellaneous notes concerning forthcoming courses, exhibitions, etc. and information about recent theses which are relevant to the study of archaeological textiles in general.

The bibliographical references have been expanded to a certain extent in this issue, in that there is a translation of the contents page from a recent book on costume from the Soviet Union. Please note, however, that although the chapter titles have been given in English, they were written in Russian. In addition to this Russian work, there is also the recent publications list, and several personal and extended bibliographies. In this issue, the works of Z. Castro Curel, M. Kostelníková

and the late R. Pfister have been included. If any one has either knowledge of a recent work (post 1980), which could be included in the bibliography or perhaps a personal bibliography which they would like to be included in a forthcoming issue of the *ATN* we would be very pleased to receive it, but please remember that we will only list published works which are relevant to the study of archaeological textiles. Should anyone have anything which they feel would be suitable for the *ATN* 5, please remember that the deadline for that issue is 1st October, 1987.

Could subscribers please check their addresses which are given in the List of Subscribers. If any corrections are to be made could you please send the relevant information to G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood at the address given in the colophon.

Finally, subscriptions are once again due! Members were warned in the last issue! We have been forced to increase the subscriptions due to the dropping value of the pound, etc. The price of the *ATN* has been raised to 15 Dutch guilders per year (for two issues). The increase has been kept to a minimum, and it is hoped that no further rises will be necessary. Could members please remember to pay in Dutch guilders whenever possible. If this is really not feasible, then payment in the equivalent in pounds sterling can be arranged. Cheques in American dollars or German marks cannot be accepted as we have to pay \$3 to cash a \$4 cheque!

EXHIBITIONS ETC.

St. Janhospitaal and Gruuthusemuseum, Bruges, Belgium: *Masterpieces of ancient Bruges tapestries*. 25th June to 4th October 1987, (catalogue available).

Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels, Belgium: *Tissus d'Or. Restauration de 4 chefs-d'oeuvre textiles de la Renaissance* (Exact dates unknown).

Musée de l'Impression sur Etoffes, Mulhouse, France: *Coordonnées tissus imprimés papiers peints 1480-1870*. March 1987 to March 1988.

Statens Historiska Museum, Stockholm, Sweden: *Ärkebiskoparna Från Bremen* (textiles from the tombs of various archbishops from Bremen). (Exact dates unknown. Catalogue available).

The Victoria and Albert Museum has now reopened its Early Medieval Gallery, now entitled *the Medieval Treasury*. The permanent display includes Coptic textiles, medieval silks and embroideries (up to the 14th century)

Colophon

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J. P. Wild.

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CONTACT ADDRESS: G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood,
Van Swietenstraat 45, NL-2334 EA Leiden, The
Netherlands.

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Eastwood, 2567328, again using the contact
address given above.

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

The *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* aims to provide a source of information for those who are studying textiles primarily as archaeological objects. Contributions to the *Newsletter* are welcome, and should be in accordance with this concept.

1. Contributions can be in English, German or French. If necessary, items in Russian will be accepted, but these will be translated into English.

2. Contributions may include short (!) references to recently published books, journals, articles and to forthcoming exhibitions, seminars, conferences, special courses, lectures etc., information concerning work in progress (see note 3), and any queries concerning the study of archaeological textiles.

3. Work in Progress: this is a general category which includes, for example, work on archaeological textiles from recent excavations or in museums. Items in this section should contain information (if available) about the following: where the textiles were found; the relevant dates; who excavated the site and when; the range of textiles found; who is responsible for the cataloguing of the textiles and where they are to be published. These notes should not exceed a maximum of three hundred words per item. Maps showing the position of the relevant sites would be greatly appreciated.

4. Line drawings will be considered, but photographs cannot be accepted at present.

5. The editors reserve the right to suggest alterations in the wording of items sent for publication.

6. The deadline for contributions is the 1st April and the 1st October, for the May and November editions respectively.

LOGO

The logo is taken from the famous depiction on a Hallstatt urn, found at Odenburg/Soporn, Hungary. The original illustration shows three women who are spinning and weaving.

IRELAND
(Map 1)

Cork: Excavations in Cork City were carried out in 1973-76 by Dermot Twohig and in 1984-85 by Maurice Hurley. The work uncovered details of 13th century city walls and houses. Organic material including leather shoes, and much pottery and bones was recovered from pits and yards running down to the river behind the houses. Textile finds include wool twills dyed with madder, but full analysis of the textiles is not complete. A report on Grand Parade I by M. Hurley, "Excavations of part of the Medieval City Wall at Grand Parade Cork", appeared in the *Journal of the Cork Archaeological Society*, XC, no. 249 (1985-6), 65-90, and an appendix on three textiles is included.

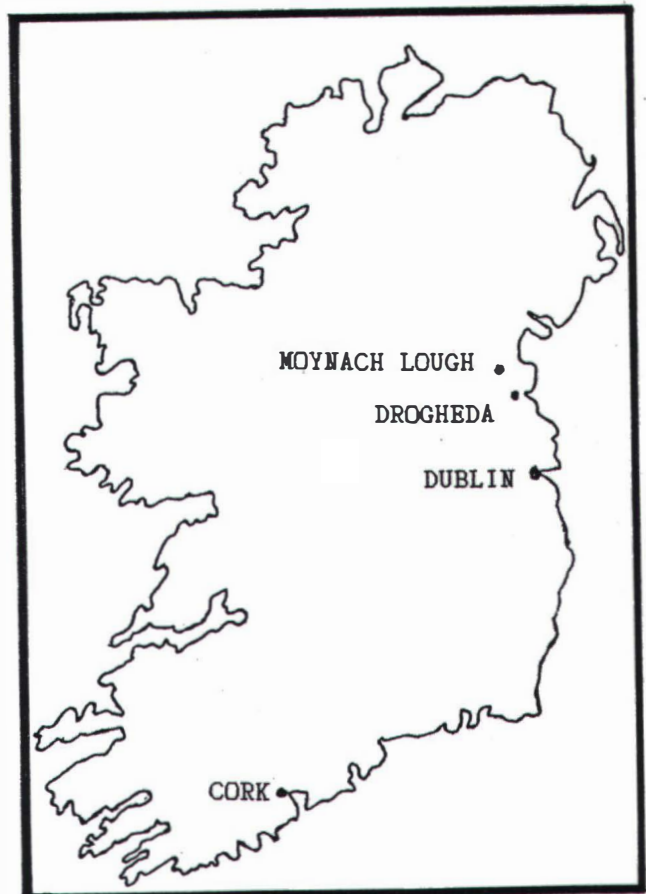
Dublin: Ten Hiberno-Norse habitation sites at Fishamble Street and a further dwelling at St. John's Lane were excavated by Dr. Patrick Wallace of the National Museum of Ireland between 1975-1981. Major textile finds totalling almost 2,000 pieces were recovered and are being analysed by Frances Pritchard of the Museum of London. A discussion of silk textiles, including gold and silver braids from Dublin was undertaken by Frances Pritchard at the Bergen Symposium in 1984. 65 pieces were analysed by Libby Heckett who reported that kerchiefs and caps of silk and wool tabby cloth were among the remains. Full publication of the textile analyses will be included in the volumes to be published in the near future by the Royal Irish Academy. A preliminary account of the excavations by Dr. Wallace is included in BAR International 255, Clark H. and Simms, A. (ed.), *The Comparative History of Urban Origins in Non-Roman Europe*, entitled "The Archaeology of Viking Dublin", pages 103-145, Oxford (1985).

In 1985-86 there were excavations in Dublin Castle Yard by Dr. Ann Lynch and Mr. Cox Manning of the Office of Public Works, revealing the corner towers of the 13th century Norman castle built on the order of King John of England by the Anglo-Norman intruders into the Hiberno-Norse town. In some parts of the Castle yard there were signs of prior Hiberno-Norse houses and a few textiles were recovered from these and await analysis.

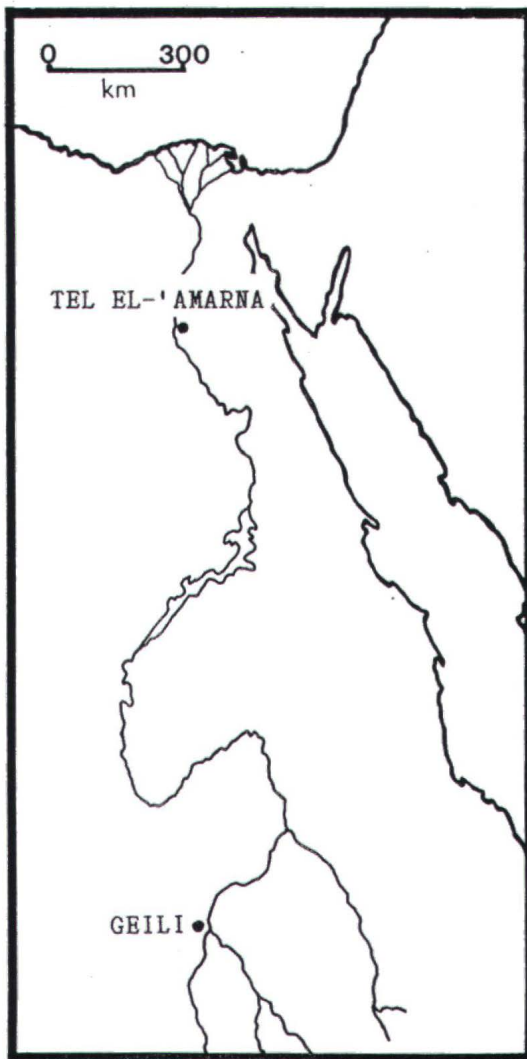
Drogheda: Excavations at James Street, Drogheda took place in 1982 under the direction of Kieran Cambell. Three textiles were found in a refuse dump associated with a 16th century house. Finds representing luxury pottery goods were recovered and one textile, having been dyed with kermes, reflects these high living standard. A report is forthcoming on the site which will include an appendix on the textiles.

Moynagh Lough, Co. Meath: This *crannog* or artificial island site has been excavated by John Bradley from 1981-1986. A habitation site of the Early Christian period overlay some remains of Bronze Age activity. Four textiles were recovered from the Early Christian levels and await conservation and analysis.

L. Heckett,
Ballymore House,
Cobh,
Co. Cork,
Ireland.



Map 1 Textile Findspots in Ireland



Map 2 Textile Findspots in Egypt and The Sudan

TEL EL-'AMARNA, 1987
(Map 2)

During the month of January, 1987, I was able to work at the Upper Egyptian site of Tel el-'Amarna and finish the recording of the textiles from the Workmen's Village (see *ATN*, 1 1985, 8). The Village is an unusual site in that it was only occupied for about 25 years between c. 1375-1350 B.C. (the precise dates are not known). The occupants of the Village were the workmen and artists who produced the city of Akhetaten ("The Horizon of the Aten"), which was specially created by the 'heretic' pharaoh, Akhenaten.

Since 1979 a team of archaeologists, under the direction of B. Kemp for the Egypt Exploration Society (E.E.S.), has been working at the site. During the course of these excavations a large quantity of cloth was found in the Chapel and *zir* areas. The latter region is made up of a series of

large pits which were filled with household rubbish.

Approximately 5000 textiles have been recorded from this site. The vast majority are made from flax, s-spun, and woven in a tabby weave. Some large fragments have been found (c. 50 x 50 cm), but many of the pieces are less than 10 cm in size. In addition to the flax textiles a number of textiles in wool have also been recorded. Some of these pieces are very coarse, but there are also some extremely fine examples, both in terms of the weave and the appearance of the cloth. The fibre diameter measurements suggest that most of the wool textiles were of the hairy medium to hairy form, but it should be stressed that these results are still tentative as the work has not been completed.

A small number of the flax textiles were coloured. The dyes have been analysed by G. W. Taylor and have proved to be:

reds: madder (*Rubia tinctorum*) and ochreous earth

blues: indigotin

purple: madder and indigotin

In addition to small fragments of cloth, a number of garment pieces and complete objects have been found. The garment pieces include parts of numerous loin cloths, long and short sleeves, and neck openings for tunics. The complete objects include lamp wicks, cloth rings, spice/herb bags, plus one small bag which may have been used in some form of domestic magic (this point is still tentative).

A number of objects have also been found which are related to the production of textiles, namely, bronze/copper needles and wooden spindles and whorls (with owner's marks cut into the sides of the whorls).

All the textiles referred to in this brief report are now housed in the finds magazine at Tel el-'Amarna.

It is intended that all the textiles and related objects will be written up in a separate monograph in the *Amarna Reports* series which is published by the Egypt Exploration Society.

Gillian M. Vogelsang-Eastwood.

Site	Dates	Excavators	Textile Specialist
Ireland (Map 1)			
Cork urban	Medieval	M. Hurley Dept. of Archaeology Univeristy College Cork, Ireland	L. Heckett
Cork urban	Medieval	D. Twohig Kinsale, Co. Cork Ireland	R. C. Janaway
Drogheda urban	16th century	K. Campbell 6 St. Ultans Laytown, Drogheda C. Louth, Ireland	L. Heckett
Dublin Fishamble St/ St. John's Lane	Hiberno-Norse (10-11th cent. A.D.)	P. Wallace National Museum of Ireland, Merrion Row Dublin, Ireland	F. Pritchard
Dublin Castle	Hiberno-Norse	A. Lynch and C. Manning Office of Public Works St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2, Ireland	L. Heckett
Moynagh Lough artificial island	Early Christian (5-12th cent. A.D.)	J. Bradley Urban Archaeology 86 St. Stephen's Green Dublin 2, Ireland	L. Heckett
Egypt (Map 2)			
Tel el-'Amarna urban (Map 00)	18th Dynasty (c. 1370 B.C.)	B. Kemp Faculty of Oriental Studies, Sidgewick Ave. Cambridge, England	G. M. Vogel- sang-Eastwood
The Sudan (Map 2)			
Geili cemetery (Map 00)	Meroitic and Early Christian (8th cent. B.C - c. 10th cent. A.D.)	I. Caneva Dipt. di Scienze dell 'antichita, Universita di Roma, Via Palestro 63, Rome, Italy.	

TEXTILES FROM SOUTHERN NUBIA
(Map 2)

A number of textiles have been found at the Sudanese site of Geili (near Khartoum), in the Meroitic and Christian graves discovered by the Italian Mission for Prehistoric Research in Egypt and the Sudan. The textiles were found in a number of simple pit graves, all with east-west orientation, which were barely big enough for the body. In three cases, however, fabric fragments were found associated with the Meroitic (between 8th century B.C. and the 4th century A.D.) contracted burials, while parts of fringed textiles, apparently belonging to mantles or shawls, were found wrapped around the body of thirteen extended burials which are probably Christian.

There are 16 textile fragments and the preliminary tests indicate that there were eleven textiles made from coarse sheep's wool or goathair, two textiles from cotton, two from *Aloe ferox* (a wild plant growing in the semi-arid belt of Africa), and finally, one sample which may have been obtained from the seeds of the Baobab tree. The Meroitic samples were made from the vegetable fibres, while the Christian samples were made from sheep's wool/goat hair. In contrast to textiles from other Nubian sites, camel hair textiles do not occur.

The fabrics were apparently undyed, with the designs being obtained by combing fibres of different, natural colours. Both s and z-spun threads were found in this group of textiles. All the textiles had been woven in a tabby weave.

The fragments of the woollen textiles were bigger than the vegetable specimens, but they were not large enough for one to deduce the width of the loom. The most simple fringed edge occurred in the five cases in which the edge was present. It consisted of unlooped, z-twisted groups of six warp threads, a type which is also common in Late Nubian textiles (type BI of Bergman's catalogue), as it is all over the world. When present, the selvedge was of one type only, unknown in Nubia, obtained by making two extra turns of the weft helicoidally around two reinforcing cords. No hems or seams have been found amongst any of the textile fragments.

The Meroitic textiles are too small to give any information concerning the original appearance of the cloth, their function, or position in the grave. The fabric from the Christian graves was probably used for mantles, or shawls, and then for funerary wrappings.

The textiles do not appear to have been imported. The poor quality of the spinning and weaving seems to point towards a poor community which was not involved in the production or trading of luxury objects.

I. Bergman, *Late Nubian Textiles*, (1975), 50, Stockholm,

I. Caneva,
Dipartimento di scienze dell'antichità,
Università di Roma "La Sapienza",
Sez. Paleontologia:
Via Palestro, 63,
00185 Rome,
Italy.

A 3/1 DAMASK TWILL SILK FROM LATE ROMAN BRIGETIO

In the Magyar Nemzeti Museum of Budapest are kept the textile remains from some Late Roman graves from Brigetio, nowadays Szöny. The textiles were published in 1965 by M. Hajnal. In March 1987 I had the opportunity of examining the fabrics in question, and it became clear that a piece which Hajnal described as being a silk of tight texture, with a pattern in 'zig-zag streak weaving', is in fact a sample of the 3/1 damask twill silk. This type of weave has recently have been researched by J. P. Wild (1970, 51ff; 1984), and D. De Jonghe and M. Tavernier (1977/78).

The Brigetio silk remains may derive from more than one cloth: some fragments seem to have been woven of unspun yarn in both systems, others have a z-spun warp, but unspun weft. Counts of 40/38, 38/30, 40/30 and 45/40 have been measured. Traces of colour are still visible on the silk fragments: M. Hajnal has suggested that they have been dyed with Polish cochineal (*Margarodes polonicus*).

L. Bender Jørgensen

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- M. Hajnal (1965): "Textiles from the Graves of Late Roman Brigetio", *Acta Antiqua, Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, XIII (1965), 259-266.
D. De Jonghe and M. Tavernier (1977/78): "Die spätantiken Köper 4-Damaste aus dem Sarg des Bischofs Paulinus in der Krypta der St. Paulinus-Kirche zu Trier", *Trierer Zeitschrift*, 40/41 (1977/78), 145-174.
J. P. Wild (1970): *Textile Manufacture in the Northern Roman Provinces*, Cambridge.
J. P. Wild (1984): "Some early silk finds in Northwest Europe", *The Textile Museum Journal*, 23 (1984), 17-24.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CLAY WEIGHTS

It is commonly supposed that the various pierced clay weights which occasionally appear in diverse cultural prehistoric settlements are related to looms. Some textile scholars and archaeologists, however, acknowledge the discrepancy between the normally small number of weights and the substantial number needed for the stretching of warp yarns when plain or patterned fabrics are woven on warp-weighted looms.

In methodically excavated large settlements - where spindle whorls attest to the activity of spinning - the absence of clay weights has led to the consideration of other prehistoric weaving techniques.

Archaeological studies reveal the inappropriate spatial location of scattered or clustered groups of weights - often crudely made, yet interspersed with finely executed ceramics - in several sites, the concurrent heterogeneous distinctive shapes, variable tempers, surface treatments and number of perforations. Principally, the striking variance in weight of each of the specimens in the assemblages is in disagreement with what is technically required of an even warp tension, and with the assumed concept of "sets of loom weights". Equally strange is the presence of weights in dwellings, but their absence from coeval burials where spindle whorls were furnished as grave goods. By inference, this would suggest that the two types of objects were not ideologically linked.

Until further stratigraphical excavations and systematic quantitative recordings provide the precise find circumstances it seems more appropriate to continue using the Latin denomination of *pondus* (sing.) or *pondera* (pl.) that archaeologists frequently give to these controversial prehistoric artefacts.

Z. Castro Curel,
Bori Fontesta 23,
08021 Barcelona,
Spain.

LÜBECK-PROJECT '88

In dem ATN, no. 3, 1986, S.3, wurde ein Arbeitsprojekt des Textilmuseums in Neumünster vorgestellt, welches sich mit den Textilfunden aus den Grabungen der Hansestadt Lübeck befaßt. Dabei unterlief leider ein bibliographischer Fehler; Dieser sei im folgenden berichtigt, und die bibliographischen Angaben werden dabei erweitert.

Die textilen Funde aus den Altstadtgrabungen Lübecks werden kontinuierlich veröffentlicht in den "Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte" (abgekürzt: LSAK). Die einzelnen Veröffentlichungen, vorgelegt von Klaus Tidow, finden sich in folgenden Bänden der LSAK:

- Bd. 1, 1978, S. 133-138 (zusammen mit Rudolf Ullemeyer) und S.139-157.
- Bd. 3, 1980, S. 183-192.
- Bd. 4, 1980, S. 163-168.
- Bd. 6, 1982, S. 115-122.
- Bd. 8, 1984, S. 33-40.
- Bd. 12, 1986, S. 123-129; 173-182 und 183-189.

Für die 1987 ff. folgenden Bände von LSAK liegen Manuskripte zum Druck vor oder werden derzeit vorbereitet.

Zusammenfassende Darstellungen bisher: LSAK 4, 1980, S. 163-168 und in: *Archäologie in Lübeck*. Erkenntnisse von Archäologie und Bauforschung zur Geschichte und Vorgeschichte der Hansestadt (= *Hefte zur Kunst und Kulturgeschichte der Hansestadt Lübeck* 3), Lübeck 1980, S.117-120.

Klaus Tidow,
Textilmuseum Neumünster,
Parkstraße 17,
D-2350 Neumünster,
W. Germany.

HANDSPINNING AND WEAVING EXHIBITION

The European Centre for Folk Studies is preparing an exhibition on handspinning and weaving throughout Europe from the neolithic to the present day. We would like photographs or information on archaeological finds related to textile from who ever might be able to help. As soon as possible, please!

The exhibition will be open to the public between September and mid-October. It will be then available for tour in Europe from November onwards. If anybody is interested in having this exhibition could they please get in contact with Louise Jones at the address given below.

Louise Jones,
Senior Researcher,
European Centre for Folk Studies.
Parade Street,
Llangollen,
Clwyd, LL20 8RB,
Wales, U. K.

THE NETWORK

Susan S. Bean of the Peabody Museum, Salem, U.S.A. is compiling a register of people who are involved in the history of textiles. The register is called: *The Network: an International Directory of Textile Scholars*, and so far there are over 250 members. Anyone who is interested in being included in this work should submit their name, address and research interests to S. Bean at the address given below.

The establishment of *The Network* was supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, but its continuation is dependent upon the Museum. The cost of copying and mailing *The Network* is U.S. \$3.50 (by surface mail overseas). Copies can be obtained by sending S. Bean a cheque - for U.S. \$3.50 (or the equivalent in your local currency). The cheque should be made payable to the Peabody Museum of Salem.

S. S. Bean,
Curator of Ethnology,
Peabody Museum,
East India Square,
Salem,
Massachusetts 01970,
U.S.A.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEXTILES AND THEIR CONSERVATION

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

Papers are invited for a conference at York in Spring 1988 on archaeological textiles and their conservation. Papers on specific topics such as lifting, cleaning, consolidation, mounting and storage, as well as case studies of particular textiles are welcomed. The conference will cover the history of textile manufacture and the study and conservation of their archaeological remains.

It is intended that this day of lectures will be preceded by a day of intensive practical sessions for a limited number of participants, covering aspects of textile production, dyeing, fibre identification, textile recording, and textile conservation.

Abstracts of papers for 20 and 10 minute contributions should be sent to Sonia O'Conner (at the address given below), by whom further information will be made available in due course.

Sonia O'Conner
YAT, Conservation Laboratories,
Galmanhoe Lane,
Marygate, York,
England, YO3 7DZ

THE 1987 MESAT MEETING IN YORK

The Third Symposium for Archaeological Textiles met for four days at York in May 1987.

Thanks to the efforts and organizing talents of Penelope Walton and John Peter Wild the symposium was a great success. And as the York Archaeological Trust acted as "fairy godmother" we were both archaeologically and gastronomically very well fed.

The lectures were presented in chronological order, from Mesolithic *nålebinding* to knitted stockings from a royal burial in Roskilde Cathedral, and 17th century garments from Svalbard. Geographically the lectures covered areas from Svalbard and Norway to Spain, and from Poland to Ireland.

The themes covered spinning and weaving, embroidery, *nålebinding*, dyes and basketry.

Two small exhibitions in the King's Manor, where the lectures took place, dealt with modern copies of prehistoric clothes (Lejre, Denmark), and plant dyes (beautifully set up by Su Grierson).

A visit to the Yorvik Viking Centre and the Mansion House made the great impression on us all. The last afternoon Penelope Walton kindly showed us the laboratory of the York Archaeological Trust where she had put on show a selection of textiles for closer examination.

Four most successful days - both archaeologically and socially - which will not be easily forgotten by the participants of the symposium.

Elisabeth Munksgaard, M.A.,
Asst. Keeper, Prehistoric Dept.,
The Danish National Museum,
Copenhagen, Denmark.

RECENT THESES

K. S. Brown, *The Question of Near Eastern Textile Decoration of the Early First Millennium B.C. as a Source for Greek Vase Painting of the Orientalizing Style*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania (1980).

S. Bittner, *Tracht und Bewaffnung des persischen Heeres zur Zeit der Achaimeniden*, Ph.D. thesis, Ludwig-Maximilian Universität, Munich (1985). ISBN 3-9800481-6-1.

C. van Driel, *Studies in Leatherwork from Roman Archaeological Sites in North Western Europe*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Amsterdam (1987).

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-Z. C. Curel, Bori I Fontesta 23, 08021 Barcelona, Spain.

-J. Dosogne-Lafontaine, Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Parc du Cinquantenaire 10, B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgium.

-C. van Driel-Murray, Laan van Ouderzorg 107, 2352 HL Leiderdorp, The Netherlands.

-M. Fentz, Norupvej 44, Vammen, DK-8800 Viborg, Denmark.

-K. Finch, 7, Western Gardens, London, W5, England.

-E. French, Ashburne Hall, Old Hall Lane, Manchester M14 6HP, England.

-T. Gabra-Sanders, 18, Craighleith Hill Park, Edinburgh EH4 2NR, Scotland.

-C. Alfaro Giner, Gobernador Viejo 34^{aa}, 46003-Valencia, Spain.

-H. Granger-Taylor, 22, Park Village East, London, NW1 7P2, England.

-E. E. Gudjónsson, National Museum of Iceland, PO Box 1499, IS-121 Reykjavik, Iceland.

-R. Hall, Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College, Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT, England.

-L. Heckett, Dept. of Archaeology, University College, Cork, Ireland.

-A. Hedeager Madsen, Lollandsgade 63, DK-8000 Arhus C, Denmark.

-J. M. G. Helmholt, Tuinfluiterslaan 35, NL-2566 SJ Den Haag, The Netherlands.

-L. Hillyer, Textile Conservation, Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 2RL, England.

-M. Hoffmann, Almevegen 28, Oslo 8, Norway.

-P. van 't Hooft, Elsa Bränströmstraat 12, NL-2037 LR, Haarlem-Schalkwijk, The Netherlands.

-R. C. Janaway, School of Archaeological Sciences, The University of Bradford, Bradford, W. Yorkshire, BD7 1DP, England.

-A. Johnson, Rønnekrogen 13, DK-3400 Hillerød, Denmark.

-D. de Jonghe, Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis, Jubelpark, Brussels, Belgium.

-E. L. Kalf, Westerhoutstraat 32, NL-2012 JS Haarlem, The Netherlands.

-D. Kehren, Langwartweg 59, D-53 Bonn-Dottendorf, W. Germany.

-P. van de Lee-Harms, Statenjachtstraat 494, NL-1034 EW Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

-V. Liebscher, Links House, Tayport, Fife DD6 9ED, Scotland.

-M. Lindström, Skåbevägen 18, 222 28 Lund, Sweden.

-D. O. R. Lugtigheid, Gieterstraat 9¹¹¹, NL-1015 HB Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

-I. Lützen, Enggårdsvvej 8, DK-3060 Espergaerde, Denmark.

-W. I. Mackay, 130, Maidmont Road, Edinburgh EH9 1A4, Scotland.

-L. M. Mackie, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5S 2C6.

-C. McClintock, Redhall, Ballycarry, Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland.

A LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS

-S. H. Abels and C. Abels-Klarenbeek, Dalweg 12, NL-9464 TE Bexterzandvoort, The Netherlands.

-W. K. Adams, 957, Wolf Run Road, Lexington, KY-40404, USA.

-J. Allgrove-McDowell, 13, Powis Villas, Brighton, England, BN1 3HD.

-H. M. Appleyard, 8, Bridle Stile, Shelf, Halifax, England, HX3 7NW

-E. Barber, 1126 North Chester Ave., Pasadena, CA. 91104, USA.

-L. Bender Jørgensen, Bryggerivej 8, ^{44v}, DK-2500 Valby, Denmark.

-A. Bergli, Historisk Museum, Konserveringsavdelingen, Arstadsvollen 22, N-5000 Bergen, Norway.

-M. Bergstrand, c/o Emaus, VildgÅsvågen 11A, S-22235 Lund, Sweden.

-K. M. Boe, Stationsgade 20, DK-8240 Risskou, Denmark.

-J. S. Brandford, 200 Brookfield Rd., Ithaca, New York 14850, USA.

-M. M. Brooks, 17, The Squirrels, Belmont Hill, London, SE13 5DR, England.

-W. Cooke, Dept. of Textiles, UMIST, PO Box 88, Manchester, M60 1QD, England.

-E. Crowfoot, River View, Big Row, Geldeston, Beccles, Suffolk, NR34 0LY, England.

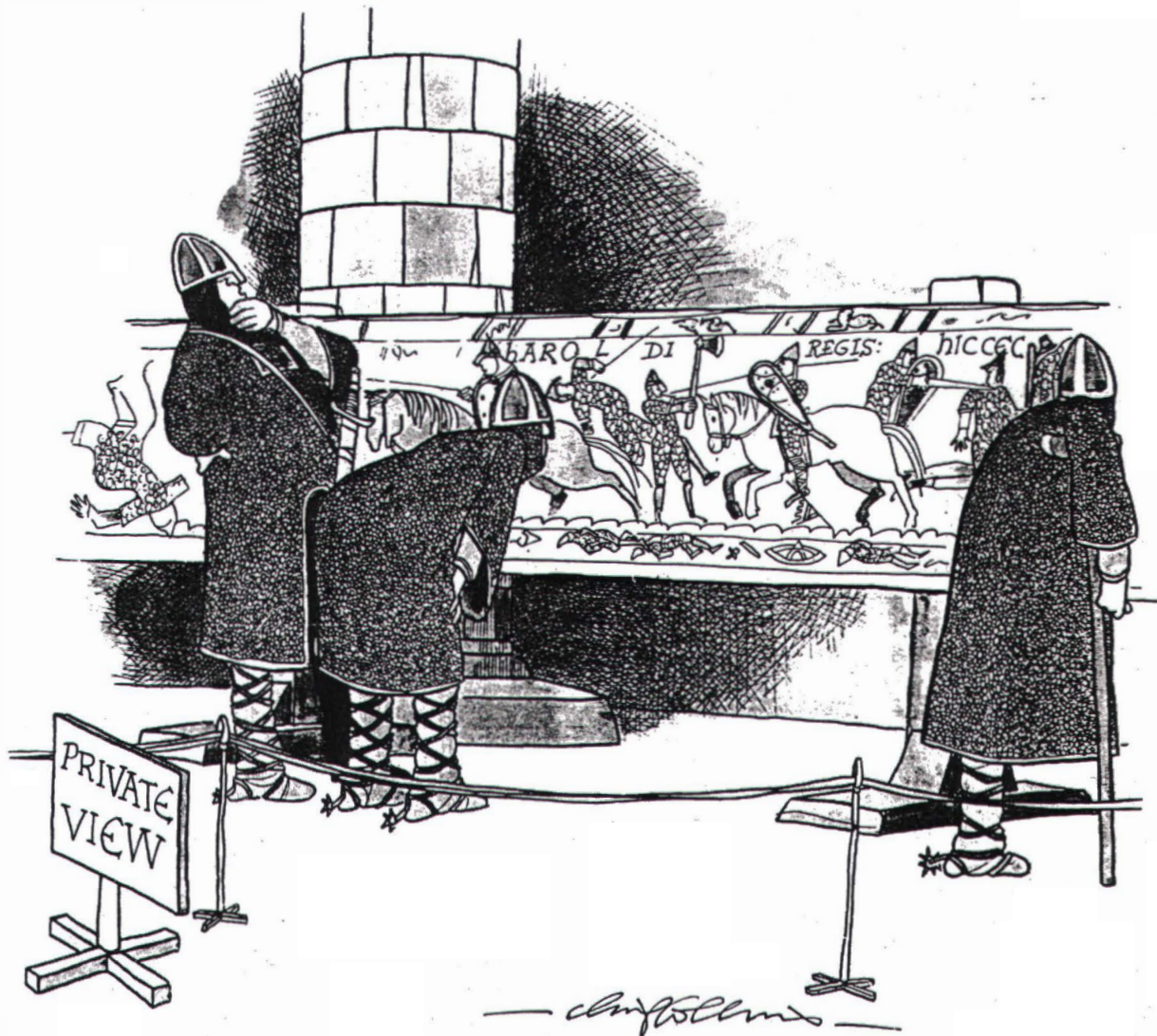
- A. De Moor, Windekekouter, 90, 9258 Scheldewindeke, Belgium.
- B. Moore, 5, Rue Eliane, F-92190 Meudon, Haut-de Seine, France.
- A. Morrell, 119, Berwick Avenue, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 3AT, England.
- E. Munksgaard, Kastanievej 2, DK-2960 Rungsted Kyst, Denmark.
- H. Moustafa Kamal, 83 Talal Saad Allah Street, El Haram Street, app. 8, Cairo-Giza, Egypt
- K.H. Nielsen, Hulsøvang 17, DK-2960 Rungsted Kyst, Denmark.
- S. Niessen, Rijnsburgerweg 164, NL-2333 AJ Leiden, The Netherlands.
- G. Owen-Crocker, The English Department, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, England.
- E. Peacock, Arkeologisk Audeing, UNIT Museet, Erling Skakkes gt. 47, N-7000 Trondheim, Norway.
- I. R. Pedersen, Konserveringsbygget, Arstadveien 22, N-5000 Bergen, Norway.
- I. Petrascheck-Heim, A-1190 Wien, Dionysius-Andrassy-Strasse 16, Austria.
- M. Postgate, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge CB3 9DA, England.
- J. Powell, Samanyoku Sok 97, Sisli, Istanbul, Turkey.
- K. Prangsgaard, Spobjergvej 173, DK-8220 Braband, Denmark.
- F. Pritchard, Dept. of Urban Archaeology, Museum of London, London Wall, London, EC2Y 5HN, England.
- K. Riboud, 54, Avenue de Breteuil, 75007 Paris, France.
- F. Roberts, Konserveringsanstalten, Vester-gade 5-7, DK-6870 Ølgod, Denmark.
- M. L. Ryder, Hill Farming Research Organisation, Bush Estate, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 0PY, Scotland.
- K. Sakamoto, 13-25, Tennoji-Ku, Shinpoin-Cho, Osaka 543, Japan.
- H. Sancisi, Klassiek Instituut, Pleiaden-laan 10-26, NL-9742 NG Groningen, The Netherlands.
- B. F. Schweger, G-213 Biological Sciences Building, Boreal Institute for Northern Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T6G 2E9.
- T. Schick, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem 91012, Israel.
- E. Schølberg, Allégt 38, N-5000 Bergen, Norway.
- A. Sheffer, Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv 69 978, Tel Aviv, P.O.B. 39040, Israel.
- R. A. Smith, 56, Parchment Street, Winchester, Hants., England, B. Stenberg Tyrefor, Alväg 6, 19441 Upplands Väsby, Sweden.
- M. Straub, 67, Highsett, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 1NZ, England.
- N. Tarrant, Royal Scottish Museum, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF, Scotland.
- G. Tata, P.O. Box 8414, Salt Lake City, Utah 84108, USA.
- C. Thorpe, 15, Hermitage Road, London, N4 1DF, England.
- K. Tidow, Textilmuseum, 2350 Neumünster 1, Postfach 2640 + 2660, W. Germany.
- D. Tweddle, York Archaeological Trust, 1, Pavement, York, YO1 2NA, England.
- M. Verheeken-Lammens, Ed. Arsenstraat 47, 2510 Mortselsel, Belgium.
- G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, Van Swietenstraat 45, NL-2334 EA Leiden, The Netherlands.
- S. Vons-Comis, Griend 87, NL-1112 KZ Diemen, The Netherlands.
- P. Walton, Garden Flat, 12, Bootham Terrace, York, YO3 7DH, England.
- D. Waterhouse, Anivad Textile Arts, 26, Mostyn Gardens, London, England, NW10 5QX.
- S. Wikström, Bergvik, Adö, S-19700 Bro, Sweden.
- J. P. Wild, Dept. of Archaeology, Manchester University, Manchester, England.
- C. Wyaux, Rue des Meuniers 4, B-5973 Glimes, Belgium.
- M. A. van Zeist-Slager, Wilhelminalaan 9, NL-9781 CT Bedum, The Netherlands.
- W. H. Zimmermann, Vor der Burg 26, D-2935 Bockhorn, W. Germany.

B INSTITUTIONS

- Abegg-Stiftung, Ch-3132 Riggisberg (Bern) Switzerland.
- Australian National Gallery, G.P.O. Box 1150, Canberra, A.C.T. Australia 2601.
- Akademija Nauk Litovskoj SSR, Central'naja biblioteka, ul.k. Pozelos 2/8, 232632 Vilnius, USSR.
- Central Lab. V.O.V.V.V.K.B.W., G. Metsustraat 8, PB 5132, 1007 AC Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
- Chicago House, Luxor, The Republic of Egypt.
- Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Postbus 9501, NL-2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands.
- Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, 22 Sharia Gezira el Wusta, Cairo-Zamalek, Egypt.
- European Centre for Folk Studies, Parade Street, Llangollen, Clwyd, LL20 8RB, Wales.
- Historisk-Arkeologisk Forsøgscenter, Slange Allé 2, DK-3423 Lejre, Denmark.
- I.S.D.S. Centre Nederlands, P. O. Box 570, 2301 CM Den Haag, The Netherlands.
- Kern Institute (Indo-Iraang), Arsenaal-straat 1, Leiden, The Netherlands.
- Kulturen, Box 1.095, S-221 04 Lund, Sweden.
- The Library, The Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Canada, M5S 2C6.
- Nationalmuseet, Bibliotekstjenesten, NY Vestergade 10, DK-1471 Copenhagen, Denmark.

-Niedersächsisches Institut f. Marschen-und
Wurtenforschung, Viktoriastraße 26/28, D-
2940 Wilhelmshaven, W. Germany.
-Research Archives, The University of
Chicago, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East
58th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637, USA.
-Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig
Bodemonderzoek, Kleine Haag 2, NL-3811 HE
Amersfoort, The Netherlands.
-Riksantikvarieämbetet, Box 5405, S-114 84
Stockholm, Sweden.
-Somerset County Museum Service, Weir Lodge,
83, Staplegrove Road, Taunton, TAI 1 DM,
England.
-Textielmuseum, Goirkestraat 96, NL-5046 GN
Tilburg, The Netherlands.

-Textile Conservation Centre, Apartment 22,
Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey,
KT8 9AU, England.
-Textile Conservation Laboratory, Bevarings-
sektionen, Nationalmuseet, Brede, DK-2820
Lyngby, Denmark.
-Textile Conservation Studios, Apt. 11a,
Fountain Court, Hampton Court Palace, East
Molesey, Surrey, KT8 9AU, England.
The Textile Museum, 2320 'S' Street, N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20008, U.S.A.
-Textilmuseum Krefeld, Andreasmarkt, D-4150
Krefeld, W. Germany.
-Victoria and Albert Museum, South
Kensington, London SW7 2RC, England.



"They've managed to get you and the Sarge, but I don't think it's very much like me."