

TERRA NOSTRA


ISSUE 8
BURIED TREASURE

Sutton Hoo

The Red Lady of Paviland

The Amesbury Archer

Nazi Treasure Hunt

Building Hadrian's Wall

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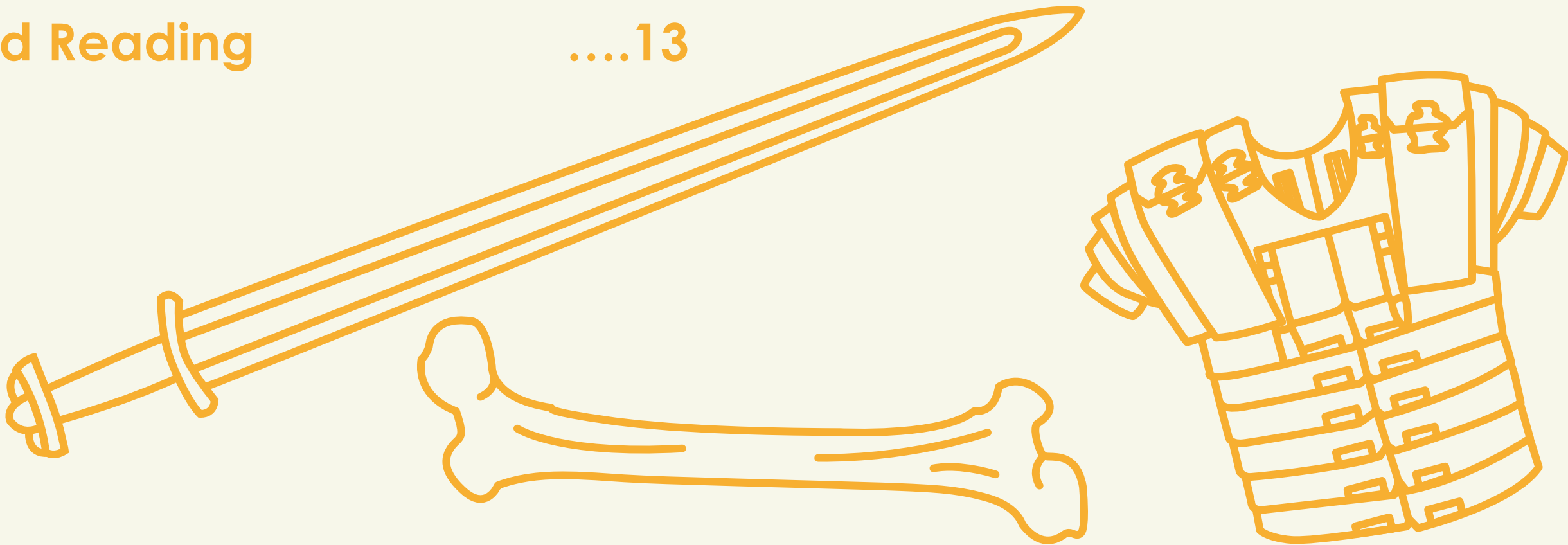
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Foreword

The 8th, and final, Issue of the year examines some of Britain's many historical landscapes. It ties in with British Archeology week this month and uncovers some of the ancient past of the British Isles. To try and uncover all of our history in one short issue would be impossible so, instead, I've cherry picked some of my favourite archeological sites from around the country.

In this issue you will find out about: the discovery of a lifetime, the woman that was not, the first goldsmiths, the wall that defended an empire, and the ongoing hunt for hidden Nazi gold. For such a short issue, this one is jam packed with interesting tales.

Mr Green





SUTTON HOO

In around 410 AD the Roman Empire officially retired from the shores of Britannia. With her legions removed to defend her from barbarian incursions and her influence waning Britain was left to fend for itself. Nobody is quite sure what happened in the years after Rome's decline but ever increasing numbers of "barbarian" leaders and raiders changed the cultural landscape of Britain forever. Today these incoming Germanic peoples are grouped together under the term Anglo-Saxon but in reality these people came from a range of independent cultures and tribes. Whilst we don't know if they originally came as raiders or settlers we do know that they arrived in large numbers in a relatively short period of time. East Anglia seems to have been a particular cultural stronghold of the Anglo-Saxons in their early years and it is here that one of the most significant archaeological finds of the 20th Century was unearthed.

With the Second World War looming on the horizon, Mrs Edith Pretty invited a local archaeologist, named Basil Brown, to excavate a series of low mounds on her land above the Deben Estuary in 1938. Brown was almost entirely self taught, having left formal education at the age of 12 in 1900. He learned several languages, studied diplomas in astronomy, geography and geology all whilst managing the family farm. He was nothing if not driven. After being recommended to Mrs Pretty by Ipswich Museum he cycled 35 miles between the dig site and his home each week. Whilst on the job he was known to encourage children to get involved alongside him and he helped to foster a love of archaeology in all the people he met.

In the first dig season, Brown excavated one of the mounds looking for the tell tale tonal change in the soil that demonstrated an infilled burial chamber or grave. This infilling occurs when the top of the burial mound collapses inwards when the chamber loses structure. This method involved Brown digging a trench across each of the mounds being examined

rather than excavating the whole mound making the assessment process much quicker. Brown quickly realised that some of the mounds had been robbed of their contents at some point in the past. It is likely that the mounds were broken into by treasure hunters seeking quick riches in the 17th century.

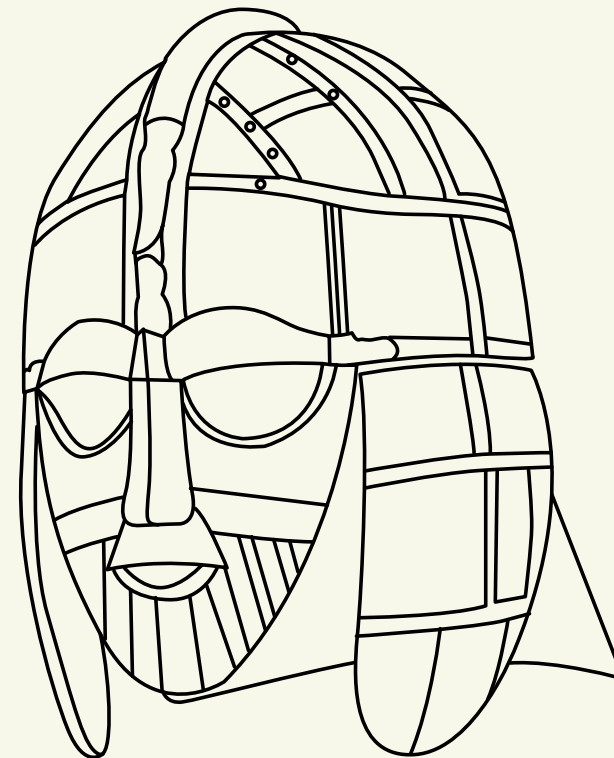
Downhearted but not defeated, Basil managed to convince Mrs Pretty to extend the dig to a second season. This second dig season began just as Britain declared war on Nazi Germany on the 3rd of September 1939. The second dig on a new mound rapidly produced results with iron rivets being discovered early on. An examination of these rivets suggested that what Brown was faced with was a potential ship burial. One of only three discovered in Britain. Continued excavation revealed the imprint of a 90ft ship dragged from the estuary and buried deep within the earth. This stunningly preserved ship impression gave Brown and the archaeological community an insight into Anglo-Saxon ship construction that was unknown before. Along with the stunningly preserved ship imprint several other amazing finds were uncovered.

Perhaps the most famous discovery is the Sutton Hoo helmet, one of only 4 complete Anglo-Saxon helmets ever discovered in England, a heavily stylised iron helm with an ornate face guard. However, when it was first uncovered it lay in hundreds of small rusted pieces after being completely crushed by the falling in of the roof above. After extensive cleaning and sorting this immensely complex 3D jigsaw puzzle of over 500 pieces has been put back together to reveal a stunning object. Each of the helmet's panels is decorated with heroic scenes of battle and an ornate dragon makes up the nose guard. It is thought that this helm must have belonged to a very important figure in East Anglian society as its highly decorative nature alludes to the helm being a ceremonial object.

Alongside this stunningly decorated helm the Sutton Hoo burial also produced Byzantine silverware, sumptuous gold jewellery, a lavish feasting set, an enormous gold buckle, a jewelled wooden instrument, and coins of gold and silver. It shows that the glittering treasures, great halls, and fierce warriors of Anglo-Saxon poetry are probably closer to reality than thought before. It also illustrates the idea that the early Dark Ages were far more connected than previously thought. In order for Byzantine silver to make its way from the area of modern day Turkey, long complex trade routes must have existed.

It is thought that such riches can only belong to a figure of royal heritage. The most often cited candidate for the grave at Sutton Hoo is that of Raedwald, King of East Anglia (599AD-625AD). Unfortunately, the documents relating to the life, death and burial of Raedwald were lost with the Viking invasions of the 9th Century. What we do know is that from 616AD Raedwald was probably the most powerful Anglo-Saxon King in Britain and that he was the first of the Anglo-Saxon rulers to turn to Christianity. Whilst he can not be tied to Sutton Hoo with any certainty he is the most probable candidate for such a lavish burial.

Within days of Edith Pretty being declared the legal owner of the discoveries found on her land in 1939 she decided to donate them to the British Museum. In response to her donating the finds, which are valued at 3.3 million pounds, Churchill nominated her for a CBE which she declined. Today the finds at Sutton Hoo can be seen on display in Room 41 at the British Museum.





THE RED LADY OF PAVILAND

Sometimes discoveries are made in the most unlikely of places. Goat's Hole Cave, sometimes called Paviland Cave, is just one such place. Located on the Gower Peninsula in Wales, Goat's Hole Cave is a rather unique archaeological site located at the base of an almost vertical cliff nine metres above the waves. It is only accessible by a rather extreme climb or a scramble at low tide.

Just beyond the triangular opening, the cave is a 21m long passage ending in a chamber 3.6m high with a funnel shaped chimney just beyond. Over 200 years the cave has been excavated extensively with almost all of the material within being removed. As a result of the long history of excavation and the rich number of finds discovered within the cave it is considered internationally important.

The story of the Red Lady begins in 1822 with an initial excavation by the Davies Brothers and a follow up investigation by Mr Dillwyn and Miss Talbot. The latter pair recovered animal bones and evidence of Roman occupation of the caves. The discovery of elephant bones, now known to be those of mammoths, on 27th December 1922 was of particular interest to Oxford Professor of Geology William Buckland. He arrived on the scene on the 18th January and spent a week excavating Goat's Hole Cave extensively.

During this excavation, Buckland unearthed the remains of a body buried in the floor of the sediment deposited on the cave floor. Whilst the skeleton was missing its head, vertebrae, and right extremities it was in surprisingly good condition. What was quite surprising about the skeleton was the red ochre stain that had been applied to them before burial. Next to the body's ribs Buckland discovered 30 cylindrical

rods and ring fragments made from ivory. Where the pocket would have been the individual had been buried with what appeared to be a couple of handfuls of dyed periwinkle shells.

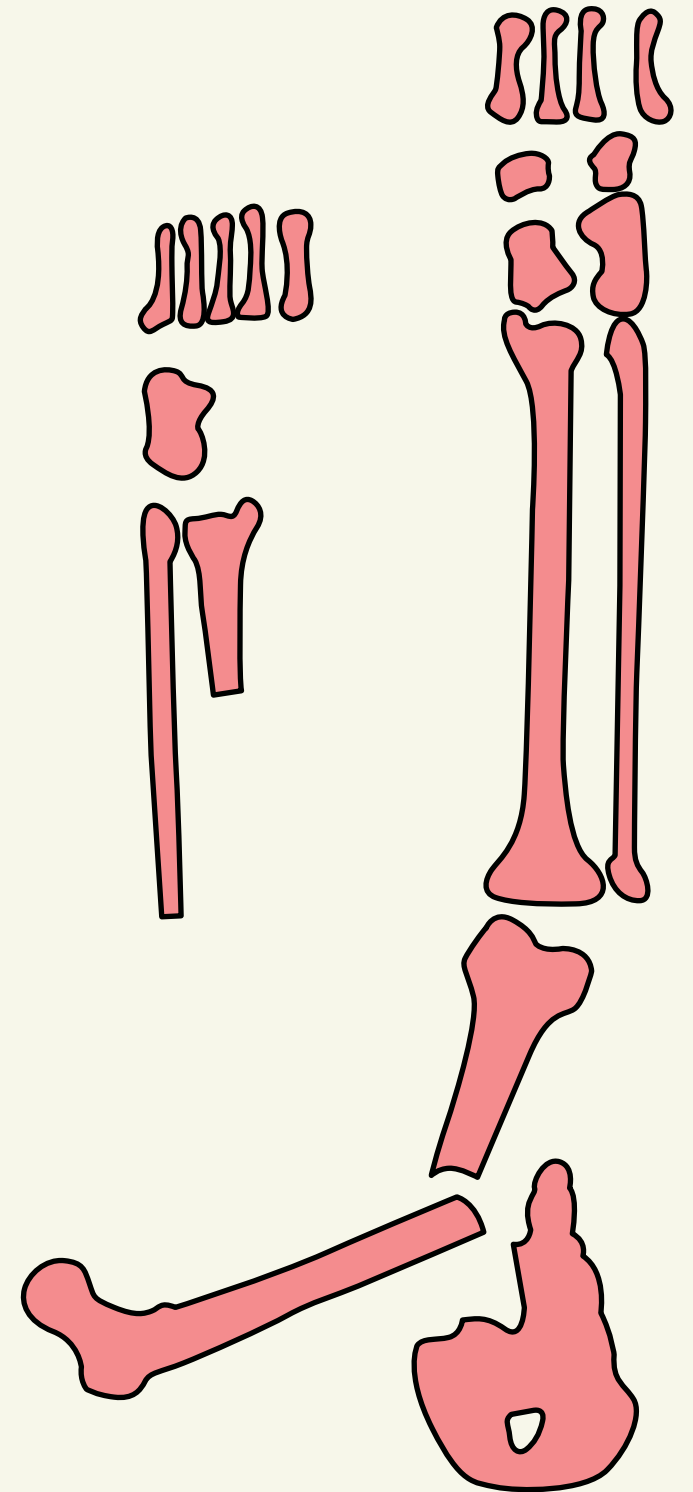
Linking the body to a period in history accurately was particularly difficult for Buckland as at this time the biblical timeline still held sway. Buckland would have been unaware that remains discovered could be older than the great flood. Initially he thought that the body may have belonged to a murdered excise man but due to its rather small size he changed his initial idea towards the body belonging to that of a Roman woman. In part this identification was linked to the large number of ornaments discovered in the grave. What that didn't explain was why a Roman woman would be buried in a cave far from other human habitation. Buckland came up with another neat explanation for this. He decided that the woman must have been a person shunned from normal society and therefore they would be forced to live at the fringes of normal society. Buckland decided that the woman must have been either some sort of witch or prostitute in part due to the red ochre stain.

What Buckland didn't know was that the infamous Red Lady of Paviland was actually the remains of a young man. More recent analysis of the bones have identified the body as that of a 21 year old man in good health. Whilst Buckland also thought the body was from the Roman period, recent advances in radiocarbon dating put the burial back as far as 30,000 years. This places the falsely named Red Lady as belonging to the Paleolithic period (the Stone Age). What this actually means is that the Red Lady is the earliest known burial of human remains ever discovered in the British Isles. This makes the grave internationally significant because it demonstrates that even the earliest human cultures had intricate burial rites and rituals previously thought to have developed far later in the human story. It is unlikely that this is an isolated burial and that the practice was probably much wider spread across Western Europe. Almost identical necklaces to those found in Goat's Hole Cave have been found as far away as the Blombos site in South Africa. The difference being that the necklaces discovered there are as old as 75,000 years old. What this suggests about the radiation and dispersal of human cultures is not yet known.

What we do know is that the rather extreme location of Goat's Hole Cave today is much different to how it would have appeared in the past. Thanks to

glaciation sea levels would have been as much as 250 feet lower than they presently are so rather than looking out over the Bristol Channel the caves would have looked over 70 mile wide plain teeming with prey. From an analysis of the historical sediments and the bones themselves historians believe that the man's diet was composed of 20% fish, balanced by other foods such as horse, reindeer, roots, acorns and berries. The landscape would have been difficult to survive year round with harsh winters very likely but the Paviland Cave System would have provided a perfect temporary dwelling from which to shelter from the elements and observe the surrounding landscape.

Given that over 4000 worked flints, necklace bones, stone needles and mammoth-ivory bracelets have been uncovered by multiple excavations over the last 100 years we can assume that the Paviland Caves have been inhabited for a large amount of human history. It must have been a well known landmark for the migratory cultures of the early stone age through to the emergence of farming in Britain approximately 5000 years ago. Whilst today it is almost completely empty of any evidence of its history it is still common to find people sleeping in the caves overnight on some kind of pilgrimage to connect with our most ancient ancestors. There is something about the very stones themselves that seem to carry with them the ingrained memory of those early hunter gatherer societies that transcends time. It is truly a spiritual experience.





THE AMESBURY ARCHER

The world famous Stonehenge is a prominent landmark on Salisbury plain. It is a major tourist attraction bringing eight hundred thousand visitors to the area every year. Despite being over five thousand years old, Stonehenge still manages to capture the attention of the masses. This was no less true in the past with pilgrims now known to make their way to Stonehenge from all over Europe during the Stone Age.

In 2002, just three miles from Stonehenge, the Wessex Archeology group discovered the remains of a Stone Age grave dated to 2300 BC. Little did they know the significance of their find until the grave was excavated and the bones analysed. What is now known as the Amesbury Archer is the richest Bronze Age burial we know of discovered in the United Kingdom. It contained a wealth of finds including the earliest gold objects ever uncovered. There were also five beaker pots, eighteen arrowheads, two wristguards, four boars' tusks, one hundred and twenty two flint tools, three copper knives, gold hair ornaments, and a cushion stone inside the grave. Clearly this was a grave of some significance to have such a large amount of material goods, some very rare for the time, interred with it.

The man in the grave was buried on his left side with his face pointing north. He would have originally been placed in a timber lined grave with a mound constructed over the top. This would have been fairly common for the period. It is likely that given the grave goods he was attired in the garb of a hunter with a slate wristguard on his arm.

An analysis of the skeleton showed that the man buried within the grave would have been between

thirty five and forty five at the time of his death. His skeleton is of particular interest due to its missing left kneecap. It is probable that this was the result of a rather serious injury at some point in the latter period of his life. This would have left him with a significant limp that would place him at a disadvantage as a functional member of his society. Similarly, a bone infection and an abscess on his jaw would have left him in constant pain. An isotope analysis of the man's teeth showed that he was not a native of Britain. It is likely that he grew up in the Alps region of central Europe. How he came to be buried so far from his home at a time when long distance travel is believed to have been fraught with danger is a mystery. What his grave does show is that the beaker culture and their distinctive pottery did not arrive via invasion as previously thought. It is more likely that there was a far greater cultural exchange between the various peoples of Europe in the Stone Age than previously thought.

Comparing his grave goods to other graves of a similar age discovered across Europe shows that it is likely that the Amesbury Archer is probably a very skilled craftsman. His grave is very similar to those of early metalworkers discovered around central Europe and the presence of metallic goods in his grave suggests that the Archer had similar skills. These skills would have been relatively new at the time and particularly so in far off Britain. They would have placed him in the upper reaches of his society and would have led to him possessing great wealth. It has been suggested that the Amesbury Archer represents a super wealthy elite that may have organised for Stonehenge to be constructed. Originally the henge would have been a ditch and mound construction dated to approximately 3000 BC but around 700 years later the famous stones were erected. The Amesbury Archer would have been alive during this latter period of reconstruction.

More recently, another grave was found close to that of the Archer and this throws up another interesting thought. This grave belongs to a man of around 25 years old and dates from the same time as that of the Archer. As well as this, similarities between the skeletons suggests that the two men may be related. However, an analysis of the teeth suggests that this man grew up in the Midlands rather than the Alps. It helps to clear up some uncertainties as to how long the Archer spent in Britain. Clearly if the man had a son who grew up in the Midlands then he or his family must have spent a long period of time here.

Whilst the Amesbury Archer almost certainly arrived at Stonehenge on some kind of pilgrimage or trading venture, other finds in the region have revealed other interesting information. An accidental discovery made whilst installing a water pipe on Boscombe Down uncovered a group burial of other Bronze Age bodies. In total, seven bodies were removed from the mass grave. The composition of the grave was made up of three adult men, one teenager and three children. Chemical analysis of the teeth showed that these people originated in Wales which is where the stones that make up the henge originate. It has been suggested that this group of people, named the Boscombe Bowmen, represent some of the builders of Stonehenge although this is difficult to prove.





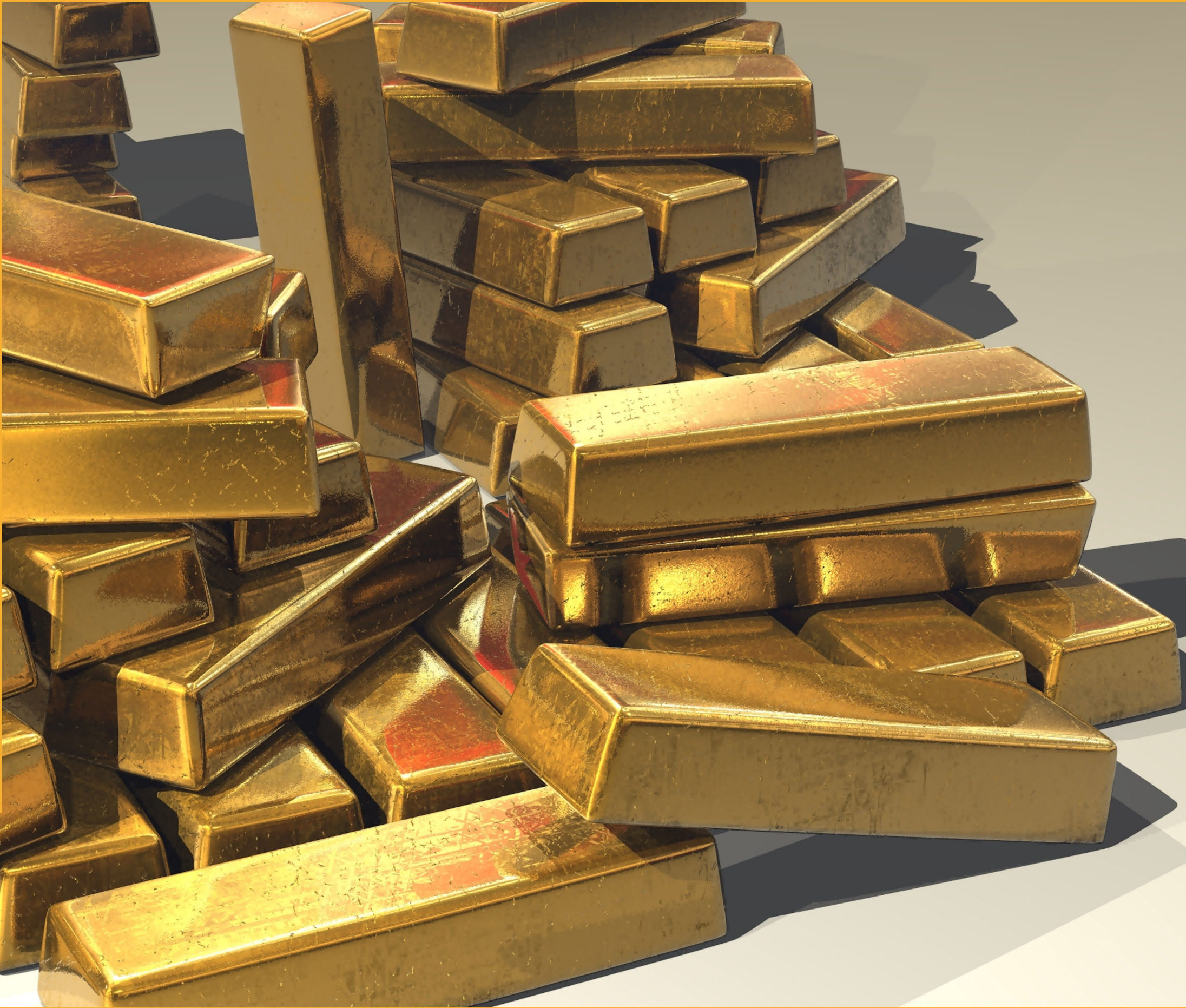
NAZI TREASURE HUNT

By Macey H, Year 10

Not all buried treasure comes from pirates. The Nazis stole billions of dollars of treasure from the people they captured and executed and the countries they invaded. Most of this treasure has not been found, but there are stories speculating where the treasure might lie.

During World War 2, the Nazis used an isolated lake in the Alps as a naval base. But, near the end of the war, legend has it that Nazi officials dumped \$5.6 billion into the lake. None of this has been found despite at least 5 divers dying in search of the treasure, with many expeditions producing no conclusive evidence. In 1959, investigators did find £700 million in counterfeit notes that Hitler was planning to trick the British with, but no real treasure has been found.

This doesn't mean that there is no treasure however, as it would now be submerged 300 feet below the surface with several layers of logs burying it. One thing is for sure: this would be an amazing treasure to uncover.





BUILDING HADRIAN'S WALL

In the North of England lies one of the most impressive feats of classical engineering ever undertaken. Hadrian's Wall was a 73 mile long defensive wall punctuated by forts, towers and a deep ditch. In many sections this almost two thousand year old structure can still be seen and remains a clear boundary between the North and Scotland. This article will look at Hadrian's wall in greater detail examining why it was needed, how it was planned and how it was constructed.

Why was Hadrian's Wall needed?

By the time Hadrian came into power in 117 AD the Roman Empire had reached its maximum extent. The pressure from barbarians on all sides was growing at an alarming rate and it was no longer possible for the empire to expand without significant difficulties. The very distance from the frontier to the centre of the empire made it difficult to move Rome's limited military resources from one area to another. This made it very difficult for the empire to react quickly to threats and left the frontier very vulnerable to barbarian attacks.

Realising the relatively precarious situation at the frontiers of the empire Hadrian made the decision to begin building a series of defensive structures to fortify the borders against the tribal peoples beyond. After visiting Britain in 122 AD Hadrian realised that the land beyond the Northern extent of the empire was of little value and full of difficult to pacify tribes. As a result of his visit, he declared that a wall must be built across

the northern border of the province to effectively seal off the northern tribes. This endeavour would allow the governor of Britain to defend the province with fewer men, freeing up soldiers to defend the other frontiers.

Planning a grand defence

Hadrian's Wall was originally designed to be a structure made of stone or turf, with a guarded gate every Roman mile with two towers in between with a large ditch in front. However, before its completion, 14 extra forts were added. This resulted in a 73 mile long wall with 83 milecastles, 17 large forts and many observation towers. The wall was originally designed to stand six meters tall with a 3 meter ditch on the barbarian facing side. This would have left attackers with an immense nine meter structure to overcome whilst being assaulted by the defenders.

The Romans were incredibly wise in their decision as to where to place the wall. They examined the landscape in great detail and took advantage of natural high points and difficult to cross terrain to best place their wall. This meant that the Roman engineers placed a large section of their wall atop naturally formed highground. This meant taking advantage of a sill, a geological feature where igneous rock has intruded between older layers of sedimentary rock, which forms an imposing natural barrier with sheer sides. However, this made it much more difficult for the Roman builders to transport material to the environment and construct the wall.

Constructing a giant

Hadrian's Wall is a bit of an oddity when it comes to Roman era fortifications. It is the only one known to have been built entirely of stone with integrated forts. As well as this, it is unusual because it is one continuous barrier rather than a series of dispersed defences. In total it took the three Roman legions, totaling 15000 men, six years to construct the entire project which is still an immense feat of engineering to this day.

As well as this, part way through the construction of the original wall the Roman's decided to re-engineer

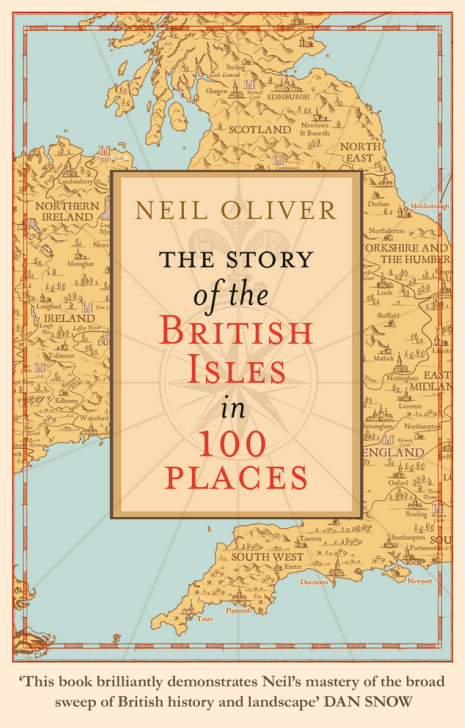
the plan to include the 14 extra fortifications. This meant that large sections of the already started wall were demolished to make way for the new fortifications. It is thought that the decision was taken to improve the mobility of the Roman army by providing quarters for them. The construction of these new forts meant that Roman forts and towers across Wales and Northern Britain were abandoned to provide manpower. By this point in time, the formerly rebellious areas of Wales and Northern Britain where these reserves came from were well adjusted to Roman Rule.

Another significant change to the wall's initial design is the reduction in the width of the wall from 3m to 1.8m in some places. Generally, these pinch points are located in areas with significant natural defences. As with many later Roman structures there was a general decline in the quality of the craftsmanship and Hadrian's Wall is no exception. By the time Hadrian, one of Rome's five good emperors, came to power the Roman empire was already in decline. The amount of maintenance on such a large structure must have been immense and in several locations there exists evidence of sections being extensively repaired.





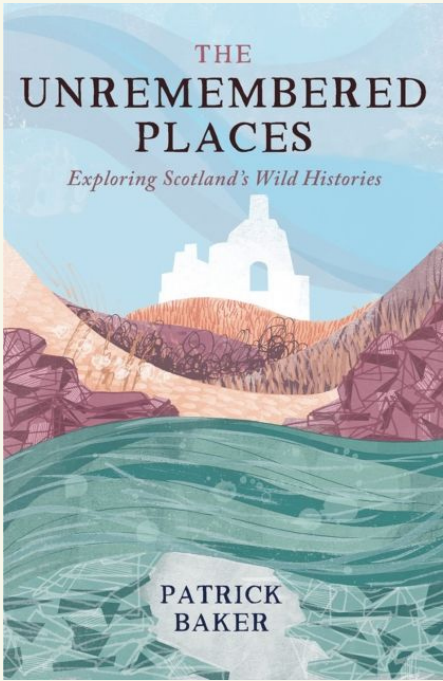
SUGGESTED READING



The Story of the British Isles in 100 Place - Neil Oliver

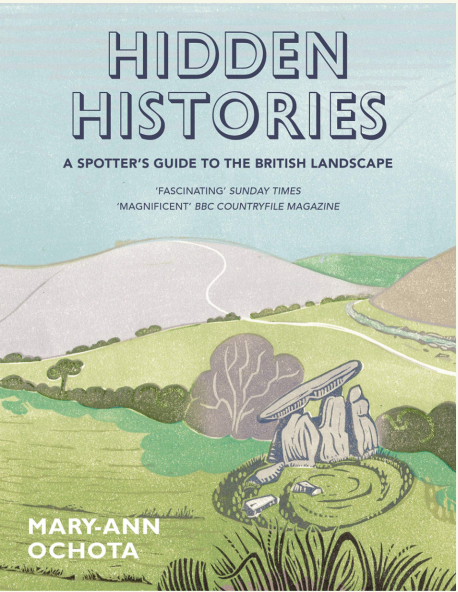
Neil Oliver is a historian well known for his work on Coast, Two Men In A Trench and other historical shows. In this book he sets out to explore the entire history of Britain by taking the reader on a journey round the British Isles to significant historical spaces. Each place is described in a short essay so this book is the perfect coffee table short read.

Once started, I couldn't put this one down and read it in a few nights. Neil Oliver really has a way with words that makes history truly come to life!



The Unremembered Places – Patrick Baker

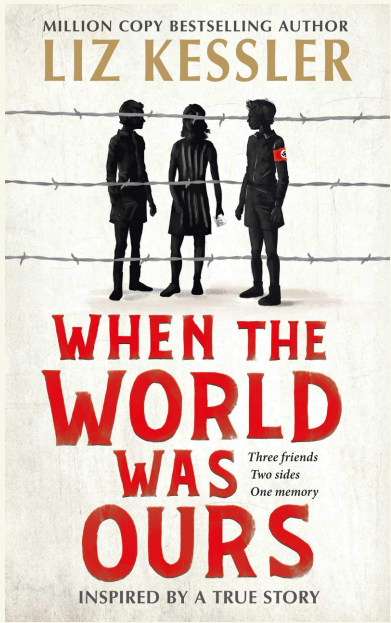
Scotland is often thought of as a barren wild place but in this book Patrick Baker takes us to all the places long forgotten that litter the landscape. Scotland is a land of extremes, and amongst the barren mountain and heaths lie some extraordinary place. In this book, Baker will take the reader to an ancient driving route to a desolate moorland graveyard, from uninhabited post-industrial islands and Clearance villages to caves explored by early climbers and the mysterious strongholds of Christian missionaries. He'll take you there foot and by paddle.



Hidden Histories: A Spotter's Guide to the British Landscape - Mary-Ann Ochota

Have you ever stumbled across some unusual quirk of the lanscape and thought "I wonder what this is?" If so then there's a good chance that this book is for you.

This spotter's guide arms the amateur explorer with the crucial information needed to 'read' the landscape and spot the human activities that have shaped our green and pleasant land. Photographs and diagrams point out specific details and typical examples to help the curious spotter 'get their eye in' and understand what they're looking at, or looking for.



When The World Was Ours - Liz Kessler

Three young friends – Leo, Elsa and Max – spend a perfect day together, unaware that around them Europe is descending into a growing darkness, and that events soon mean that they will be cruelly ripped apart from each other. With their lives taking them across Europe – to Germany, England, Prague and Poland – will they ever find their way back to each other? Will they want to?

Castles - Marc Morris

Beginning with their introduction in the eleventh century, and ending with their widespread

abandonment in the seventeenth, Marc Morris explores many of the country's most famous castles, as well as some spectacular lesser-known examples. At times this is an epic tale, driven by characters like William the Conqueror, King John and Edward I, full of sieges and conquest on an awesome scale. But it is also by turns an intimate story of less eminent individuals, whose adventures, struggles and ambitions were reflected in the fortified residences they constructed. Be it ever so grand or ever so humble, a castle was first and foremost a home.

