Excavations at Star Carr, an Early Mesolithic Site at Seamer Near Scarborough Yorkshire

Excavations at Star Carr, by J.G.D. Clark

The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial reviews the current state of mortuary archaeology and its practice, highlighting its often contentious place in the modern socio-politics of archaeology. It contains forty-four chapters which focus on the history of the discipline and its current scientific techniques and methods. Written by leading, international scholars in the field, it derives its examples and case studies from a wide range of time periods, such as the middle palaeolithic to the twentieth century, and geographical areas which include Europe, North and South America, Africa, and Asia. Combining up-to-date knowledge of relevant archaeological research with critical assessments of the theme and an evaluation of future research trajectories, it draws attention to the social, symbolic, and theoretical aspects of interpreting mortuary archaeology. The volume is well-illustrated with maps, plans, photographs, and illustrations and is ideally suited for students and researchers.

An exploration of the archaeological findings of one of Miami's best archaeologists.

In this book, Carr unravels the biography of the archaeologist Tessa Verney Wheeler, a charming, tiny woman whose untimely death left her archaeological career overshadowed by her distinguished husband, Sir Mortimer Wheeler. Despite a short career of just over twenty years, Verney Wheeler published and excavated extensively while simultaneously developing new archaeological techniques, brought archaeology into the lives of the general public through her connections with the Press and the encouragement of site tours, and was an inspiring teacher to an impressive roster of students. In this biography, her life is recovered through an examination of her written work, archives, sites, and photographs, as well as through the memories of those who knew her. By means of a discussion of the very personal life and work of one woman, Carr explores the role of women in early British archaeology, resulting in a fascinating picture of a woman and a vivid evocation of the interwar period in London and Wales. From her work retraining colliery navvies as archaeological diggers in Roman amphitheatres on the Welsh borders, to cheap omelettes with her students at the Lyons Corner House on Piccadilly in London, Verney Wheeler crossed social and physical borders with a grace and appeal that remains very palpable today.

Malcolm Lillie presents a major new holistic appraisal of the evidence for the Mesolithic occupation of Wales. The story begins with a discourse on the Palaeolithic background. In order to set the entire Mesolithic period into its context, subsequent chapters follow a sequence from the palaeoenvironmental background, through a consideration of the use of stone tools, settlement patterning and evidence for subsistence strategies and the range of available resources. Less obvious aspects of hunter-forager and subsequent hunter-fisher-forager groups include the arenas of symbolism, ritual and spirituality that would have been embedded in everyday life. The author here endeavors to integrate an evaluation of these aspects of Mesolithic society in developing a social narrative of Mesolithic lifeways throughout the text in an effort to bring the past to life in a meaningful and considered way. The term ‘hunter-fisher-foragers’ implies a particular combination of subsistence activities, but whilst some groups may well have integrated this range of economic activities into their subsistence strategies, others may not have. The situation in coastal areas of Wales, in relation to subsistence, settlement and even spiritual matters would not necessarily be the same as in upland areas, even when the same groups moved between these zones in the landscape. The volume concludes with a discussion of the theoretical basis for the shift away from the exploitation of wild resources towards the integration of domesticates into subsistence strategies, i.e. the shift from food procurement to food production, and assesses the context of the changes that occurred as human groups re-orientated their socioeconomic, political and ritual beliefs in light of newly available resources, influences from the
continent, and ultimately their social condition at the time of ‘transition’.

The book draws on the evidence of landscape archaeology, palaeoenvironmental studies, ethnohistory and animal tracking to address the neglected topic of how we identify and interpret past patterns of movement in the landscape. It challenges the pessimism of previous generations which regarded prehistoric routes such as hollow ways as generally undatable. The premise is that archaeologists tend to focus on [sites] while neglecting the patterns of habitual movement that made them part of living landscapes. Evidence of past movement is considered in a multi-scalar way from the individual footprint to the long distance path including the traces created in vegetation by animal and human movement. It is argued that routes may be perpetuated over long timescales creating landscape structures which influence the activities of subsequent generations. In other instances radical changes of axes of communication and landscape structures provide evidence of upheaval and social change. Palaeoenvironmental and ethnohistorical evidence from the American North West coast sets the scene with evidence for the effects of burning, animal movement, faeces deposition and transplantation which can create readable routes along which are favoured resources. Evidence from European hunter-gatherer sites hints at similar practices of niche construction on a range of spatial scales. On a local scale, footprints help to establish axes of movement, the locations of lost settlements and activity areas. Wood trackways likewise provide evidence of favoured patterns of movement and past settlement location. Among early farming communities alignments of burial mounds, enclosure entrances and other monuments indicate axes of communication. From the middle Bronze Age in Europe there is more clearly defined evidence of trackways flanked by ditches and fields. Landscape scale survey and excavation enables the dating of trackways using spatial relationships with dated features and many examples indicate long-term continuity of routeways. Where fields flank routeways a range of methods, including scientific approaches, provide dates. Prehistorians have often assumed that Ridgeways provided the main axes of early movement but there is little evidence for their early origins and rather better evidence for early routes crossing topography and providing connections between different environmental zones. The book concludes with a case study of the Weald of South East England which demonstrates that some axes of cross topographic movement used as droveways, and generally considered as early medieval, can be shown to be of prehistoric origin. One reason that dryland routes have proved difficult to recognise is that insufficient attention has been paid to the parts played by riverine and maritime longer distance communication. It is argued that understanding the origins of the paths we use today contributes to appreciation of the distinctive qualities of landscapes. Appreciation will help to bring about effective strategies for conservation of mutual benefit to people and wildlife by maintaining and enhancing corridors of connectivity between different landscape zones including fragmented nature reserves and valued places. In these ways an understanding of past routeways can contribute to sustainable landscapes, communities and quality of life.

Brings to life fifteen thousand years of human history in a study that follows an imaginary modern traveler who visits and observes prehistoric communities and landscapes that laid the foundations of the modern world.

The origins and development of human culture throughout the world are re-examined in this new, generously illustrated edition of Clark’s famous work. There is much more detailed and up-to-date coverage of the various territories, particularly America and Australasia plus a select bibliography of reference to the main sources used.

The study of hunter-gatherers has had a profound impact on thinking about human nature and about the nature of society. The subject has especially influenced ideas on social evolution and on the development of human culture. Anthropologists and archaeologists continue to investigate living hunter-gatherers and the remains of past hunter-gatherer societies in the hope of unearthing the secrets of our ancestors and learning something of the natural existence of humankind. Hunter-Gatherers in History, Archaeology and Anthropology provides a definitive overview of hunter-gatherer historiography, from the earliest anthropological writings through to the present day. What can early visions of the hunter-gatherer tell us about the societies that generated them? How do diverse national traditions, such as American, Russian and Japanese, manifest themselves in hunter-gatherer research? What is the most up-to-date thinking on the subject and how does it reflect current trends within the social sciences? This book provides a much-needed overview of the history of thought on one of science's most intriguing subjects. It will serve as a landmark text for anthropologists, archaeologists and students researching anthropological theory or the history of social anthropology and related disciplines.
This book was originally published in 1954. Grahame Clark's excavations at Star Carr from 1949 to 1951 have long been regarded as a model of how archaeological investigation should be conducted. In addition to this, the importance of the site itself, the first early mesolithic site in Europe from which a full complement of bone, antler, wood and other organic material was recovered alongside the flint industry, has established for this report on the excavations a permanent place in all archaeological libraries. The book is now reissued.

This volume provides a forum for debate between varied approaches to the past. The authors, drawn from Europe, North America, Asia and Australasia, represent many different strands of archaeology. They address the philosophical issues involved in interpretation and a desire among archaeologists to come to terms with their own subjective approaches to the material they study, a recognition of how past researchers have also imposed their own value systems on the evidence which they presented.

Star Carr is one of the most famous and important prehistoric sites in Europe. Dating from the early Mesolithic period, over 10,000 years ago, the site has produced a unique range of artefacts and settlement evidence. First excavated in 1949–51 by Professor Grahame Clark of Cambridge University, the site was buried in a deep layer of peat on the edge of prehistoric Lake Flixton. The peat has preserved an incredible collection of organic artefacts, including bone, wood and antler, as well as thousands of flint tools. This has allowed archaeologists to build up a detailed picture of life on the edge of the lake around 9000 BC. New excavations have now revealed the remains of what may be the earliest house ever found in Britain, and have shown that the settlement stretched for several hundred metres along the lake shore.

This book tells the story of the discovery of Star Carr, and brings it up-to-date with details of the current excavations. It also discusses other important Mesolithic sites in Britain and Europe and how these are transforming our view of life after the Ice Age.

Studies in Archaeological Conservation features a range of case studies that explore the techniques and approaches used in current conservation practice around the world and, taken together, provide a picture of present practice in some of the world-leading museums and heritage organisations. Archaeological excavations produce thousands of corroded and degraded fragments of metal, ceramic, and organic material that are transformed by archaeological conservators into the beautiful and informative objects that fill the cases of museums. The knowledge and expertise required to undertake this transformation is demonstrated within this book in a series of 26 fascinating case studies in archaeological conservation and artefact investigation, undertaken in laboratories around the world. These case studies are contextualised by a detailed introductory chapter, which explores the challenges presented by researching and conserving archaeological artefacts and details how the case studies illustrate the current state of the subject. Studies in Archaeological Conservation is the first book for over a quarter of a century to show the range and diversity of archaeological conservation, in this case through a series of case studies. As a result, the book will be of great interest to practising conservators, conservation students, and archaeologists around the world.

An award-winning archaeologist and journalist chronicles England's history—as told through the country's recent archaeological discoveries. Digging Up Britain traces the history of Britain through key discoveries and excavations. With British archaeologist Mike Pitts as a guide, this book covers the most exciting excavations of the past ten years, gathers firsthand stories from the people who dug up the remains, and follows the latest revelations as one twist leads to another. Britain, a historically crowded place, has been the site of an unprecedented number of discoveries—almost everywhere the ground is broken, archaeologists find evidence that people have been there before. These discoveries illuminate Britain's ever-shifting history that we now know includes an increasingly diverse array of cultures and customs. Each chapter of the book tells the story of a single excavation or discovery. Some are major digs, conducted by large teams over years, and others are chance finds, leading to revelations out of proportion to the scale of the original project. Every chapter holds extraordinary tales of planning, teamwork, luck, and cutting-edge archaeological science that produces surprising insights into how people lived a thousand to a million years ago.

Star Carr is one of the most important Mesolithic sites in Europe. It was discovered in the late 1940s by John Moore and then excavated by Grahame Clark from 1949-1951, becoming famous in the archaeological world for the wealth of rare organic remains uncovered including barbed antler points and antler headresses. However, since the original excavations there has been much debate about how the site was used: was it a residential base camp, a hunting camp or even a ritual
site? From 2003-2015, excavations directed by Conneller, Milner and Taylor aimed to answer these questions. This work has demonstrated that the site is much larger and more complex than ever imagined and was in use for around 800 years. The excavations show that Mesolithic groups were highly invested in this place: there is evidence for a number of structures on the dryland (the oldest evidence for ‘houses’ in Britain), three large wooden platforms along the edge of the lake, and the deposition of rare artefacts into the lake edge, including more antler headdresses and a unique, engraved shale pendant. People continued to occupy the site despite changes in climate over this period. The main results of our work are contained in two volumes: the first provides an interpretation of the site, and the second provides detail on specific areas of research. The main results of our work are contained in two volumes: the first volume provides an interpretation of the site, and the second volume provides detail on specific areas of research.

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The British archaeologist Grahame Clark was a seminal figure in European and world archaeology for more than half of the twentieth century, but, at the same time, one whose reputation has been outshone by other, more visible luminaries. His works were never aimed at a wide general public, nor did he become a television or radio personality. Clark was, above all, a scholar, whose contributions to world archaeology were enormous. He was also convinced that the study of prehistory was important for all humanity and spent his career saying so. For this, he was awarded the prestigious Erasmus Prize in 1990, an award only rarely given to archaeologists. This intellectual biography describes Clark’s remarkable career and assesses his seminal contributions to archaeology. Clark became interested in archaeology while at school, studied the subject at Cambridge University, and completed a groundbreaking doctorate on the Mesolithic cultures of Britain in 1931. He followed this study with a magisterial survey, The Mesolithic Settlement of Northern Europe (1936), which established him as an international authority on the period. At the same time, he became interested in the interplay between changing ancient environment and ancient human societies. In a series of excavations and important papers, he developed environmental archaeology and the notion of ecological systems as a foundation of scientific, multidisciplinary archaeology, culminating in his world-famous excavations at Starr Carr, England, in 1949 and his Prehistoric Europe: The Economic Basis (1952). Clark became Disney Professor of
Public Archaeology at Cambridge in 1952 and influenced an entire generation of undergraduates to become archaeologists in all parts of the world. He was also the author of the first book on a global human prehistory, *World Prehistory* (1961).

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It frequently feels that there is nothing new to explore on the earth - the most distant places are visited by TV crews and even tourists. However, the past can also be a foreign country and recently archaeologists have begun to explore a vast, unknown landscape hidden beneath the North Sea. Inhabited by early man, this land disappeared beneath the sea when sea levels rose more than 8000 years ago. This enigmatic landscape, known as Doggerland after the famous banks in the North Sea, has remained hidden until now. Today, we can map unknown rivers, hills, lakes and valleys using 3D seismic data originally collected for oil exploration. Some 23,000 km² of this 'lost world' (an area equivalent to that of Wales) have now been revealed. This book tells the exciting story of how this lost country was rediscovered by archaeology and what the results of new work are telling us about what happened to man during the last great phase of global warming, when a massive area of Europe was lost as a consequence of climate change. Although a study of the past, this book demonstrates how archaeology can provide vital information for the future.

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A summary of findings from the most recent archaeological and palaeoecological investigations at the Early Mesolithic occupation site. The new programme of research, intended to shed further light on problematic issues such as the exact age, duration, and pattern of occupation, and the precise nature of the birch...
brushwood platform, called for the use of scientifically more advanced techniques not before available. Contributors to the work include Phil Clogg, Chantal Conneller, Charly French, Huw. I. Griffiths, Jonathan Hather, Jonathan A. Holmes, Jennifer Jones, Paul Lane, Carol Law, Richard Preece, Peter Rowley-Conwy, Tim Schadla-Hall, and Maisie Taylor.