ANTIQUITY — the first 75 years

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O.G.S. Crawford founded ANTIQUITY 75 years ago as a private venture and declared it to be a 'needed organ to express the points of view' of scholars and 'to publish the cream of their researches'. Its *purpose* was to 'serve as a link between specialists and the general public' (1955: 193). Its *function* was 'to tell readers about the most interesting things that are going on in the archaeological world, and also to foreshadow coming events of outstanding importance' (1957: 57). He reflected that 'ANTIQUITY thus became, quite naturally and informally, the organ of the then younger generation, consisting of alert-minded students who were creating new implements of research and using them to give substance and form to prehistory' (1954). His fundamental *ethos* was that 'archaeology is world-wide; our subject is the origin of man and the roots of our culture, and important discoveries bearing on these matters may come from any part of the world'.

Many archaeologists gathered here to celebrate this journal no doubt will claim to have personal and sentimental feelings towards the journal ANTIQUITY, be they young Turks or mature practitioners. But why are *you* here? What makes ANTIQUITY significant and different from other journals of archaeology?

Is it its *independence* of spirit?

Or is it the vast *range* of subjects, places and periods that are contained within the journal?

Or is it that what is published represents the *honest yet authoritative opinions* of the individuals who write, unrestricted by politics, status or view, able to be candid and often controversial?

Is it the *topicality of the Editorials*, which review events, news and developments — humorously or critically as required?

Or is it simply that it appears frequently and regularly?

ANTIQUITY, of course, is all of these things.

Independence

Firstly, O.G.S. Crawford quite intentionally planned that ANTIQUITY would be *independent* of any institution or society, able to express a range of views (Crawford 1932: 131):

> In recent numbers of ANTIQUITY there have been published several provocative criticisms of contemporary affairs ... In a freelance journal like Antiquity such matters can be ventilated with more freedom than elsewhere: and if these occasional draughts of fresh air cause some people to catch cold we sincerely regret their inconvenience but maintain that the atmosphere is improved and the majority benefited thereby. Science has nothing to gain from polite humbug which nobody believes.

As Mortimer Wheeler (1958: 3) wrote of him after his death in 1957, Crawford was full 'of boyish glee in calling the bluff of convention [which] never left him, and never ceased to stimulate and delight'.

Virtually every other review, journal or annual of an archaeological, cultural or historical nature is tied closely to an institution or association — be it a museum, university or county society. Publications sponsored by these necessarily echo their current ethos, since production is paid for and edited by its members. Material for such journals is selected because it 'fits' the parameters and reflects the interests of the members, subscribers and associates, however narrow or broad they may be.

Range

When Crawford founded ANTIQUITY, he was well aware of the self-selected archaeological centres of influence — Oxford University, the Society of Antiquaries of London, the County societies, the national museums and the rest; and he sought to offer wider and more interesting material in ANTIQUITY for a general readership. He wanted the journal to be bought on the news-stands and, indeed, he was successful; for decades, ANTIQUITY could be bought at W.H.Smith and on railway-staiton bookstands. Crawford reflected the changing ideals of the 1920s — The Common Man: thus (1955: 3):

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ANTIQUITY is not just a journal published by archaeologists for other archaeologists, and specializing in some particular aspect or period or country. It covers the whole field and it is kept going by its readers, the majority of whom are not archaeologists in the strict sense, but just intelligent people who are interested in archaeology and like to hear about it. It was for them that ANTIQUITY was founded and without their support it could not exist. Indeed, without them there would be little or no archaeology today! For the day of the rich individual patron is over; archaeology is kept going by the tax-payer, and it is only right that, in return, an attempt should be made to explain to [them] what it all means. We make the attempt in ANTIQUITY by publishing popular but authoritative articles, notes and reviews dealing with matters of current interest and importance.

These days we take public access to archaeological knowledge for granted, believing this is freer and better now than then. But how many of us, involved in archaeology and historico-cultural work, really take the broad and interested public into account in the bulk of what we write or speak about on our subject? Equally, how many of us are genuinely interdisciplinary, and bother to keep up across other areas of our discipline that seem just too remote and unrelated?

For example, why bother with Romans when your interests are exclusively mediaeval?

Why comprehend ancient Egyptian chronological problems when you are engrossed in Peru?

Why understand current work in human evolutionary studies and the lower Palaeolithic when really all you are interested in is Celtic art?

These questions constantly challenge editors, past and present, when planning the contents of ANTIQUITY. Our subject is a small and, to most outsiders, really rather insignificant one. The world would probably still continue without it or us. So, why do we need the breadth and scope that ANTIQUITY has always insisted on? There are many answers to this; not least, as those of us professionally engaged in interpreting and presenting the past know well, that it does not offer itself up in discrete slices of time or theme. Every site, every assemblage, each ancient culture in general is complex, and demands interdisciplinary approaches if sense is to be extracted. Practitioners and thinkers in archaeology need flexible, critical and broad approaches that allow them to continue to learn. The pace of work demands new ideas and methods, the adoption of approaches from related disciplines. Above all, archaeologists must accept their responsibilities to an international and critical public. They must be explicit, as was Crawford, about their role in exploring and interpreting past worlds, and be clear about how and why they are building their pictures of it. ANTIQUITY with its range and its insistence on the original provides a rare wealth of stimulus and inspiration for practising archaeologists and, for the more 'arm-chair' spectators, a satisfying and reassuring reflection of what is going on.

Each one of us, I suspect, came into archaeology because back there in our own personal 'Dark Ages' when we chose college courses and selected our route in life, we were attracted because of the curiosity, the range and versatility of the subject. We rarely followed this path for its archaeological theories, its typologies and its narrow sub-disciplines. So beware: our public expect more, and ANTIQUITY tries above all else to extract the passion and interest from what we do for that large and uncounted audience that reads the journal.

Honest and authoritative style

And what of the liberal range of viewpoints in ANTIQUITY? More people than I can list have been offended by reviews of their books in ANTIQUITY, myself included! The constant and timely review of the flow of new books is one of the great strengths of the journal, and it forms probably the most complete account of the changes in archaeological publishing over 75 years. There have been clear policies adhered to, just as with the range of papers. Firstly, the review is considered to be the personal view of the reviewer and so, unless unprofessional or libellous, is never edited or changed to suit the editors or the sometimes unfortunate author. Secondly, a return match is not allowed, and authors or publishers are not normally permitted to enter a slanging-match in reply. Thirdly, it has been a policy either to review or to list the publication details of every book received by the ANTIQUITY office, so that a full record is published, to the great benefit of publishers and librarians. Finally, the Reviews Editor sends books to reviewers whom *he/she* chooses, not whom the author or publisher might prefer. In other words, independence of view is the guiding principle. And the same is also generally true of the published papers. Short of libel, editors rarely insist on changes except

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to structure and language, and so readers are treated to genuine, candid accounts of work, material, events and ideas presented, we hope, in interesting and readable form. Authors are treated to expert critical review, advice on changes to be made and, when papers are accepted, rarely more than half a year's wait for final publication.

Editorials

And then of course there are the Editorials — the regular essay that opens each issue of the journal. These contain current news, opinion, letters, discussions, which variously stimulate, infuriate, entertain and inform across the broad world of archaeology and its associated interests. Crawford developed the personal Editorial, making it the unique feature of ANTIQUITY. No other archaeological journal has made the Editorial its hallmark, or has promoted the frankness that is found in ANTIQUITY. Crawford's professional interests as geographer and cartographer meant that he relished the growing knowledge and discipline of landscape studies that emerged during the 1930s to 1950s using aerial photography, environmental studies, dating and monument research. He provided sharp commentary on the training required by the emerging discipline of archaeology, rejoicing in the founding of new departments. For many, O.G.S. Crawford was an 'amateur's' archaeologist, providing the means to publish and comment outside the restrictions of local journals and to offer a vision of a new and universal discipline

Glyn Daniel edited ANTIQUITY from 1958 to 1986. He was a natural raconteur who could tackle difficult subjects in an entertaining but critical style, often biting in its sharpness. He made archaeology, as reflected in the Editorial pages of ANTIQUITY, a subject both serious and humorous, wherein he pursued the bogus attempts to win academic credibility through fakes and forgeries with an acid wit and eagle eye. He introduced a host of literary and real characters to the essays, that were as enriching as they were funny. As Philip Howard commented in 1992, Daniel was 'learned and accessible and funny, particularly when [he] was laying into sacred cows such as the bogus Druids. The [Editorials] give a brilliant aerial survey of the years in which archaeology turned into a grown up subject', and they were written in such style — 'For any young scholar who wants to see how to write deadly serious stuff without being pompous or obscure, and for any young journalist who wants to learn how to write compulsively readable stuff without fudging or twisting from the highest standards, they are essential copybook reading'. What is more, he enjoyed the sheer entertainment of our subject — he saw the nonsense that so many of us make of it when we get too serious, too interested in minutiae, too remote from what matters and from the public who have an equal right to know.

Many a Daniel Editorial examined the ludicrous presentation of the past — such as professionals giving dreadful conference papers, or the mess made of public monuments and museums, and the nonsensical publications from the lunatic fringe. At the same time he was quick, like Crawford, to encourage new young scholars, giving them a chance to air their views and research in the pages. Everyone who is anyone in archaeology, I might hazard a guess, has written at an early stage for ANTIQUITY.

Daniel introduced many current discussions into ANTIQUITY, reviewing the changing theoretical and methodological approaches, and inviting many leading thinkers to add their personal views. Such pieces, which included David Clarke's 'Archaeology — the loss of innocence' have made a profound mark on at least British thinking, in New Archaeology.

Chris Chippindale followed Glyn's lead, further developing the interest in people, personalities and their antics, and on a huge geographical canvas. From Australia to Alaska, and all places between, ANTIQUITY began from the later 1980s to reflect the whole world of archaeology, and the major new scientific, philosophical and sociological approaches to our newly globalized world. What had begun as a national review journal by Crawford 60 years before, became the world's review of the subject, reflecting the new interests of world archaeology, Cold War archaeology, emerging nations and ethnic identities, as well as new theory, science and method. Chippindale continued to pursue the ethical issues that have in recent years become prominent — he exposed the difficulties of the World Archaeology Congress and the mixed political messages that emerged from it. He also pursued the rather shady machinations that revealed how some Professors and Directors of major archaeological departments were appointed — through slightly bogus affiliations, friends, networks and

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the like. ANTIQUITY was never closer to being sued than over one of these events! Chris also brought with him the new age of professional desk-top publishing and electronic communications, which have absolutely transformed the journal in the last 15 years. From traditional printing and the postal service, the journal became one of the leaders in the rapid transmission of correspondence and material *via* the internet.

The present editors have continued the excellent framework of electronic publishing methods introduced by Chippindale, and also the open, frank and current discussion across the very broad canvas established during the period 1986–1997. We feel that ANTIQUITY is, and always should be, a journal that emerges from a broadly Anglo-Saxon tradition, reflecting the views and impressions of those who want to communicate with the English-speaking world. Great value has always been placed on the quality of communication and its potential to 'speak' to a wide audience as the hallmark of ANTIQUITY

One important criticism directed at the modern ANTIQUITY, for example by Ruth Daniel — who was the production editor throughout Glyn Daniel's tenure — suggests that the subject matter has become too specialized; that the minutiae and depth of argument has begun to exclude too many general readers, and that the interested amateur had been left out altogether. At conferences such as this, we try to elicit interest from either contributors or subscribers, but many people reply they have no time for world archaeology, that ANTIQUITY does not cover their specific interest. It seems that the closer the historical interests of archaeologists are to the present (Classical and Medieval archaeologists especially, who perceive their study to be complete in itself), the more likely they are to favour journals that simply cater for their own regional and period interests. The most enthusiastic contributors amongst you are the theorists and the prehistorians, who relish the big picture of world archaeology, of anthropology, new methods, dating techniques and challenging ideas and approaches. But all may yet change with our Editorial successors who will no doubt, bury the suspicions of scholars of the later antique world, and find new readers and authors from amongst them at last!

So, in an increasingly specialized world of diverging academic and popular agendas, what is the role and future for ANTIQUITY?

We, as teachers and archaeological museum professionals, appreciate the current dilemmas facing archaeology. On the one hand, the academic demand is for new, cutting-edge science, theory and knowledge, but on the other hand, the constant demand by public, educational and political institutions is to make all this knowledge accessible to everyone. At the same time, the funding for archaeology, universities, museums and heritage seems ever more crucial and under threat. Many of our Editorials have been critical of the level and ethics of government support. But it is here, perhaps, that the value of ANTIQUITY is most apparent — striving still to provide the authoritative summary and digest of the new work, alongside a critical commentary of our broad and often generalizing discipline. The recent introduction of short colour notes has elicited some fine reports on fieldwork and discoveries, especially from parts of the world, such as Iran, Cuba or China, from where it is difficult to reach a worldwide readership. Invariably, notes from ANTIQUITY reach the international press as well, making interesting headlines on the most unlikely of themes. Returning to Crawford's original ethos, archaeology in ANTIQUITY exists for 'intelligent people who are interested in archaeology and like to hear about it'.

Regularity

ANTIQUITY has always had a dedicated team of editorial assistants, Advisory Editors, publishers and distributors. It is not just down to Editors to ensure that you receive your copy regularly, correctly typeset and sent to your address. To the generations of the ANTIQUITY team, I salute you for your dedicated work and loyalty to what is without doubt, even amongst the august company of members of the Society of American Archaeology, the very best archaeological journal in the world!

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