UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Humanities

The Past and the Public

Archaeology and the periodical press
in nineteenth century Britain

by

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ABSTRACT

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THE PAST AND THE PUBLIC: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PERIODICAL PRESS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITAIN

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Today, archaeologists are more aware of the importance of the relationship between their work and the public at all levels of professional life than ever before, however, this growing awareness has yet to be transferred into an historical context. Looking around, whether at television schedules, bookshop shelves, newspapers or cinema listings, no one can be left in any doubt that there is a widespread public interest in archaeology. It is easy to assume that this is a recent phenomenon, but even a casual glance at a nineteenth century magazine would demonstrate that public interest in archaeology is far from new. In fact, archaeology has been available to the general reader in Britain since at least the 1830s; a time long before any professional or institutional study of the subject began. Through a study of the periodical press, this thesis will examine in detail the relationship between archaeology and the reading public in Britain between 1800 and 1900, exploring the unique contribution that periodicals can make to our understanding of the history of archaeology.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, archaeologists are more aware of the importance of the relationship between their work and the public at all levels of professional life than ever before, however, this growing awareness has yet to be transferred into an historical context.[i] Looking around, whether at television schedules, bookshop shelves, newspapers or cinema listings, no one can be left in any doubt that there is a widespread public interest in archaeology. It is easy to assume that this is a recent phenomenon, but even a casual glance at a nineteenth century magazine would demonstrate that public interest in archaeology is far from new. In fact, archaeology has been available to the general reader in Britain since at least the 1830s; a time long before any professional or institutional study of the subject began.[ii] Through a study of the periodical press, this thesis will examine in detail the relationship between archaeology and the reading public in Britain between 1800 and 1900, exploring the unique contribution that periodicals can make to our understanding of the history of archaeology.[1]

NINETEENTH CENTURY PERIODICALS

Before the arrival of mass communications such as television, radio and cinema newsreels in the twentieth century, the periodicals ruled supreme as the primary way that the public were kept informed of what was going on in the world.[iii] The term periodical covers a wide range of magazine type publications – often published weekly, monthly, or quarterly – and is often used to differentiate this body of literature from the book press.[iv] Through the course of the nineteenth century the periodical became the dominant form of publication in Britain, and between 1800 and 1900 around 125,000 different periodicals were published.[v] Many covered archaeology as a part of their content, some of which had a readership in excess of a million people each week.[vi]

[1] Throughout this thesis the word 'archaeology' is used to refer to any comments on ancient objects, sites etc., that appeared in the periodical press. Its use is not intended to suggest a professional or academic study of ancient material culture. Archaeology was a term used throughout the nineteenth century and included the study of ancient objects, sites, buildings, local history, genealogy and folklore. It was only in the twentieth century, as archaeologists attempted to distance themselves and their research from amateur antiquarians and establish their own discipline, that archaeology came to refer to the study of material culture.

Serious study of the nineteenth century periodical press began in the late 1950s, and periodicals have come to be an essential historical resource for research on nineteenth century Britain.[vii] In their introduction to one of the first collected works on periodicals research Joanne Shattock and Michael Wolff neatly sum up the importance of this area of study:

> Nobody who reads about or studies Victorian Britain nowadays needs to be reminded of the importance and inescapability of the Victorian periodical press. There is surely no monograph or scholarly article, scarcely a popular biography of general history which does not refer to or cite some portion of the tens of thousands of newspapers and magazines which were, in effect, the first mass media.[viii]

Unlike other historical disciplines archaeology has yet to make use of this valuable historical resource, despite archaeologists being aware of its existence for over half a century.[ix]

The idea that the relationship between archaeology and the British public should be an important aspect of the history of archaeology was first proposed over fifty years ago by Glyn Daniel in *A Hundred Years of Archaeology* (1950). Daniel noted that popular publications of archaeology, in particular periodicals, played an important role in communicating information about the past to a non-specialist audience in the nineteenth century.[x] Daniel's work was ahead of its time in recognising the importance of the relationship between archaeology and the public, however these introductory points were never followed up with a more detailed study.[xi] Several more recent works have also noted the importance of the public in the development of archaeology in the nineteenth century, including Kenneth Hudson's *A Social History of Archaeology* (1980), Barry Marsden's *Pioneers of Prehistory* (1984), and most recently A. Bowdoin Van Riper's *Men Amongst the Mammoths* (1993).[xii] All these accounts acknowledge that periodical publications were an influential medium for communicating archaeology to a general audience in the nineteenth century, however none make a serious effort to use periodical publications as a critical source that can provide us with insights into an aspect of archaeology that remains largely unknown.[xiii]

The simple answer why no detailed historical research has taken place on the coverage of archaeology in the periodical press is that this type of research is extremely time consuming. As Shattock and Wolff describe:

> The sheer bulk and range of the Victorian press seem to make it so unwieldy as to defy systematic and general study. Given the inadequacy of most existing reference works, the uncertainties of cataloguing, and that vague but all-too-familiar feeling that there are literally millions of serial articles out there whose allure we dare not admit to, we can barely grasp the dimensions of the subject, let alone come to grips with its content.[xiv]

Not only does study involve the collection of data from a variety of widely dispersed, and often fairly poorly preserved, sources, it also requires a knowledge of a wide range of different publications and their individual histories. However, the reasons why periodicals have not been highly valued as historical resources goes much deeper.

The Value of Popular Presentations

With very few exceptions histories of archaeology construct a narrative around published accounts written by major archaeological figures, and aimed at like-minded scholars, as their primary sources of evidence.[xv] These often include the proceedings of archaeological societies, books that proved to be influential new statements on archaeology, and sometimes unpublished correspondence and memoirs. Popular presentations, where they are mentioned at all in such accounts, are often used purely as sources of amusement; irrelevant padding to liven up the 'serious' work surrounding them. Periodicals are generally used to provide entertaining one-liners, often to make a negative point about public perceptions of the past, rather than as a serious historical resource that can make a valuable contribution to our knowledge of archaeology in the nineteenth century. For example the source of any quotation used is rarely acknowledged in the main body of the text, and any wider information about the publication ignored altogether. It is perhaps symptomatic of the way that periodicals are regarded that most of the histories of archaeology that mention the periodical press are those aimed at a fairly general readership, clearly suggesting that periodicals are not valued highly as a historical resource.[xvi] This represents a wider devaluing of popular presentations as a resource for academic studies, which research into the representation of the past has aimed to challenge.

The importance of studying popular culture as a serious area of historical research was established by the pioneering work of Richard Altick in the 1950s, and has since become an established area of study on the nineteenth

century.[xvii] What this research has demonstrated is that popular presentations – including exhibitions, cheap books, periodicals, and cartoons – are important historical resources that provide unique insights into aspects of nineteenth century culture that more traditional sources do not cover. Within archaeology there has been a growing concern to understand the role that non-academic presentations of archaeological information have played in constructing the ideas that we have about the past.[xviii] This research has demonstrated that 'popular' presentations aimed at a non-specialist audience have played an influential role in shaping the ideas that we have about archaeology and the ancient past.[xix]

Most studies of the representation of the past seek to understand how popular presentations have influenced the formation of ideas, especially academic theories, about the past.[xx] While this research is important from an archaeological perspective, there is a danger of losing sight of the wider historical significance of the sources being used. In their use of popular culture archaeologists have drawn on the type of intellectual histories favoured by scientific disciplines, rather than cultural histories.[xxi] This has resulted in a growing knowledge about the influence of popular presentations of archaeology on the development of ideas about the past, but the wider historical importance of the sources used has not been explored, nor has the unique contribution that they can make to our knowledge of archaeology in the nineteenth century. Despite the fact that studies into the representation of the past focus on presentations aimed at a popular audience, the public have remained almost entirely absent from many accounts. This is a notable omission, as in many cases periodicals were aimed at very specific sections of the public therefore their content was selected to appeal to a certain readership. Such information is vital to understanding the coverage of archaeology included in the periodical press, and forms an integral part of this study.

The Focus Of This Study

To study the coverage of archaeology in the periodical press in the nineteenth century a survey of 130 periodicals published between 1800 and 1900 was carried out (for details of how the data was collected and the titles of the periodicals surveyed see Appendix).

This initial survey proved that archaeology was featured in a wide range of periodicals, and most importantly that there was a close relationship between the publication, the way that archaeology was covered, and the themes selected for inclusion. Therefore, following the advice of Maidment that it is important to study individual periodicals in detail to understand their content, it was decided that the presentation method that best fulfilled the research aims of highlighting the major changes in the way that archaeology was brought to the general reader, and the value of periodicals to the study of the history of archaeology, was to focus on key periodicals that provide an insight into the reporting of archaeology at different points in the century.[xxii] In particular the aim was to highlight the major changes that occurred in the presentation of archaeology in the periodical press, many of which are related to wider publishing and social trends, by focussing each chapter on the way that an individual periodical or publication type covered particular archaeological themes. The publications were selected as each represents an important stage in the development of the public presentation of archaeology. Within each chapter the case studies were selected to provide a good example of the coverage of archaeology in the period and in the periodical studied. It is not the aim of this study to catalogue popular archaeology in the nineteenth century, rather to highlight the key changes that occurred in the presentation of archaeology to the public in the periodical press.

The nineteenth century periodical press is a uniquely placed resource to tell us about the consumption of archaeology by the reading public in Britain. Through the course of the century the potential audience for archaeology massively increased, changing from the educated few at the beginning of the century, to potentially anyone who could either read or look at pictures by mid-century.[xxiii] The story of the relationship between archaeology and the British reading public in the nineteenth century begins with the *Gentleman's Magazine* and its circle of dedicated antiquarian readers.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[i] This is perhaps most evident when archaeology is conducted in a post-colonial context, where working with local communities is regarded as particularly beneficial. For examples see the collection of papers on community archaeology in *World Archaeology* 34 (2003). See also Jameson (ed.) (1997).

[ii] For readable introductions to the history of archaeology see Casson (1934, 1940); Daniel (1950, 1975, 1981); Bahn (1996); Schnapp (1996). Trigger (1990) provides a detailed account of the intellectual development of archaeology in a global perspective. On the wider study of the past in Victorian Britain see Brand (ed.) (1998).

[iii] Altick (1992) provides an excellent introduction to the periodical press. For details of individual periodicals see the *Waterloo Directory of Nineteenth Century Newspapers and Periodicals*, edited by North (1997). Poole (1963) provides the only real catalogue of articles that appeared in the nineteenth century periodical press in the UK and USA, although the division of subject themes is somewhat erratic. The location of original collections of periodicals is listed in the *British Union Catalogue of Periodicals*, Stewart (ed.) (1968), although some information is now slightly out of date.

[iv] Although there is some overlap between the two areas of publishing as throughout the nineteenth century many books were published in instalments. On serial publishing in general see Myers & Harris (eds) (1993) and Secord (2000) for a fascinating glimpse into the world of nineteenth century publishing.

[v] This figure is the estimate provided by North (1997), page 9, in his introduction to the *Waterloo Directory*.

[vi] Ellegard (1957) provides the most comprehensive discussion of readership figures of Victorian periodicals.

[vii] See *Victorian Periodicals Review*, the journal of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals, for details of the emergence and growth of research into the nineteenth century periodical press. Attributing authorship to anonymously published articles has been one of the largest areas of research, with many of the results published in the *Wellesley Index*. For a wider discussion of the periodical press and research into it see Shattock and Wolff (1982a); Brake, Jones & Madden (eds) (1990); Vann and VanArsdel (1995, 1996); Diamond (2003).

[viii] Shattock and Wolff (1982b), page 1.

[ix] A number of compilations exist of archaeological stories from various periodicals, including Gomme (1886-1905) for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Bacon (1976) for the *Illustrated London News*, and Warner (1994) for stories on Egypt from several periodicals. See also Gomme (1891-1903) for an index to archaeological articles published in specialist journals, in particular local societies, through the nineteenth century.

[x] Daniel (1950), pages 55-56. Among other publications he mentions *Chambers's Journal*, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the *Athenaeum*, and the *Spectator*.

[xi] A similar discussion appears in Daniel's *The Idea of Prehistory* (1962), and *A Hundred and Fifty Years of Archaeology* (1975).

[xii] Hudson (1980); Marsdon (1984); Van Riper (1993). Both Hudson and Marsdon mention periodicals by name and include a few choice quotes but nothing more. Van Riper includes a much more detailed account of the public debate over human prehistory, which derives much of its content from publications aimed at the scientific community and learned readers.

[xiii] In contrast, Alvar Ellegard's *Darwin and the General Reader* (1990 [1958]) provides a detailed study of the way that Darwin's theories were reported to the public by different periodicals in the period 1859-72. It remains one of the few detailed thematic studies of periodicals in a research field dominated by cataloguing projects and work on well-known literary figures.

[xiv] Shattock and Wolff (1982b), page 1.

[xv] For examples look at any history of archaeology ever written. 'Traditional' histories of have a valuable place in the publication of archaeology, and it is not my intention to suggest that these be discarded in favour of more novel approaches. But I believe that by embracing new sources of evidence we can augment our understandings of what archaeology is all about.

[xvi] Bacon's (1976) collection of articles on archaeology from the *Illustrated London News* presents the stories primarily as a source of entertainment for his readers, rather than as significant historical documents that can give us a unique perspective on the consumption of the past.

[xvii] Altick (1992). Griffin (2002) provides a comprehensive introduction to the history and future of the study of popular culture.

[xviii] Moser (2001) provides a general introduction into research on the representation of the past.
[xix] See Molyneaux (ed.) (1997) and Smiles and Moser (ed.) (2005) for an idea of the range of work this field of research encompasses. See also Schnapp (1996) for the only work on the history of archaeology to deal explicitly with the reception of ideas about the past at different times and global locations.
[xx] E.g. Moser (1992, 1996, 1998); Moser and Gamble (1997); Stoczkowski (1997).
[xxi] The work of Rudwick (1976, 1993) on geological imagery has proved to be particularly influential. Much recent work on the history of archaeology has focussed on the intellectual history of the discipline, e.g. Trigger (1984, 1990); Murray (1987, 2001); Corbey & Roebroeks (eds) (2001).
[xxii] Maidment (1990).
[xxiii] Altick (1992) provides the classic introduction into the rise of reading in the nineteenth century and Rose (2001) the most up-to-date account. See also Vincent (1989). Manguel (1997) provides a good general history of reading in a global context.

1

ANTIQUARIES AND THE *GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE*

> Pray do allow me to have a bit of a gossip with some of your correspondents. I have just finished my evening meal, and I have nobody to talk to.[1]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the best place to read about archaeology was in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a publication that aimed much of its content at Britain's antiquarian community. The magazine was founded by London printer Edward Cave of St John's Gate, and had burst onto the publishing scene in 1731, the pioneer of a new format of magazine to appear in Britain (fig. 1).[2] The majority of space in the *Gentleman's Magazine* was devoted to letters addressed to Mr Sylvanus Urban, Gentleman, a name adopted by successive editors of the magazine to retain their anonymity. Many of the letters were written anonymously, often just signed with a series of letters or symbols, and some readers amused themselves attempting to work out the identity of the writer based on the way they signed themselves:

> In reading a news-paper, a magazine, or any other periodical work, I find a great amusement in remarking the various signatures adopted by anonymous correspondents. From long observation I have found, that one may generally form a judgement of the taste and spirit of the whole composition, from the style and title which the writer assumes at the end of it. A witty writer makes an essay like an epigram, in which the last words are always the most brilliant. A grave author usually chooses a solemn name; and your men of profound researches, consistently enough, use a signature, the meaning of which is hard to be discovered.[3]

Contributors to the *Gentleman's Magazine* included clergymen, architects, landowners, antiquaries, as well as the odd Member of Parliament.[4]

Most of the correspondents who wrote to the magazine were regular contributors, with some having a letter published in almost every issue. The

total number of contributors was in fact fairly small, and the feel of the magazine was very intimate; it was possible to exchange news with a group of like-minded individuals, either anonymously or in name, and get a response back in future issues. In many ways the *Gentleman's Magazine* operated in a similar way to a Gentleman's club, a place where people with similar interests and backgrounds got together. The magazine had a following of loyal readers, even when increases in the price of paper stretched many people's ability to afford periodicals.

> By reason of the late enormous advance upon all kinds of paper, and the consequent high price of books, many a poor parson, like myself, has been necessarily obliged to relinquish the private purchase of several periodical publications, from which he had heretofore been accustomed to derive a variety of amusement and information; and, instead of perusing them, as before, in his own parlour, by his own snug and comfortable fire-side, has been involuntarily compelled to put up with a transient glance of them, as it were, in a circulating library, or (what is still worse) in a public reading-room. This is a sad pass, Mr Urban, to which many of our profession, and, I believe, many of every other profession and calling, are unfortunately reduced! But still *your* publication, Sir, the "Gentleman's Magazine," will, notwithstanding (however others may suffer by the present unwelcome, I had almost said, ruinous tax upon paper), I am very well persuaded, never be thrown aside by any of us, so long as we have any cash in our caskets to pay for it; whilst it is conducted with that truly laudable spirit and patriotic temper, by which it has been uniformly distinguished from its happy commencement down to the present hour. No: as long as we have any true taste for polite and general literature remaining, so long shall we continue to be your constant readers and admirers at *home*.[5]

One parson at least, even if he had to sacrifice his subscription to other publications because of their increased price, would continue to be a regular purchaser of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

In the early years the *Gentleman's Magazine* included parliamentary reporting as one of its most important subject areas, and boasted Dr Samuel Johnson as its parliamentary editor (1740-1744). However, as the eighteenth century wore on, the magazine began increasingly to cater to the interests of Britain's antiquarian community, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century the magazine counted a number of celebrated antiquaries among its regular correspondents. One of the best known, as well as the most prolific, was Richard Gough, best known for his translation of William Camden's *Britannia*,

and the author of numerous works on the antiquities of Britain.[6] Gough's personal contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine* number well over a hundred, written under one of the many fictitious names and initials he used throughout his career. Each month Gough and his contemporaries shared their latest antiquarian researches in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

The Antiquaries Forum

There had been a tradition of antiquarian study in Britain for at least three hundred years by the beginning of the nineteenth century.[7] The favoured pursuits of a typical antiquary included book collecting, visiting and recording ancient monuments and buildings in Britain and abroad, and the collection of antiquities and curiosities from the more or less distant past. The *Gentleman's Magazine* provided a forum where those of an antiquarian persuasion could share with their brother antiquaries their latest discovery at the site of their local ruined monastery, the seal ring they had unearthed in their back garden, or the latest gleanings of the history of the town or county where they lived. This relationship between Britain's antiquarian community and the *Gentleman's Magazine* reached new heights when John Nichols, himself a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, took the helm in 1792, a position he retained until 1826.

Over the years antiquaries have received a pretty bad press, a lot of it deserved, and even in the early nineteenth century many considered them to be, at best, slightly ridiculous figures. One needs look no further than Walter Scott's famous account of his fictional antiquary, Jonathan Oldbuck of Monckbarns, to see some of the common perceptions the public had of those of an antiquarian persuasion.[8] Antiquaries were well known for the wildly speculative nature of their assertions about the past, usually based on the barest of evidence. In one famous incident Oldbuck confidently pronounces to his companion Lovel that a series of earthworks standing before them were once a Roman encampment, only to be told by a local beggar a few minutes later that, not only are they modern, but that the beggar himself was involved in their digging. A stone inscribed with the letters A.D.L.L. found at the site, which Oldbuck was convinced was an ancient inscription in Latin, was also identified as having a similarly recent origin.[9] Scott claimed that this story was based upon a real incident that befell the Scottish antiquary and politician Sir John Clerk of Penicuik and his companion the English antiquary Roger Gail. Just

like Oldbuck, Clerk had identified a series of earthworks as a Roman Praetorium, until being put right by a local shepherd who had in fact created them himself. This tale rapidly became a part of antiquarian folklore and was revisited by Charles Dickens in *The Pickwick Papers* where the honourable founder of the Pickwick Club, himself something of an antiquary, makes a similarly creative interpretation of an inscribed stone outside an inn. A well-known story in the early years of the nineteenth century, recounted in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, showed antiquarian zeal in its worst light:

> Many of you, I doubt not, may have heard of that truly egregious Virtuoso, who attended at a sale of choice medals, and purchased at an enormous price one article which was stated to be an *unique*. When the treasure was completely transferred to him, the happy possessor battered it into an indistinguishable mass of metal before the eyes of his astonished competitors, exclaiming with transport, that "*Now* there existed but *one* specimen of the kind, and *that* was *locked up* in *his own cabinet*."[10]

But stories such as this did many antiquaries a disservice. Even a quick browse through many of the letters to the *Gentleman's Magazine* demonstrates that most antiquaries had a very strong respect for any relic of the past, and would never contemplate destroying an ancient artefact to enrich their private collection. In general they were more concerned with trying to find out more information about the things they discovered, and recording anything old that they came across. As a correspondent noted in 1806, there was no motive in what he did beyond the love of antiquities:

> I, like all Antiquaries, intent on the marvels inviting us forth, left London with small regret, my sole imagination being lost in that hope which encourages us to tempt barren heaths, tempests bleak, nodding ruins, cloud-capped mountains, and all the long list of terrors which we pursuers of Time's memorials are subject to. If at last we view the sepulchral mound, the druidical circle, the embattled tower, the religious fane, the monumental relic, – these are our treasures in expectation; we behold, and we enjoy![11]

Each issue a number of letters appeared that described antiquities that had been discovered in a field or garden near the correspondent's house. Many of these discoveries were coins, medieval seals and rings, most of which were described, any inscription reproduced, and illustrated as a part of a plate in the magazine (fig. 2). Usually a request for information accompanied the correspondence, and many letters received a response in later issues. For the

majority of items the *Gentleman's Magazine* was the only place that they were recorded, and it was not without justification that several correspondents referred to the magazine as a 'Museum of Antiquities.'[12]

The following account of the discovery of a gold ring on Salisbury Plain is fairly typical of the sort of correspondence that readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, with an interest in antiquities, sent in:

> I present to your antiquarian correspondents an impression from a curious gold seal-ring, seemingly of great antiquity, and rendered somewhat interesting from the adventitious circumstance under which it came to light.
>
> A shepherd's boy, driving his flock from Salisbury plain, observed at the foot of White-fleet hill, near Wardour castle, one of his sheep to halt. Upon catching it, to discover the cause, he found one of its claws encircled with this ring. The sheep was instantly relieved from its lameness, and the ring safely deposited in the boy's pocket.
>
> Being a few days afterwards to a goldsmith in this place, it was discovered to be of the purest gold, massy (i.e. about eight pennyweights), perfectly plain, without any inscription, the seal of a whitish coloured stone, bearing the impression.
>
> I have nicely compared it with the Arundel arms, under the idea that it might formerly have belonged to some inhabitant of the neighbouring castle of Wardour, but find no affinity to the arms of that family; nor can I, considering the unfrequented spot whereon it was found, and the evident characteristics of its antiquity, form so probable a conjecture respecting its origin as, perhaps, some of your ingenious and more enlightened correspondents may do. I will, therefore, thank them for any explanation they can give of it, either in heraldry or antiquity.[13]

Readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine* liked nothing better than a good story about how antiquities were discovered, and many other examples recount discoveries made by gardeners, road diggers, builders and even a turnip planter! Alongside the accidental discoveries of antiquities, antiquaries also spent a considerable amount of time in ancient churches, taking notes of inscriptions on grave stones and any monumental brass plaques, as well as any interesting architectural feature or sculpture.

Some of the letters that appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* provide a rather more detailed account of the nature of archaeology in the early nineteenth century. The widely held image of an antiquary engaging in digging up a barrow or a Roman villa is somewhat misleading. If the correspondents to the *Gentleman's Magazine* were typical of the antiquarian community, and there is no reason for assuming otherwise, then participating in excavations

was not a common part of their interest in the past. Most discoveries that they record were chance finds, usually brought about by building work, or farming. On a few rare occasions the antiquary was on hand when the discovery was made, which was what happened when a number of human skeletons were found near Aylesbury. The following letter shows the way that local history, archaeology, and the genealogies of noble families were woven together in an antiquary's attempts to make sense of the past:

> As your Magazine may be justly considered the true Antiquarian Repository, I make no apology for sending you a notice of the discovery of a great number of human bones which were some time ago dug up in the vicinity of Aylesbury. Some workmen employed in digging gravel in the Northern part of the parish, discovered within a few yards course of a small brook which separates it from the neighbouring parish of Brieton, and very near to the turnpike road leading from Aylesbury to Winslow, the remains of several skeletons. They were found lying in various directions and postures, some with the heads towards the East, others the contrary way, and, in a word, as if thrown promiscuously into holes which had been hastily dug to receive them. Some of them were within three feet of the surface, others four or five; but according to the information given to me upon the spot, none at more considerable depth. The number of skeletons amounted to *thirty-eight*; and as the labourers proceed in getting up the gravel, it seems probable that many more may hereafter be discovered. The bones are for the most part those of adult subjects; and from the appearance of the teeth, with few exceptions, scarcely past the middle age. Some locks of hair were observable still hanging to one or two of the skulls; and at least in one of them the brain had not wholly lost its figure or consistency. These latter were imbedded in the dark-coloured stiff clay, which obtains very generally in and about the vale of Aylesbury, and is known by geologists under the appellation of *oak-tree clay*. Where the bones had lain in the beds of gravel, they generally appeared drier and more decayed. Some few of the bones evidently belonged to tall men, but afforded nothing very particular with reference to their stature. The meadow in which these relicks have been found, abounds with green patches, irregularly distributed about its surface; and there are evidently enough to be traced, several holes or pits which have not yet been examined. With the exception of a small buckle found lying upon the neck of one of the skeletons, and a piece or two of a horse-shoe, I could not ascertain that any thing whatsoever, which might have been supposed to be buried at the same time with the bodies, was discovered.
>
> Very various conjectures were made by the visitors who, attracted by curiosity from time to time, inspected the progress of the discovery. Some were at first inclined to suppose that there had formerly been a place of execution near the spot:

but that idea was, I believe, soon abandoned, in consequence of the number as well as the appearance of the bones. The most probably account is, - that these were the bodies of soldiers slain during the civil wars of Cromwell. History, it is true, has not preserved many particulars of the contests to which, at that eventful period, we may venture to refer to the loss of so many lives; but it is quite too much to suppose that these bones have lain here ever since Saxon times, a period of more than twelve hundred years having intervened since the reduction of the town of Aylesbury by that people under *Cuthwolf.* The spot in which they have been found is about a mile Northward of the parish church; the ground immediately contiguous has been of late years considerably raised, in order to form and improve the line of turnpike-road which formerly was in wet seasons frequently overflowed by the neighbouring brook. Over that brook (which by the bye is the original, though here inconsiderable, stream, that, after a course of a few miles, is dignified by the title of "the river Thame") is a small bridge of two arches, forming one of the principal approaches to Aylesbury; and, very probably, a spot where it may have been thought proper to station an advanced guard for the protection of the Southern bank; and to interrupt an enemy in advancing towards the town.

According to Lord Clarendon's account, Aylesbury was garrisoned for the Parliament during 1644 and the succeeding year; and although, as Mr Lysons truly observes, "it does not appear to have sustained any siege from the Royal army," it was deemed of great importance, and in all probability must have been exposed to the occasional loss of many of the troops stationed there, as well as very likely to have been the means of destroying numbers of assailants in those predatory excursions which there is good authority for believing to have been at the time very common in this neighbourhood, although not particularized by the historians of that period. Boarstall or Borstal House (situated upon an antient domain, now belonging to the family of Aubrey), then one of King Charles's garrisons, was a perpetual annoyance to the parliamentary forces at Aylesbury. In the spring of the year 1644 Boarstall was one of the smaller garrisons which it was thought advisable to abandon. It was accordingly evacuated by the King's forces, and the fortifications destroyed. Immediately the Parliamentarians, who "had experienced much inconvenience from the excursions of their neighbours," took possession of it, and greatly annoyed the Royal garrison at Oxford, by intercepting provisions, &c. whereupon Colonel Gage undertook to reduce it, which he is related to have effected with great gallantry. Lady Denham, the then proprietor of the mansion, having fled away in disguise; and "the garrison left there by Col. Gage, nearly supported itself (says Lord Clarendon) by depredations in Buckinghamshire, particularly in the neighbourhood of Aylesbury." It also appears that the King fixed his head-quarters at Buckingham for some time, in 1644. Hence it seems but reasonable to suppose that severe conflicts might have taken place in the vicinity of so important a post as

> this of Aylesbury, although not particularly described or handed down to us in the page of History: and that the bones now discovered may be more reasonably referred to that period than to one so much more remote, as the days of our Saxon ancestors, is confirmed by their general appearance, freshness, the mode in which they were buried, the particular spot where they have been lain, and every other circumstance connected with the subject, which has come to the knowledge of An Old Correspondent.[14]

The case for the bones dating to the time of the Civil War is well made, indeed, the way that the conclusions were reached is not all that different to the way an archaeologist would go about understanding the skeletons today. It was chance discoveries, such as this, where the important role of the *Gentleman's Magazine* is most evident. If the correspondent had not been on the spot, and decided to send his observations to the magazine, the discovery would have remained entirely unknown to everyone who had not witnessed it first hand. The *Gentleman's Magazine* provided the facility for those with an interest in antiquarian researches to communicate with those who shared their love of the past. At the time several other antiquarian publications were in existence, but these rarely lasted much beyond a few issues, and had a fraction of the readership of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[15] Much of this antiquarian correspondence, that would have held so much interest to dedicated readers, would probably have had little interest for a casual browser. But the magazine never claimed to aim its contents at everyone; Nichols knew what his readers were interested in and catered to those needs.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* also played an important role in bringing news of the latest books on antiquities to the attention of readers in its book review section. This was especially important in the early nineteenth century as the price of most books was so high, as one correspondent complained:

> The complaint of the dearness of books, and the consequent difficulty of procuring them, by a number of Readers, is a theme of daily occurrence. In many instances the complaint is well founded.
>
> The luxurious habit of the present day has obtruded itself into the quiet abode of Literature; and a preference of the ornamental to the useful, is making rapid strides towards excluding a still greater number of persons from the benefits and delights if literature. A book ushered forth in the plain, but respectable, garb of former days will not now be endured; no, it must be decked out with hot-pressed paper, large margin, and various other embellishments, to suit the taste of this embellished age. It this taste only affected those who are chiefly solicitous of the outsides of books, it

> would be of little consequence; let such grown children as are fond of toys have them; but, when it prejudices as well those who have some regard for the inside, it becomes a matter of more serious reprehension.[16]

Many readers would have been unable to afford to compile a large library of their own, but by reading the *Gentleman's Magazine* they were able to keep informed of the state of antiquarian knowledge. The reviews in the magazine included a wide cross section of the publishing market, ranging from expensive travel accounts of Egypt and the Classical world to the many works on the antiquities of Britain. Reviews of books on the ancient buildings and monuments of Britain were particularly common in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and the magazine and its correspondents were often actively involved in creating and updating the many works on Britain's antiquities.

One of the most common tasks that British antiquaries engaged in was the preparation and publication of historical and topographical accounts of the county where they lived. As well as providing a forum for antiquarian discoveries, the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine* were also a place where county historians could communication with one another, and keep their subscribers informed of the progress of their latest work. In this field the *Gentleman's Magazine* boasted some of the most famous local historians of the day as correspondents, including Robert Surtees, the historian of Durham, who employed J.M.W. Turner as his illustrator, and Sir Richard Colt Hoare, best known for his two volume work on ancient Wiltshire.[17] Many of these works were reviewed in the magazine, either in the section dedicated to book reviews, or by a correspondent writing in to share his opinions. The reviews, like the correspondence, were aimed at the typical reader who generally had a fairly extensive knowledge of antiquarian matters. It was not unknown for a reader to purchase a work on the strength of a good review in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:

> In consequence of your spirited Review of Mr Coxe's Monmouthshire Tour I have purchased the book, and have read it with extreme satisfaction. Though it costs four guineas it is a very cheap book, the plates are so numerous and well executed.[18]

County histories were published by subscription in advance, usually for a fairly high fee. A price of four guineas, the amount charged for Coxe's Monmouthshire, would have placed the work well out of the reach of most

readers, who would have had to visit the reading room of the British Museum to see a copy.

In its role of helping to update county histories, the *Gentleman's Magazine* regularly included illustrations of sites of antiquarian interest, with an accompanying description and a note of their present condition. In his preface to the first volume of the *Gentleman's Magazine* index Samuel Johnson considered this to be one of the magazine's most valuable roles:

> Another object, in which by the kind assistance of our Correspondents we have been particularly successful, is in preserving the scattered remains of Antiquity discovered by accident, or which have been long concealed in the Cabinets and Libraries of the Curious. It is with pleasure we observe that there is scarcely any Publication of Local or County History in which the Magazine is not frequently referred to; and to future writers on these subjects, the contents of the Magazine will be rendered more known, and consequently more useful.[19]

It was not without justification that one correspondent described the *Gentleman's Magazine* as the 'foster parent of English Topography.'[20] The permanent record of sites of historical interest that the *Gentleman's Magazine* provided was to prove particularly important in the early nineteenth century as so many of Britain's ancient buildings were falling into serious disrepair. Many were demolished and others restored with little regard for the building's original appearance. These restorations, or 'innovations' in contemporary terminology, provided the material for the most hotly contested antiquarian debate that the magazine had ever seen.

Architectural Innovations

Alongside the requests for information and reports of discoveries, many correspondents to the *Gentleman's Magazine* were interested in describing, often with an accompanying illustration, some of the finest surviving examples of the ancient architecture of Britain. Churches and cathedrals, in particular, were a favourite subject of discussion. In the early nineteenth century there was a widespread concern among the antiquarian community and beyond for the poor state of repair of many parish churches and other ancient buildings, and there is no doubt that many were dangerously close to ruin.[21] But even when buildings reached a state when they were dangerous, people were slow to act, as one correspondent noted in a letter from 1810:

> The dreadful accident which lately occurred in the Church at Liverpool is well calculated to call forth, and *imperiously demands*, the immediate attention of all those whose peculiar province it is to take care that our *Churches* and *Chapels* are places of safety. But, Sir, there is in some parishes an apathy, not less to be lamented than difficult to be accounted for, one instance of which has arisen within my knowledge, too glaring and criminally neglectful to pass without peculiar notice.[22]

The accident referred to in Liverpool was a roof falling in on a congregation resulting in great loss of life. The letter went on to recount the story of a church that was in danger of falling down, which an architect had visited and ordered that the bells not be rung again until structural repairs had been carried out. His orders were obeyed for a year, but bell ringing was then recommenced without any repairs taking place, putting the congregation in great danger.[23] This was almost certainly not the only example. However in many cases when a church was in a poor state of repair, rather than carry out the necessary repairs, it was pulled down and replaced by a new building. As an antiquarian correspondent recorded:

> In a former excursion to Scarborough, I had observed, with considerable interest, an antient Parish Church in a village adjoining the town of Malton in Yorkshire; and had resolved, in the tour of the present year, to give it a closer inspection. As well as my recollection serves me, it consisted of a single Aile or Nave, with two doors of entrance highly wrought with birds-beak mouldings; the parapet supported by curious heads, the windows very small, undoubtedly of the most antient Norman Architecture.
>
> You will readily conceive my feelings, when, approaching the object of my pursuit with all the eagerness of protracted expectancy on a favourite subject, I found this little interesting Chapel was no more; but in its place such a building!!!
>
> I have no doubt that the whole has been most regularly done; that the Archdeacon gave directions for its repairs; that the Churchwardens sought out the most intelligent builder in the neighbourhood, who reported it irreparable; or that at least for no great additional sum of money he could build one more commodious and cheerful; and, perhaps, many of the parishioners are pleased with the change.
>
> The spirit of innovation is the spirit of the times; but it is a tasteless and heartless spirit. It loves new objects, because the colours are more gaudy; but it is wholly insensible to those deep and aweful emotions which are excited by the contemplation of antient structures; and which are so conductive to the solemn

> impressions of Religion, as to stamp an additional consecration on the buildings appropriated to its service....
>
> As the mischief is done, and irreparable, I should not have troubled you with my observations upon it, unless with the hope that some of your Correspondents would treat the subject in a manner which might awaken some degree of horror at the sacrilegious devastations; and likewise that, any one who possesses an accurate delineation of the ancient church of Norton, he may be tempted to send it to your Magazine, that the memorial of it at least may be preserved.[24]

Fortunately the *Gentleman's Magazine* provided a record of many destroyed buildings, even if the original no longer survived. The magazine was, as a correspondent described it, 'a valuable repository of destroyed specimens of antient art.'[25] Another considered 'that one of the most useful objects of your interesting and valuable Miscellany, is the facility which it offers for the preservation of certain parts of Topographical History, which are fast hastening to decay, beyond the power of recovery.'[26] Countless letters detailing alterations made to local churches or their destruction were featured in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in an extreme example a correspondent recalls on a visit to Reculver church seeing 'its roofs and spires stripped of their lead covering, and the ponderous masses crushing the pavement and memorials of the dead in the Nave!'[27]

The neglect and destruction also included some of the greatest ancient buildings in the land. A visitor to Winchester Cathedral sent a record of the following scene to the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1806:

> On my way up to London from the West with a Brother Antiquary, I came through Winchester, and, as I always do, went to see that noble and venerable pile the Cathedral. The day, Sir, was very rainy indeed; and what added much to our grief and melancholy, was to see *in several parts of the nave*, the rain pour in such torrents, as to leave no doubt but the roof must be in a most deplorable situation.... Horrid, Mr Urban, to see the great temple of God so neglected; instead of striking awe in the beholder, to excite pity and commiseration.[28]

The subject of restoration was of great interest to a number of correspondents to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, as it usually meant the destruction of many of the ancient features of buildings and their replacement with new, and fashionable, gothic styles. Accompanying this restoration was a mass plastering project to cover over decaying walls and decorations with plaster and

whitewash. Something which a correspondent from 1807 was eager to warn readers about:

> At this time when our Antiquities lie at the mercy of the *Compo* infatuation, it becomes a sacred duty with me to warn those who are eager to join hands in the general confederacy to blot out from the historic recollection all their characteristic features, lest their compunction and grief of heart come too late.[29]

Britain's antiquarian community considered it to be their task to protect the nation's ancient buildings from destruction or transformation wherever possible, and when this proved impossible to provide, at the very least, a pictorial record and description in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:

> Conviction compels me the acknowledge, that while the name of Antiquary is so generally coveted by the higher orders of society, the real admirers of the noble study are but few. That man of rank and affluence is a faithful follower in the pursuit, who devotes thereto his time, his patronage, and his influence, doing honour to his country, and to the memories of his ancestors from whom he derives the means to do this earthly good. By the encouragement he gives to expedite the ardour of the imitative hand, what has he not to expect to see portrayed from our Antiquities; and what praise will not Futurity bestow upon his name, as he will leave behind him on paper representations of those works, which others of contra-dispositions may have in a few years, transformed, or utterly destroyed![30]

The restoration and destruction of the finest examples of the ancient architecture of Britain was of particular concern to the antiquary and architect John Carter.

Carter was born in 1748 and, after leaving school at the age of twelve, trained as a surveyor and mason. His talents as an artist soon became apparent, and he went on to illustrate work for Richard Gough, who become his patron, providing Carter with further commissions and bringing him into contact with such illustrious figures as Sir John Soane, Sir Richard Colt Hoare and Horace Walpole. Through his life Carter developed an interest in antiquarian researches, in particular the study of ancient architecture, and went on to publish several detailed books, including a multi-part publication entitled *The Antient Architecture of England*, which remained unfinished.[31] His lack of education was frequently commented upon by his critics, and in character he was described as being 'rather irascible in temper, and had the reputation of being a quarrelsome man.' But 'as a companion he was blameless,' and 'his

integrity was incorruptible.'[32] Carter was a prolific contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and many of his contributions show a more argumentative side of his character. He published many of his contributions under the pseudonym of An Architect, including a monthly column entitled 'Architectural Innovations,' which detailed the latest buildings to be altered and provided a record of how they appeared prior to restoration, as well as numerous other contributions to the magazine.[33]

It was through the pen of John Carter that the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine* were made aware of the changes that were being wrought on the ancient architecture of the country, or the 'Demon of Innovation' as one correspondent put it.[34] At first Carter's reports centred upon the alterations being made to Durham Cathedral, but soon his attentions were drawn to the more pressing concerns for the survival of Westminster Abbey, one of the greatest works of ancient architecture surviving in the capital. The controversy centred upon the restoration work taking place in Henry VII's Chapel and St Stephen's Chapel. The debate was hotly contested for over ten years and provides a revealing insight into the character of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and Britain's antiquarian community in the early nineteenth century.

The Westminster Debate

Carter's first extended article on Henry VII's Chapel, which began with a quote from Ward's *London Spy*, told readers why the ancient building was so worthy of notice:

> *"Henry the Seventh's chapel is the admiration of the Universe; such inimitable reflections appear in every part of the whole composure, which looks so far exceeding human excellence, that it appears knit together by the fingers of angels, pursuant to the direction of Omnipotence."*
>
> What feeling heart, susceptible to the "beautiful and sublime," but must fervently subscribe to the above inspired sentiments! What feeling heart or eye, quickened by the sight of consummate perfection in art, but must bow down to the all-subduing power of Henry's enchanting scene, which shews the utmost ability and the end of all human grandeur! Each doorway, window, arch, compartment, niche, statue, yea the groined vault itself, all rush on the admiring sense as tending towards something that is sacred and divine!

> We who thus participate in the glories of this Chapel, are but ill prepared to hear of the intended reparations, and all the unavoidable train of consequences belonging thereunto, that are about to take place on this structure; for it seems the order has or is to pass, which consigns these royal walls into the hands of workmen; hands which, by habit and long hostility to our Antient Architecture, will have but a lukewarm tenderness, either to protect or save from farther harm their devoted wonders. We doubt thus, even from that Antiquarian care which has so recently been made apparent on the neighbouring pile, St. Stephen's chapel; the pages of this Miscellany constantly enumerating and confirming the melancholy truths thereof. It is given out, that the operations on Henry's chapel are soon to commence, and that only *one* window at a time is to be *restored*; yet without any disguise we are at the same time informed, this restoration (strange logic!) is *not* to be according to the original design, but – according to what design then? Weep, weep, votaries to England's antient architectural honours! Another and another innovation still succeeds! Inactive we stand; we hear, we sigh; we see, and still we sigh! Is there then no means, by soft persuasion, by gentle remonstrance, or mild representation, whereby that we dread may be averted? None! none! the faculties of the mind are weak, and so is confederacy in Antiquarian virtue. On my part, then, I must singly, or at least protected by this Literary Sanctuary, stand in the gap between what now is and what henceforth may be, and merely with my pencil take a strict imitation of each original line before execution, and then note down, after such act, what repairs, alterations, or *improvements*, may be brought to pass.
>
> The publick are highly interested in the fate of Henry's chapel; it is a national glory, therefore shall it fade in man's remembrance and be forgotten? Forbid, Taste! forbid it, History! and let those who are Antiquaries by a natural propensity, as well as by the solemnity of an oath (otherwise "obligation") decreed by Royal Charter,* cry, "We forbid it also!"[35]

Just as he had promised, John Carter began to record the progress of the reparations in great detail and reported them to the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Behind Carter's strictures sent to the magazine lay a firm belief that by making the public aware of the destruction of ancient architecture caused by the renovation work at Westminster, he could get public opinion on his side and stop the devastation that was taking place. As he wrote in 1803:

> As it is a received maxim, that animadversions on literary productions correct and guide the opinions of the Publick, who are to patronize or discourage the same; so likewise it is become necessary to give free and unbiased thoughts on the demolitions, alterations or improvements (as they are called), repairs, &c. made in

* Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

> any of our antient buildings. If the purpose is laudable in the first instance, it must be so in the second; one having for its end the welfare of Learning and the happiness of Society, and the other the illustration and protection of the Antiquities of the country. Here then is one common interest, the cause is mutual. May the endeavours arising from either motive have the like good effect! In this hope I put my trust.[36]

But not only did Carter believe that he could change public opinion, he also thought that antiquity haters could be reformed, if they were only better informed about the importance and beauty of ancient architecture. In a letter to the *Gentleman's Magazine* from 1808 Carter recounted a story of just such a conversion:

> And moreover, I do also believe, that if a few of those people who occasionally wreak their vengeance on the choicest morsels of our public works were but *fortunately admonished*, and in the very act of their barbarism, they would desist from further havock, and become converts – To what? – Our Antiquities to be sure! In proof: About two months past, beholding a party of the Seminary youths at Westminster *amusing* themselves in mutilating the mullions and tracery in the last window but one, to the right, of the West Cloister of the Abbey Church, they having at that moment beat down with stones one of the capitals; I cried, "Gentlemen, pray leave some particles of these beautiful objects for other Artists to study from, who may come after me for that purpose" (I being at that time employed in making sketches from the several windows.) they all instantaneously laid down their missile weapons (fragments of tracery, which, with the said capital, I saw afterwards taken away by a friend, who has carefully placed them in his study,) and went their way abashed and much concerned. In a few moments one of the Scholars returned – he owned (I beg I must be credited) the propriety of my reproof; and ever my renewed visits to proceed with the imitations of the said windows, he came, and conversed with me, as one pleased with my labours, and awakened to the glories around us! Would that some compunction, like unto what this reformed youth gave way to, might wind round the hearts of those of riper years, who daily tread the Cloistered Aisles. That a stop might be put to the shameful and destructive practice of turning them into tennis and cricket-courts! Will remonstrance never plead to any purpose?[37]

Carter, it seems, recognised the great potential for protecting ancient buildings if young people were interested in them, however, he held out few such hopes that those with a long-standing disinterest could easily be converted.

Not all correspondents to the *Gentleman's Magazine* supported Carter's strictures on the Westminster renovations. One gentleman in particular, who wrote under the title of 'An Old Correspondent,' vehemently refuted the veracity of just about every word Carter wrote about the work being carried out at Westminster. In the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine* a regular correspondence developed between Carter and Old Correspondent that would last, on and off, for almost a decade. Carter would pay regular visits to the Abbey to monitor the progress of the repairs, and publish his criticisms in the next volume of the magazine. The following issue Old Correspondent would point out the errors of Carter's comments. Like Carter, Old Correspondent was a regular contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and the fact that long running correspondence such as this could take place in the magazine was one of its unique features. It shows the personal touch of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, where like-minded individuals, even if they did not agree, could conduct a public debate of the issues of the day. Such debates were usually very civilised, however the correspondence between Carter and Old Correspondent soon turned into a very personal battle, with accusations flying in from both sides.

In 1806 Carter began his criticisms of the Westminster renovations in earnest:

> In the year 1800 I communicated my Survey of the Palace at Westminster, in its then state. I have not been unmindful of the innovations made therein during the five years that have elapsed; they are numerous, and unrestrained. I have hitherto declined in bringing forward the circumstances of its condition, waiting, with painful anxiety, to see how far the rage would go. The undertaking has been rapidly carried on; the alterations are infinite, the additions numerous; and, to the jealous feelings of an Antiquary, the dilapidations are great and fearful. In due time, therefore, I shall produce my memoranda. It is probable I shall take the works by *surprise*; for which service I shall enter the lines with an assurance that I am well *drilled* as "sharp-shooter." It is pretty evident there are many fair *marks* for a good shot. If I bring down the object in view, I shall not *close* the eyes of any one, but *open* the eyes of all; then my prize is gained, and I shall return victorious! But, soft. What if those mines, which from bitter experience are ready to be sprung when an Artist of my *colour* dares to tread, to them forbidden ground, should frustrate my intents? Well, what I cannot achieve by open assault I must bring about by stratagem and cunning force; deal *blow*, for *blow*. Ah! base my resolve! I collect myself. What, need I use *mean* and *underhand* attempts to survey a National building which,

> according to the custom of Foreign countries, should be open to every one, free from all restriction either official or pecuniary? I will then set on, supposing the barriers *unguarded*, even when such a *spy* as myself approaches.[38]

Carter's letters revealed his somewhat combative nature, and Old Correspondent took particular offence at the tone and language of Carter's offerings. In his responses, Old Correspondent made frequent references to Carter's lack of ability as a writer, and generally casts aspersions on his lack of education:

> In the coarseness of Mr Carter's language, and his bravado of "who's afraid?" no answer will be made; of the dogmatical confidence he assumes as an Antiquary, no notice will be taken; on the classification of his abuse, as it is unintelligible, no remarks will be offered. The reply will attach solely to the facts he states; and if, after this, he shall choose to continue his attacks in the same rude, capricious, and offensive style, totally foreign to the controversy, the field will be left open to him; for no opponent who has respect for decency and propriety of character will enter the lists, or meet him with the same weapons he has adopted for the combat. No Champion will appear.[39]

Old Correspondent was wrong on his last point; Carter was not without support. Over the following issues several letters appeared from correspondents wanting to offer their support to Carter's cause, even if not all of them agreed with the way that he made his case:

> Your "old Correspondent" might justly be offended with the freedom of Mr Carter's strictures on the late alterations in Westminster Abbey, were they really as destitute of truth as he is pleased to represent them. In Mr Carter's style, or his wit, I have nothing to commend; but the bold and honest effusions of his zeal for the preservation of our National Antiquities, his profound reverence for the venerable Sanctuaries of Religion, and his unrivalled skill in their Architecture, demand the respect and gratitude of every one who pretends to taste or feeling.[40]

Several other letters of support for Carter were also received, however Old Correspondent believed they were all written by Carter himself using various pseudonyms. In fact they were genuine letters (at least in the fact that they were written by different correspondents).

However the debate did not become really heated until Carter accused the Master Mason of the Westminster works, Thomas Gayfrere, of demolishing the turrets on Henry VII's Chapel, which Gayfrere had claimed would otherwise

have fallen. Old Correspondent, who stood up to champion the mason's cause, vehemently refuted Carter's accusations, and reported that Gayfrere was prepared to defend his claim in front of a magistrate, a challenge Carter was unable to turn down:

> In his continuation of the critique ... my opponent says his friend the Mason is ready to assert "upon oath," that the Turrets of Henry's Chapel (which he has dwindled into insignificant cappings) did threaten ruin. I again repeat, they were in no dangerous state; and I am ready to come forward on this occasion to give my oath also. Yes, I do remember the Mason was taking sketches of the Turrets when I was aloft at my employment. But in what way? Why, as a man who intends to caricature his foe takes a *likeness* of this person, in order that he may turn him into scorn and ridicule. How can this Mason restore certain decorations once belonging to these Turrets, and other particulars of the fabrick, of which there have been no remaining documents for many years past? Again, will this Mason (whose integrity must not be called in question, while my credit and honesty are bandied about without mercy) be able to produce two beautiful Capitals at the finish of the Staircases to each Turret, which he suffered to be thrown down on the stairs, whereby they became mutilated, and left among the rubbish? Let me put this question likewise. What emolument can I possibly seek in return for my papers of the "Architectural Proceedings" at the Abbey Church and Henry's Chapel? I look not to be Director, Mason, or Paymaster, in the projected *improvements.* Nothing but the simple wish that our Antiquities may be protected, urges me forward; while, on the other hand, both my Opponent, the Mason, and others concerned, expect much gratification, much remuneration, for "labour, stuff, and time," and much of that indescribable something always appertained to undertakings of this sort![41]

A magistrate was not called in on this occasion. Carter's questioning of the Mason's motivation for carrying out the renovations, prompted old correspondent to question Carter's qualifications for commenting on them:

> The end aim of all my efforts, according to John Carter, is to induce Readers to believe his defence of Henry VIIth's Chapel is but a disguise to cover the foul workings of his mind, fraught with envy, malice, and detraction; and that his knowledge in the Art of Masonry is trifling and contemptible. Be it known then, that I avow the sentiment, though I disclaim the language. I have never used such terms in my correspondence with John, however provoked by his petulance, or goaded by his insolence; but I have no hesitation in maintaining my charges *in any language that can be used in the company of Gentlemen.*

> I charged him with indiscriminate and malevolent detraction – indiscriminate, because no professional man living, but one, ever obtained his commendation – malevolent, because his censure increases in proportion to the eminence of the artist, or the importance of the undertaking.[42]

In 1811 Carter levelled another accusation at the Mason, this time that he had inserted a skylight into the roof of the chapel. This met with a predictable outrage from Old Correspondent, who again called for Carter to appear before a magistrate to declare under oath the truth of his accusations. If he was willing to do this the Master Mason would make a claim to the contrary.[43] Carter agreed, and met Thomas Gayfrere at the Public Office in Marlborough Street at midday on Tuesday 9 April, and the meeting was duly recorded in letters to the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The magistrate though was less than sympathetic: 'The Magistrate in attendance, on hearing our business (which he considered of no moment) declined taking our affidavits!'[44] Gayfrere also inserted his defence in the same edition of the magazine, in which he described his defence as 'an oath as solemn, on my part, as could have made it.' He closed his letter with a statement of his withdrawal from the debate: 'And here, sir, if my Enemy will cease his persecution, and allow me to be silent, I mean to close my correspondence for ever.'[45] Nothing more was heard on the matter from Gayfrere, however Carter was far from finished.

The fiasco with the magistrate had brought about a renewed speculation as to the identity of the protagonists in the debate. Carter, who also wrote as J.C and An Architect, had unmasked himself at the time of the affidavit, but Old Correspondent had preserved his anonymity. In 1811 Carter challenged him to reveal himself:

> Come forth then, like a man, and avow your real name, if your "Defence" will bear you up! If, after this summons you dare not shew your face without your present mask, the Publick will, no doubt, treat your future attacks on my disinterested criticisms with that contempt that they must deserve, and consider them as the offspring of a brain "without father bred," and nursed in the gloom of bigotry and anti-antiquarian predilection![46]

Old Correspondent declined to be unmasked, claiming he would keep his identity hidden for the same period as Carter had written under the name of An Architect (some twenty years) and if they were still alive after this time he would come forward.[47] By this time Carter had gained the title of Red Cross

Knight, the great defender of England's antiquities, suggested by one of his supporters, and at the same time Carter had dubbed Old Correspondent Sir Blood Red, of the blood red countenance! Old Correspondent was particularly outraged by the new title and by the tone of Carter's letters attempting to find out his identity.

> The virulence of John Carter's abuse, and the insolence of his threats, can be equalled by nothing but the grossness and vulgarity of his style: he is now trying to bring me down from my *high estate* by a home stroke; he is trying to drag me from my *lurking hole*; he is to explode my *mean perversions of his remarks*, and to abash my *effrontery*. What a wonderful performance must be his next epistle to you, Mr Urban, if he accomplishes this in a single effort!
>
> Now, Sir, ever since J.C. has assumed the title of *Knight* (whether by right or usurpation matters not) I have always treated him with the courtesy that the laws of Chivalry and Controversy prescribe; at the same time I have always told him, and tell him now, that his intemperance betrays the weakness of his cause.
>
> His remarks constitute the point in dispute; these, without any breach of courtesy, I am at liberty to *controvert*; whether I *pervert* them or not must be left to the judgement of others.[48]

Between letters, Carter discovered the real identity of Old Correspondent, something that appears to have come as rather a shock:

> Since writing the last Proceedings, wherein I mentioned my intention of addressing an Old Correspondent under his real signature as I then supposed I knew the man (the Earl of ___); I have confidentially been assured by several well-informed friends, that the above able writer is no less a personage than a very Reverend Dignitary. Here I had my doubts, being unwilling to give up my first opinion with respect to my Opponent's true name; but, upon mature consideration, I have been induced to fall in with the general surmise... If then an Old Correspondent should be, in fact, the said exalted Character, how many apologies will it be necessary for me to make, with respect to the freedom I have sometimes taken in my replies to his numerous pleasantries, sported off at my cost! But, I trust, his benevolent heart will do more in this case than an hundred excuses from such an insignificant person as myself. And let it be remembered, that Writers pitted against each other, particularly where feigned signatures are made use of, have always been allowed, by literary charter, to amuse each other with their witticisms (that is, "abuse.") But on this part of the controversy, others will be the best judges, who has *laid on* the greatest quantity of *matter*. Therefore, as it is now humbly presumed that I am not ignorant to whom I address myself, I shall be cautious, in future, how I transgress

> on the head "abuse," notwithstanding others may still go on with the same humour. I shall preserve a respectful distance; and, with my good friend Mr Urban's permission, continue my Remarks, as well as make them.[49]

The 'exalted character' whose identity Carter had worked out was none other than the Reverend William Vincent, the Dean of Westminster Abbey. The discussion over the identity of Old Correspondent reveals just how intimately related the readership of the *Gentleman's Magazine* actually was. When Carter made an effort he could work out, with the help of a few friends, the identity of his adversary with comparative ease, reflecting the niche readership the magazine catered to. Just about any correspondent, by calling on their circle of acquaintances, they could work out the identity of many of the people writing to the magazine.

After Carter had worked out that he was addressing Rev. Vincent there was something of a climb-down in the intensity of the discussion. Although a few more remarks were traded, this was effectively the end of the Westminster debate. Carter continued to comment on other architectural innovations until his death in 1817. A few months previously, he had reported the declining health of his alter ego the Architect, but even when he was too ill to write his regular column on Architectural Innovations, he could still manage the odd letter in defence of Britain's antiquities. In an unprecedented move, the *Gentleman's Magazine* printed three separate obituaries of one of its most influential correspondents.

Carter's work was not in vain. A correspondent to the *Gentleman's Magazine* wrote in 1816 that Carter 'deserves the high regard of all men of taste, for his bold, and not always unsuccessful appeals, against the rash and ignorant hand of mutilation or destruction.'[50] Another noted that 'the exposures of "An Architect" have produced much silent reform,'[51] and for Reverend Bingley, 'the papers of the Architect were, in some measure, a means of instigating me to enter upon the task of endeavouring to restore the long-neglected beauties of [his] parish.'[52] Through the contributions of John Carter's and others like him, the *Gentleman's Magazine* has a strong claim to have saved a number of ancient buildings from the hammer and chisels of the restorers. Architect John Britton, author of some of the most famous works on ancient British architecture, had the following praise for the work of the magazine in a letter published in 1818:

> Your pages have often teemed with strictures on "Architectural Innovations," and severe reproofs on those persons who have wantonly destroyed or injured the antient buildings of our country. It gives me no small degree of pleasure, to inform you and the publick, that a better feeling, and a better taste now prevail. For, instead of pulling down, or even defacing those venerable and interesting works of former times, many of our gentry and clergy are at the present moment laudably employing themselves, and appropriating part of their funds to restore, preserve, and adorn our antient Cathedrals and Churches. In travelling over various parts of the country, this is frequently seen: and a knowledge of it must be a source of sincere pleasure to every Architectural Antiquary.[53]

In its own small way the *Gentleman's Magazine* had played an important role in preserving and recording the antiquities of Britain.

Archaeology for the Antiquarian Market

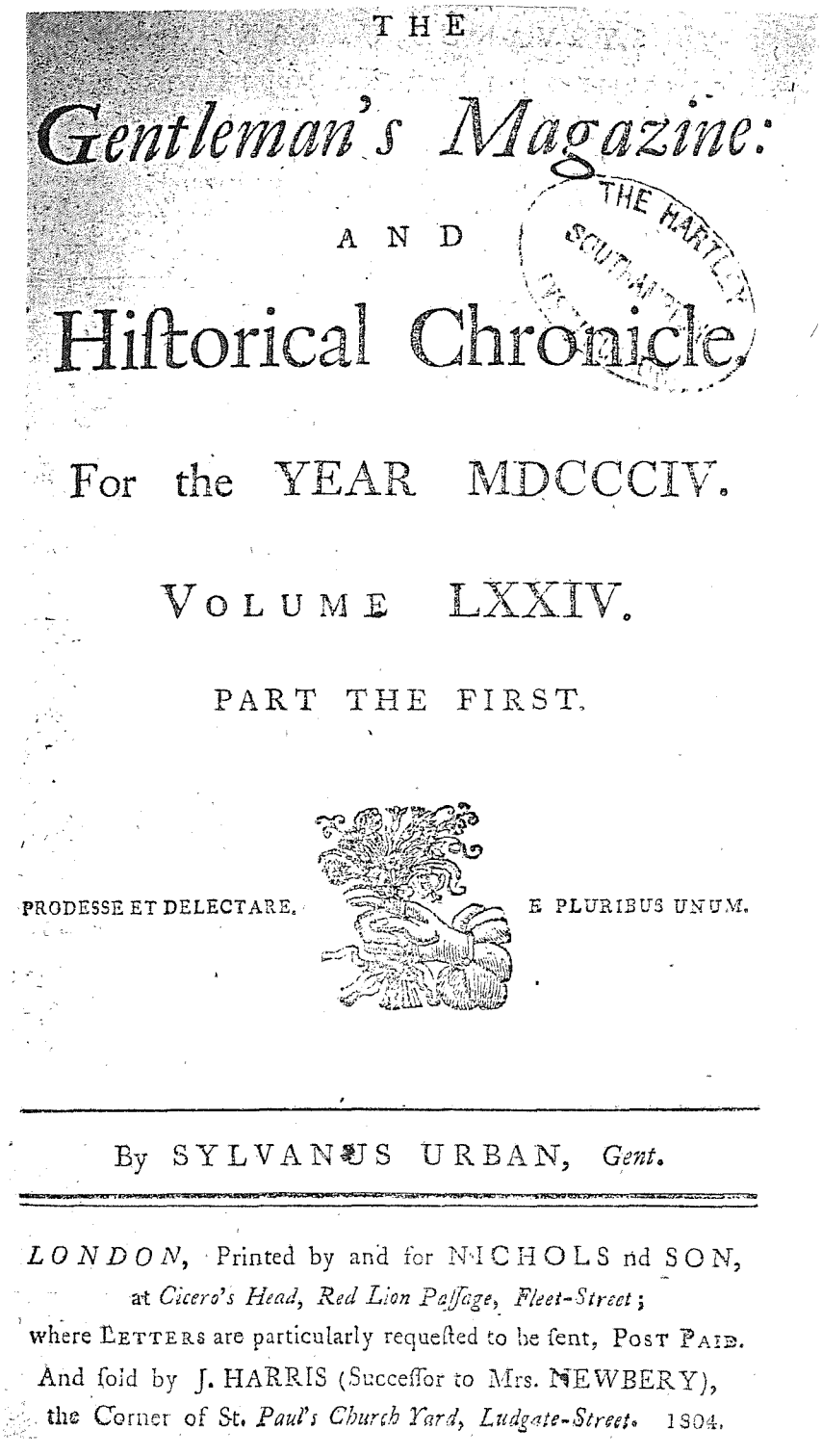
Although correspondents to the *Gentleman's Magazine* included a wide range of topical issues in their letters, in the early years of the nineteenth century reports of antiquarian researches were the single most popular theme. This antiquarian content reflects the interests of the magazine's readers, many of whom were antiquaries themselves, or had some interest in the relics of the past. The *Gentleman's Magazine* provided its readers with the greatest range and depth of information on archaeology that was available at the time, and a significantly wider range of content than the *Archaeologia*, the official publication of the Society of Antiquaries. It has to be questioned just how many accounts of church inscriptions or discoveries of well-rusted coins would have held any interest to a less specialised reader, but the *Gentleman's Magazine* never aimed its contents to appeal to anyone who did not share the interests of its correspondents. Many of the letters published in the magazine were written by a fairly low number of writers who published frequently; the *Gentleman's Magazine* was essentially a private correspondence club for like-minded individuals, many of whom would have been known to one another. The magazine's most important role was to enable those already with an interest in antiquarian researches to keep up to date with the latest findings, without the need to purchase the often prohibitively expensive books of the day, rather than to introduce new readers to archaeology. The *Gentleman's Magazine* catered to a fairly small-scale niche market of those with antiquarian interests.

It is easy to dismiss the *Gentleman's Magazine* as nothing more than a collection of antiquaries' gossip, but that is to underestimate the role that the magazine played in the early part of the century. It was one of the key forums for antiquarian debate, and even more importantly provided place to record so many examples of small isolated discoveries that would otherwise have gone unnoticed, and a permanent record of ancient buildings that had been demolished or renovated. In the preface to the first volume of the General Index, published in 1821, editor John Nichols wrote the following words of praise for the role that the *Gentleman's Magazine* had played in recording British archaeology:

> It will not, we trust, be deemed presumptuous to say, that the *Gentleman's Magazine* has in a great measure fulfilled the prediction of the learned and ingenious Antiquary, and has proved itself "one of the most useful Repositories of the species of knowledge above recommended, any where to be met with; its pages having been always eagerly opened to facts, and observations upon facts, respecting the History and Antiquities of our country; precedents and explanations of our ancient an glorious constitution; with useful discoveries of every kind."[54]

The *Gentleman's Magazine* continued to peddle its wares of antiquarian knowledge until the mid 1860s when it was changed beyond all recognition to become nothing more than a fairly unsuccessful literary magazine. Throughout its life it had remained true to the ideals of its early years of priding itself as a place of antiquarian communication, even when such a style of publication had long ago gone out of fashion. At its heart the *Gentleman's Magazine* belonged to the early years of the nineteenth century, and made little attempt to change. Later in the century it would be viewed as a quaint survival of a bygone age; a time when antiquaries roamed the English countryside measuring, peering and poking to their heart's content.

If the *Gentleman's Magazine* was catering to the needs of those already converted to the value of antiquarian researches, the more widespread reading public were also being informed about archaeology. At the same time that the *Gentleman's Magazine* was operating as a forum for antiquarian debates, the most significant books on the subject were being discussed in the prestigious and learned literary reviews. In the pages of the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review* there was no room for the trifles of British antiquity that had so fascinated the antiquarian readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*; only books on the finest discoveries, particularly those from abroad, were allotted space.


THE

Gentleman's Magazine:

AND

Hiſtorical Chronicle,

For the YEAR MDCCCIV.

VOLUME LXXIV.

PART THE FIRST.

PRODESSE ET DELECTARE. E PLURIBUS UNUM.

By SYLVANUS URBAN, *Gent.*

LONDON, Printed by and for NICHOLS nd SON,
at *Cicero's Head, Red Lion Paſſage, Fleet-Street*;
where LETTERS are particularly requeſted to be ſent, POST PAID.
And ſold by J. HARRIS (Succeſſor to Mrs. NEWBERY),
the Corner of St. *Paul's Church Yard, Ludgate-Street*. 1804.

Figure 1 The *Gentleman's Magazine*

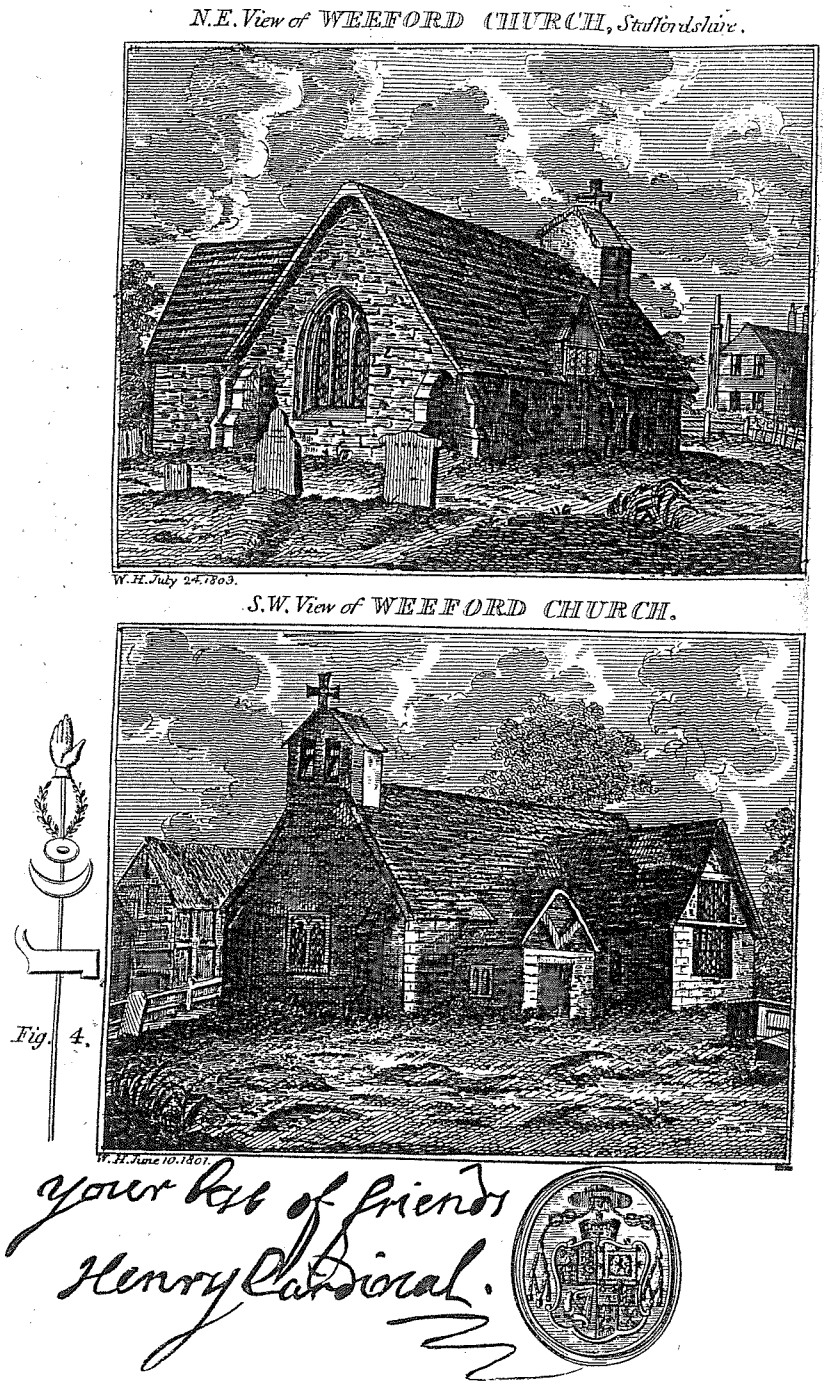


Figure 2 Plate from the *Gentleman's Magazine*

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

[1] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 71/2 (1801), page 810.
[2] A useful history of the early years of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, written by John Nichols, can be found in the introduction of the third volume of the General Index (1821).
[3] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 71/2 (1801), pages 603-4.
[4] Details of the attribution of authorship of letters to the *Gentleman's Magazine* from Nichols's records can be found in Kuist (1982). This work has been augmented and updated by Emily Lorraine de Montluzin and appears online with a searchable index at: http://etext.lib.virginia.edu.bsuva/gm2/.
[5] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 72/1 (1802), page 223.
[6] Gough (1789).
[7] The most comprehensive account of British antiquarianism to be published in recent years is Rosemary Sweet's *Antiquaries* (2004). Stuart Piggott (1976, 1985, 1989) has also published a series of useful essays on the subject, many contained in *Ruins in a Landscape* (1976). For the relationship between antiquarianism and archaeology see Daniel (1943, 1950, 1975), and Crawford (1932) for an alternative perspective. See also Peter Ackroyd's *Albion* (2003) for a fascinating account of the relationship between antiquarianism and the English imagination and Smiles (1994) on the artistic side of antiquarianism.
[8] Walter Scott *The Antiquary*, (1816).
[9] Piggott (1976a) provides a more detailed account of Oldbuck and his links to Scottish Antiquarianism. See also Piggott (1976b) for more on the tale of the Roman fort.
[10] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 84/1 (1814), page 117.
[11] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 76/1 (1806), page 33.
[12] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 79/1 (1809), page 297.
[13] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 72/2 (1802), pages 609-10.
[14] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 90/1 (1820), pages 13-14.
[15] Sweet (2004) provides a good account of several of these publications.
[16] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 85/1 (1815), page 519.
[17] Surtees (1816-1840); Hoare (1812-21).
[18] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 71/2 (1801), page 685.
[19] Johnson (1789), page iv.
[20] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 86/1 (1816), page 11.
[21] Sweet (2004) provides useful wider information on Britain's antiquaries and their concern to preserve ancient architecture.
[22] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 80/1 (1810), page 310.
[23] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 80/1 (1810), pages 310-1.
[24] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 89/2 (1819), page 601.
[25] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 90/2 (1820), page 117.
[26] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 90/2 (1820), page 390.
[27] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 79/2 (1809), page 906.
[28] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 76/2 (1806), page 904.
[29] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 77/1 (1807), page 14.
[30] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 76/2 (1806), page 1027.
[31] Carter (1795-1807).
[32] Details of Carter are from his entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. 3.
[33] The column began in 1798 and appeared in most issues.
[34] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 79/1 (1809), page 126.
[35] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 73/1 (1803), page 511.
[36] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 73/2 (1803), page 1128.
[37] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 78/2 (1808), page 889.
[38] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 76/1 (1806), page 33.
[39] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 78/1 (1808), page 110.
[40] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 78/1 (1808), page 311.
[41] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 78/2 (1808), page 600.
[42] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/1 (1811), page 230.
[43] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/1 (1811), page 26.
[44] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/1 (1811), page 341.
[45] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/1 (1811), page 341.
[46] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/1 (1811), page 341.
[47] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/1 (1811), page 419.
[48] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/2 (1811), page 229.

[49] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 81/2 (1811), page 330.
[50] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 86/1 (1816), page 423.
[51] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 85/1 (1815), page 484.
[52] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 80/2 (1810), page 36.
[53] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 88/2 (1818), page 511.
[54] Nichols (1821), page lxv.

2

SOLDIERS, ADVENTURERS AND THE REVIEWERS

For those with a dedicated interest in antiquities, in particular those of a British variety, the *Gentleman's Magazine* was the publication that catered, more than any other, to those interests. But at the same time a more general reader was also able to keep abreast of the latest books on archaeology, published in Britain and abroad, in the pages of the prestigious literary reviews. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the higher end of the world of periodical publishing was dominated by two quarterly periodicals, the *Edinburgh Review* (est. 1802) and the *Quarterly Review* (est. 1809).[1] These two publications were a political force to be reckoned, discussing many of the most pressing political concerns of the day, and counted some of the most influential political and literary figures of the day among their contributors, including Whig politician Lord Henry Brougham, and poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott.

Both the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review* followed an almost identical format, although the political focus of the two publications was very different: the *Edinburgh* was generally Whig in its orientation, and the *Quarterly* Tory. In content the literary reviews were composed of a number of critical essays on the publications of the day, with the work under review providing a starting point for a much wider intellectual discussion on a topical issue. Biting criticism was the norm in these reviews, with the *Quarterly* and the *Edinburgh* often adopting opposing viewpoints on a publication; for a book to survive the reviewers unscathed was high praise indeed. In scope, the literary reviews included a cross section of the book market, ranging from the latest philosophical works, travel memoirs, and reports of parliamentary speeches to the latest high quality fiction and poetry. Both publications also contained reviews of books on archaeology.

For the *Edinburgh Review*, what constituted archaeology was very specific, as a review of a work on Greek marbles from 1810 stated:

> Our knowledge of antiquity is drawn from two sources, - monuments and antient authors. The latter, though far more copious, can never be so decisive as the former, both on account of the corruption of manuscripts, and the difficulty of representing to our minds images of things which we have never seen. Here the ancient monuments of art happily step in, and supply what is wanted.[2]

For readers of the literary reviews, the archaeology that was considered to be important, and therefore most worthy of inclusion, was ancient monuments – and in general the more spectacular the better. There was no room for the small, localised British discoveries that were such a source of fascination to the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, although the *Quarterly Review* often featured the best books on British antiquities, including Colt Hoare's *Ancient Wiltshire* and Britton's *Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain*.[3] In content the literary reviews catered to the interests and educational backgrounds of their readers, and their discussions of archaeology were no different.

For generations educated Englishmen had been brought up with the classical tales of Greece and Rome, and biblical stories of the great civilisations of Egypt and the East. The majority of the readers of the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review* would have received a thorough education in the classics and been familiar with many of the ancient archaeological sites of Europe, either first hand, or from many of the detailed travel memoirs or art books published. Unsurprisingly, discussions of the latest editions of the classics were commonly featured in the literary reviews, and often included detailed commentary on the merit of various translations with extracts quoted in the original Greek or Latin. Those who lacked this educational background were excluded from partaking in much of what was on offer, and it is readers of the highest intellectual calibre who would have made up much of the readership of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* reviews. The type of archaeology that found its way into the literary reviews was designed to appeal to the interests and background of their readers, who were assumed to already be possessed of a significant amount of background knowledge of the subjects under discussion. In many of the review publications archaeology appeared as part of the content of travel memoirs, usually alongside themes such as ethnography and politics. Many readers would have been wealthy and well travelled with an extensive knowledge of other

publications on the subject. Just like the *Gentleman's Magazine* the literary reviews catered to a niche market – the social and intellectual elite – however their archaeological audience was much less specialised, extending far beyond the boundaries of the antiquarian community.

In the *Edinburgh Review* accounts of the classical sites of Europe were among the most popular areas of archaeology featured, but continental war at the beginning of the nineteenth century had made travel to many parts of Europe difficult and dangerous, restricting it to the most adventurous travellers. This conflict cut off one of the most popular avenues of the study of antiquities, but war brought with it new opportunities. In 1798 Napoleon's army had invaded Egypt, and accompanying the French expedition were a number of scholars who published lavish accounts of the country, including its ancient monuments, on their return to Paris. These works were ideally suited to the type of archaeology considered most important by the *Edinburgh Review*.

ANCIENT EGYPT AND THE *EDINBURGH REVIEW*

There is no doubt that ancient Egypt was a popular subject with the readers of the *Edinburgh Review*. As a reviewer commented in 1811, 'we receive ... with pleasure, and without being very fastidious as to its literary merits, *some*, or *any*, account which can add to the stock of our knowledge concerning the state of ancient Egypt.'[4] The fascination with ancient Egypt centred on the great sense of mystery and wonder attached to its monuments, which had previously been read about in a few travel accounts from the eighteenth century, glimpsed in the British Museum, or described in classical literature:

> Since the age of Herodotus to the present time, no country seems to have attracted the attention of strangers so powerfully as Egypt. It is not only the grandeur, the number, the variety, and the antiquity of Egyptian monuments, but in their peculiarity, that the traveller finds matter for curious and interesting speculation.[5]

The ancient monuments of Egypt certainly had all the credentials for inclusion in the *Edinburgh Review*. They possessed the necessary classical associations, had links with the Bible, and were certainly monuments on at least as grand a scale as the best the classical world had to offer. But added to this was another level of interest brought about by the recent conflict between Britain and France played out in Egypt. Of all the subjects that were discussed in the *Edinburgh Review*, British foreign policy was one of the most common, and in its

discussions of Egyptian antiquities the periodical was able to draw on a number of wider themes that were of interest to its readers. This was reflected in its review of one of the most famous accounts ever written about ancient Egypt, Baron Dominique Vivant Denon's *Discoveries in Lower and Upper Egypt during the Campaigns of Bonaparte*.[6]

Denon had accompanied Bonaparte's expedition to record Egypt's ancient monuments, and followed the French army around the country drawing and describing what he saw.[7] His narrative was first published in 1802 in two folio volumes, the first containing the narrative, the second a collection illustrations. A review of Denon's work, written by Francis Jeffery, appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* early in 1803:

> Few publications, we believe, have ever obtained so extensive a circulation in the same space of time as these travels. The country to which they relate stands at the beginning of sacred and profane antiquity; the splendid periods of its history were all gone by, before the barbarians of Europe had learned either to observe or record; and the monuments that employed the pencil of M. Denon, had assumed the appearance of deserted ruins in the days of Strabo and Diodorus.
>
> Since the origin of correct observation and minute enquiry in modern Europe, the political situation of Egypt has been such as to place all our travellers in circumstances of great disadvantage. Exposed to continual insult and suspicion on account of their religion and their curiosity, they have been obliged to pursue their researches amongst a nation of bigots and banditti, and to snatch a hasty and imperfect view of objects that required the most deliberate meditation. It is not easy for an infidel and an alien to travel at all among a people without police, and without morals; and the fruits of his hasty and perilous expeditions, cannot often be very valuable, where his informers are equally destitute of knowledge and veracity.
>
> At length, however, a civilised nation possessed itself of this wonderful country; a whole college of philosophers was transported to the city of the Ptolemies; a printing press was established at Cairo; and the scholars of Europe consoled themselves for the violation of the balance of power, by anticipating the sublime discoveries of the Egyptian institute. The appearance of some scattered memoirs served only to exalt these expectations; and at last the present superb publication was announced, under the patronage of the Chief Consul, and at a price that could only be justified by the combination of splendour and utility.
>
> The book is certainly sufficiently splendid; and yet it has disappointed us extremely. The author writes like a brisk little old Frenchman, with more vivacity than judgement, and more ease than perspicuity. His narrative is exceedingly perplexed, from the want of dates, and the irregularity of his military movements;

> and the reader must be contented to take his skill in drawing as an apology for his defects in erudition, and his admitted ignorance in all the branches of physical science.[8]

All the classical allusions made in this introduction would have been well known to the readers of the *Edinburgh Review*. The introduction sets the tone for the whole review by making it absolutely explicit that the current political state of Egypt was of primary importance to the author. Comments about Denon writing, 'like a brisk little old Frenchman,' a rather personal comment about the author, are fairly typical of the publication, and one gets the sense that being too complimentary about the work of a French author during a time of war would not really have been the done thing.

For Francis Jeffery, Denon's comments on the movements of the French army around Egypt, which he had witnessed first hand, were of more interest than the descriptions of the antiquities.

> Though we cannot consider this book ... as having made any very important addition to our knowledge of the Egyptian history, or monuments, it would be unfair to allege that it is destitute of interest or information. It contains many beautiful engravings, and many striking and animated specimens of description: it gives us, incidentally, at the same time, a great number of curious traits of the character of the inhabitants, and certainly affords the most candid and authentic detail of the conduct of the French army, during the progress of their Egyptian conquest, that has yet been presented to the public.[9]

Jeffery then goes into a detailed account of Denon's comments on military matters; indeed almost the entire review is spent describing movements of the army through Egypt. The parts of the book which describe ancient Egypt were certainly considered to be of less interest, and are limited to the final third of the piece.

In style, the review of Denon's narrative follows a fairly standard format for an article in the *Edinburgh Review*. A number of short passages from the book are quoted, and the contents linked with the wider state of knowledge and current affairs from the time. For example, Jeffery makes the following comments on Egyptian antiquities:

> The characters of the Egyptian architecture have long been known to the inquisitive. Gigantic in all its proportions, it seems rather to have aimed at overwhelming the imagination by vastness, than at enchanting it by elegance; and while ideas of

> grandeur and power are irresistibly excited by the enormous masses that are piled into regularity by human labour, we are oppressed by a certain cumbrous and severe uniformity of execution, that banishes every idea of inventive freedom, and indicates the designs of an insulated and monastic corporation. A temple upwards of two miles in circumference, constructed of stones from 15 to 36 feet in length, supported by columns 50 feet high, and 12 in diameter, and adorned with obelisks of a single stone 100 feet in elevation, and with colossal statues measuring from 50 feet to 80, may serve to give some idea of those stupendous structures, the memory of whose origin has been forgotten for centuries, and which still promise to survive all the generations of mankind. We have already insinuated that M. Denon's publication has not added very materially to our knowledge of those monuments. We do not know, indeed, that he pretends to have made a single discovery. He has given fewer *plans* than either Pocoke or Norden, and is infinitely less distinct in his descriptions, and less learned in his references, than the former of these travellers. He has made much better, and more numerous, drawings, however, than any of his predecessors, and has presented the groups of objects in a much clearer and more picturesque manner. His views in the islands of Philoe [Philae] and Elephantine are a great deal more perfect; and he has copied the paintings and engraved hieroglyphics in the tombs at Thebes, and the temple of Tentyra [Dendyra], much more correctly and extensively. He has intermingled a variety of critical remarks and animated reflections also, that give a certain dramatic interest to his descriptions, and indicate a cultivated taste and an inflamed imagination.[10]

Readers of this review were presumed, from the outset, to be familiar with the state of knowledge on ancient Egypt and, in particular, the accounts of Pocoke and Norden.[11] Any reader not already well versed in the works that Denon was being compared to would have struggled to comprehend many of the more detailed points of the argument about the relative merits of the narrative. Very little attempt was made in the *Edinburgh Review* to convey any details of the contents of the book to readers, so unless they were prepared to read a copy of Denon's narrative they could gain little in the way of knowledge about ancient Egypt from the review alone. Its purpose was to provide a criticism to enable readers to make an informed choice whether or not to purchase the book, not to provide a potted summary as an alternative to buying it. The *Edinburgh Review* was intellectually exclusive, and no attempt was made to make the publication appealing to any reader who was not up to the level of learning required to be a part of the debate.

The final passage of the review of Denon's narrative demonstrates just how biting some of the criticisms levelled at a book could be:

> We cannot take our leave of these *colossal* volumes without entering our protest against such a form of publication. M. Denon's taste has been formed perhaps upon the gigantic monuments of the Thebaid, and will relish no book that is not as large as a panel charged with hieroglyphics; but in this quarter of the world, we believe there are few readers who will think themselves indemnified for the great price of this work by the satisfaction of turning over four square feet of pasteboard in every leaf, and having their eyes dazzled by characters like those on a tombstone. Even in the volume of plates, the huge size of the page is turned to no sort of use; most of the views being given in small compartments, that do not occupy one eighth part of the sheet, and the paper being covered by a single subject, in no instance but the fanciful representation of two battles with the Mamelukes. We are the more inclined to censure the injudicious magnitude of these volumes, as there is nothing either in the style or the matter of M. Denon that tallies with so much magnificence. He has made some fine drawings of monuments that had been drawn before, and brought away some slight sketches of hieroglyphics that had not previously been copied; and he has recorded his observations and adventures in a flippant and familiar style, that partakes less of dignity than of pertness; and seems better adapted for the undress of an occasional pamphlet, than for the monumental vastness of such a publication as the present.[12]

Criticism on intellectual and stylistic grounds were common, however for Denon's work criticism was even extended to the format in which it was published. The size (atlas format) makes it all but impossible to use and store unless you have a dedicated library of your own, which is a revealing insight into the type of people who were perceived to be the purchasers of such archaeological works in the early years of the century. The point made about the price is also significant. When Denon's work first appeared it was priced at a staggering 15 pounds for the basic board edition and 30 pounds for the limited run of vellum; sums which even the wealthy would have had to think twice about paying.[13] Having read the *Edinburgh Review* article on the book a reader could be well versed in a general way of its contents, and the merits of those contents, however remarkably little could be gleaned in the way of knowledge of the monuments of ancient Egypt – the actual subject of the book. Again it is all very well to make the point about the pictures being spectacular, but as the *Edinburgh Review's* account of the book was not illustrated, a reader would have had to pay a visit to the reading room of the British Museum to see a copy (itself an activity that was effectively restricted to the upper end of society), or purchase one for themselves (which was even more exclusive).

For the next decade a number of works on ancient Egypt were featured in the *Edinburgh Review*, including Edward Daniel Clark's *The Tomb of Alexander*, an account of the Alexandrian Sarcophagus seized from the French and displayed at the British Museum,[14] and William Hamilton's *Aegyptiaca, or some Account of the Antient and Modern State of Egypt*,[15] which was considered to be 'an excellent supplement to the more elaborate and costly work of Denon.'[16] As with the review of Denon's narrative, the focus of these reviews was as much on contemporary politics as ancient remains, and the same level of background knowledge on the subject matter was assumed. The review on the Alexandrian Sarcophagus featured the following comment on French brutality, before it discussed the sarcophagus itself:

> This sarcophagus was forcibly taken from the mosque of St Athanasius in Alexandria by the French, in spite of the howlings and lamentations of the inhabitants, to whom it was the object of superstitious veneration; and on the capitulation of Alexandria to the British, it fell into the hands of the conquerors. It had then been long removed from the sight and adoration of the people of Alexandria; it was already destined for Europe. However it might have been obtained by the French, it was to us the prize of war. Lastly, it was a most tempting article: and, on all these accounts, we seized it, brought it to England, and placed it in the British Museum, where it now lies, a wonder to the ignorant and a riddle to the wise. Seriously, although we are of the opinion that the acquisition of this treasure by our victorious army, stands on very different ground from the lawless seizure of it by the pretended deliverers of Egypt, yet it seems a nice inquiry, whether conquest strictly conferred on us the right of converting it to our own use, and whether the feelings of those, to whom it had previously belonged, were sufficiently consulted in this transaction.[17]

Even if archaeology was the subject of the book reviewed, discussion of the archaeological content would often take second place behind discussions of contemporary politics or classical history. As the *Edinburgh Review* described the value of antiquarian researches: 'when it is once settled that the study of antiquities, however overvalued, is not without its use, and prefers, on this ground, a clear title to our regard, it certainly is not necessary to make out this title in every particular instance.'[18] If archaeology was to be included in the publication it had to know its place! Although anyone reading the *Edinburgh Review* could gain little in the way of details about the ancient world from reading the publication alone, it did play an important role in providing the

public with a good idea of what archaeological works were available, and a critical appraisals of the merits of their contents.

The major limitation on the coverage of archaeology in the *Edinburgh Review* was that it had to fit into the fairly rigid review format, and remain consistent with the editorial focus and interests of the publication. The same was true of the essays that were featured in the *Quarterly Review*, however in 1818 something rather different appeared. It was in that year that the *Quarterly Review* first reported the discoveries of Giovanni Belzoni in Egypt, and the British public got its first real archaeological news story.

GIOVANNI BELZONI AND THE *QUARTERLY REVIEW*

The story of archaeology is littered with great characters, but perhaps there is none larger than the traveller, adventurer, antiquary and former circus strongman Giovanni Battista Belzoni, the giant from Padua (fig. 3).[19] Belzoni was in many ways the first celebrity archaeologist, and there were certainly many episodes in his life that made interesting reading for the British public.[20] The *Quarterly Review* told its readers some of the stories in a biographical piece published in 1818:

> Our readers may, perhaps, not be displeased to learn a little of the history of this extraordinary man. Belzoni was born, we believe, in the Papal states. Of his youth no particulars have come to our knowledge; but about nine years ago he was in Edinburgh, where he exhibited feats of strength, experiments in hydraulics, musical glasses, and phantasmagoria. He repeated the same course of experiments in Ireland and the Isle of Man; whence he proceeded to Lisbon. Being about twenty-five years of age, of the extraordinary height of six feet seven inches, well made and stout in proportion, with an animated and prepossessing countenance, he was at once engaged, by the manager of San Carlos, to appear in the play of Valentine and Orson, and again during Lent, in the sacred drama of Sampson; in both which, by feats of strength and activity he gained the highest applause. At Madrid he performed before the king and the court. Leaving Spain he fell in with Ismael Gibraltar, the agent of the pashaw of Egypt, who persuaded him to visit Cairo. Here the pashaw engaged him to construct a machine for raising water out of the Nile to irrigate his gardens, for which he was to be paid at the rate of 800 piastres per month, besides a considerable reward, provided it should finally be found to answer the purpose. In the course of three months it was put in operation. The pashaw attended; and three Arabs, with an Irish lad whom Belzoni had brought from Edinburgh, as a servant, were put into the large wheel to walk round and keep it in

> motion: at the second or third turn the Arabs became giddy and jumped out; the wheel, wanting its counterpoise, flew back, and the Irish servant, in attempting to escape, broke his thigh, and must have been killed, had not Belzoni caught hold of the circumference of the wheel, and, by his extraordinary strength, stopped its motion.
>
> The accident was equivalent to a failure; and Belzoni now determined to try his fortune in search of antiquities in Upper Egypt; but just as he was preparing to depart, Mr Salt arrived in Cairo.[21]

Henry Salt was the British Consul General in Egypt, and had been engaged in collecting antiquities for the British Museum.[22] Belzoni's feats of strength with the irrigation machine were witnessed by the renowned Swiss traveller Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, who had travelled the Arab world under the assumed name of Sheik Ibrahim, and recommended Belzoni to Salt:

> [Salt] conceived him at once to be the person most proper to employ in the arduous attempt of bringing down the head of the Young Memnon from Thebes. Belzoni, after some consideration, accordingly relinquished the plan of travelling on his own account, and engaged himself to Mr Salt and the Sheik.[23]

The head of Memnon, now identified as Ramesses II, was part of a colossal statue of red granite lying at Thebes, which the French had previously failed to move from its resting place. After accepting the Consul General's commission Belzoni set out for Thebes. Fortunately for British readers, Henry Salt sent news of his exploits to London, and extracts from his letters were published in the *Quarterly Review*.

In 1818 the first report of Belzoni's work appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, as a short piece included in a review of the latest African discoveries made by the Congo Expedition. This was a departure from the standard review format, which was generally restricted to critical comments on published works, to report an archaeological story as it was unfolding. In other words it was reporting archaeology as *news*. Even the usual tone of criticism was abandoned, with the writer just revelling in the great story of Belzoni, and seeming to have no desire other than to share what he knows with his readers. The change in style also brought about a change in content; without a publication to refer to, the descriptions of Belzoni's researches had to tell the story without referring to a published source, and were therefore much more detailed and descriptive than a normal critical piece. Even if a reader did not have a huge knowledge of

Egyptian antiquities they would have been able to get a good idea of Belzoni's researches just from reading the *Quarterly Review*. In providing readers with a story that did not rely on extensive prior learning, the *Quarterly Review* pioneered many of the basics of a good archaeological news story that have been employed ever since.

Of all Belzoni's exploits it was the transportation of the head of Memnon that would prove the most famous, and was the first subject featured in the *Quarterly Review*:

> The 'Memnon' mentioned in the Consul-general's letter is the head of a colossal statue found at Thebes, and brought from Alexandria at the joint expense of our deceased traveller [Burckhardt] and Mr Salt, as a present to the British Museum, where, while we are writing, it has just arrived in safety. This extraordinary head is, without doubt, the finest specimen of ancient Egyptian sculpture which has yet been discovered. It is formed of a single block of granite about ten tons in weight. Under the direction of M. Belzoni, it was moved by the sheer labour of the Arab peasantry two miles, without the aid of any kind of machinery, embarked on the Nile. The French unable to remove it, attempted to blow off with gunpowder the large mass of hair behind, forming that bushy coiffure so common on Egyptian statues, and part of the bust; fortunately, the face has sustained no injury. If we mistake not, there is a plate of this bust, not exactly as it now is, but as the French savans had intended it to be after the operation of blowing off the wig.
>
> By the indefatigable labour of M. Belzoni and Mr Salt, the British Museum is likely to become the richest depository in the world of Egyptian antiquities. They uncovered the front of the great sphynx, when numerous pieces of antiquity, as unexpected as extraordinary, were developed, pieces which, for many centuries, had not been exposed to human eyes. Among other things, a beautiful monolithic temple of very considerable dimensions was discovered between the legs of the sphinx, having within it a sculptured lion, and a small sphynx. In one of the paws of the great sphynx was another temple, with a sculptured lion standing on an altar. In front of the great sphynx were the remains of buildings, apparently temples, and several granite slabs with inscriptions cut into them, some entire, and others broken. One of these is by Claudius Caesar, recording his visits to the pyramids, and another by Antoninus Pius; both of which, with the little lions, are now in the British Museum. Several paint-pots were also found fronting the sphinx, with paint of different colours in them. At Thebes, M. Belzoni has made many new and curious discoveries, and found many valuable relics which had escaped the ravages of the invading Persians and the modern Arabs: he has also uncovered six tombs of the kings of Egypt, which for centuries had not been entered or, indeed, known. That of Apis he represents as being uncommonly magnificent and interesting. 'It is

certainly,' he says, 'the most curious and astonishing thing in Egypt, and impresses one with the highest idea of the workmanship of the ancient inhabitants. The interior, from one extremity to the other, is one hundred and ninety feet, containing a great number of apartments and galleries. The walls are every where covered with hieroglyphics and *bas-reliefs*, in fresco colours, which are brighter than any colour we have, and as fresh as if they had been only just laid on. But the finest antique in this place is in the principal chamber. It is a sarcophagus, formed of a single piece of alabaster, nine feet seven inches long, three feet nine inches wide, the interior and the exterior being equally covered with hieroglyphics and figure, hollowed with a chisel. This sarcophagus sounds like a silver bell, and is transparent as ice; no doubt, when I shall have it transported to England, as I hope to do successfully, it will be esteemed as one of the most precious treasures of which any European museum can boast.'*

But we must return to the afflicting task from which the seductive and interesting nature of our correspondence almost unconsciously withdrew us.[24]

This initial piece in the *Quarterly Review* provided its readers with the first glimpse of Belzoni's researches in Egypt. The super-human effort of moving the giant head of Memnon quickly became an archaeological legend, and would be repeated in the periodical no less than four times between 1818 and 1820 (fig. 4). After this first piece the *Quarterly Review* continued to keep readers up to date with the progress of Belzoni's researches.

In the very next edition readers heard for the first time of the further discoveries that Belzoni had made at Luxor, and the results of his expedition down the Nile to Nubia:

We took the opportunity, in our last Number, to introduce to the acquaintance of our readers a Roman traveller of the name of Belzoni, who, in laying open the front of the great sphynx, had made some singular discoveries in Egyptian antiquities. The uncommon sagacity and perseverance displayed by this Italian are worthy of all praise; and we apprehend that we cannot conclude this Article in a more satisfactory way than by giving a summary account of what his more recent discoveries have been, and what may yet be expected from him.

Mr Belzoni has already completed two journies to Upper Egypt and Nubia, under the auspices of Mr Salt, the British Consul-general in Cairo. In the first he proceeded beyond the second cataract, and opened the celebrated but hitherto undescribed temple at Ipsambul, or, as it is called by Mr Burchhardt, Ebsambel, and by Captain Light, Absimbel [Abu Simbel], being the largest and most extensive excavations

* The alabaster sarcophagus was bought by Sir John Soane for his museum in Lincoln's Inn, London, where it remains today.

either in Nubia or Egypt. More than two thirds of the front of this grand temple were completely buried in the sand, which, in some places, covered it to the height of fifty feet. Its site however is easily recognized by four colossal figures in front in a sitting posture, each of which is about sixty feet high; but one of the four has been thrown down, and lies prostrate in the sand, with which it is partially covered. It was this statue, we believe, from the tip of whose ear Mr Bankes could just reach to its forehead, and which measure, according to Burckhardt, twenty one feet across the shoulders. Mr Belzoni found this extraordinary excavation to contain fourteen chambers and a great hall: in the latter of which were standing erect eight colossal figures, each thirty feet high; the walls and pilasters were covered with hieroglyphics beautifully cut, and with groups of large figures in bas-relief, in the highest state of preservation. At the end of the sanctuary were four figures in a sitting posture, about twelve feet high, sculptured out of the living rock, and well preserved. In bearing testimony to the great merit of Mr Belzoni for his researches in this temple, and for his exertions in clearing away the immense mass of sand, Mr Salt observes, that the 'opening of the temple of Ipsambul was a work of the utmost difficulty, and one that required no ordinary talent to surmount, nearly the whole, when Mr Belzoni first planned the undertaking, being buried under a bed of loose sand, upwards of fifty feet in depth.' 'This temple,' he adds, 'is on many accounts peculiarly interesting, as it satisfactorily tends to prove that the arts, as practised in Egypt, descended from Ethiopia, the style of sculpture being in several respects superior to any thing that has yet been found in Egypt.'

At Thebes Mr Belzoni succeeded in making several very remarkable discoveries. Among other things, he uncovered a row of statues in the ruins of Carnac, as large as life, having the figures of women with heads of lions, all of hard black granite, and in number about forty. Among these was one of white marble, about the size of life, and in perfect preservation, which he conceived to be a statue of Jupiter Ammon, holding the ram's head upon his knees. On his second visit to Thebes he discovered a colossal head of Orus, of fine granite. It measured ten feet from the neck to the top of the mitre, was finished in a style of exquisite workmanship, and is in a state of god preservation. He brought away to Cairo one of the arms belonging to this statue, which, with the head, he thinks would form an admirable specimen of the grandeur and execution of Egyptian sculpture; and as he succeeded so well in removing the head of the younger Memnon, as it is called, now deposited in the British Museum, we have no doubt he would be equally successful, if encouraged, in conveying the one in question to Alexandria. Speaking of the Memnonian bust – 'He has the singular merit,' says Mr Salt, 'of having removed this celebrated piece of sculpture, to accomplish which it was necessary, after dragging it down upwards of a mile to the water side, to place it on board a small boat, to remove it thence to another djerm at Rosetta, and afterwards to land and lodge it in a magazine in

> Alexandria – all of which was most surprisingly effected with the assistance solely of the native peasantry, and such simple machinery as Mr Belzoni was able to get made under his own direction at Cairo. In fact, his great talent and uncommon genius for mechanics have enabled him with singular success, both at Thebes and other places, to discover objects of the rarest value in antiquity, that had long baffled the researches of the learned, and with trifling means to remove colossal fragments which appear, by their own declaration, to have defied the efforts of the able engineers who accompanied the French army.'[25]

Belzoni's excavation of the colossal temple of Abu Simbel and his discoveries at Karnac are some of the most famed in the history of Egyptology. There is no doubt that just like the *Edinburgh Review*, the *Quarterly Review* was most interested in the most spectacular discoveries. The story of the transportation of the Memnon statue to the Nile was considered to be worthy of repetition once again, and was quickly becoming the most famous of Belzoni's exploits. The fact that many of Belzoni's discoveries were now housed in the British Museum did not go unnoticed, and many readers of the *Quarterly Review* would probably have wanted to view them there.

In 1820 Belzoni published a memoir of his time spent in Egypt and an accompanying volume of 42 colour illustrations with London publisher John Murray (who also published the *Quarterly Review*).[26] Between 1818 and 1820 the *Quarterly Review* had been the best place for British readers to learn about the details of Belzoni's researches, and the publication had contained the detailed accounts of his discoveries and of Belzoni the man. Indeed the periodical claimed full credit for making the British public aware of the name and exploits of Belzoni. When the time came to review his narrative the piece opened with the following words:

> The name of Belzoni must be familiar to the readers of our journal. We may, indeed, take credit for having brought before the public eye whatever has appeared, (prior to the present publication), of the important researches and discoveries made by *this distinguished and meritorious individual, from information with which we were* exclusively favoured from the scene of his operations.[27]

It is especially significant that the *Quarterly Review* published reports of Belzoni's researches before his own narrative appeared, thus making the periodical almost the official reporter of Belzoni's discoveries. The story was considered to be of enough public interest to be included in a different format to what was usual for the publication, which is a powerful testament to just how

highly the story of Belzoni rated. However, the *Quarterly Review* did not include any similar reports for any other archaeological discoveries. The combination of the spectacular nature of the discoveries, the interesting character of Belzoni and Salt's letters giving exclusive reports had made the story so newsworthy. Fortune and circumstance had conspired to produce a new way of reporting archaeology, which would not realise its potential for another half century.

But with the publication of Belzoni's narrative the exclusivity of the story, which must have been an important factor influencing the decision to devote so much column space to it, disappeared, and the *Quarterly Review* reverted back to its traditional review format to provide an extremely positive account of the book:

> Mr Belzoni has now, very properly told his own story in his own way, and we may add, pretty nearly in his own words; having, as we understand, declined all literary assistance beyond that of the individual employed to copy out his manuscript and correct the press. 'As I made my discoveries alone,' he says, 'I have been anxious to write my book by myself, though in doing so the reader will consider me, and with great propriety, guilty of temerity; but the public will, perhaps, gain in the fidelity of my narrative what it loses in elegance. I am not an Englishman; but I prefer that my readers should receive from myself, as well as I am able to describe them, an account of my proceedings in Egypt, in Nubia, on the coast of the Red Sea, and in the Oasis; rather than run the risk of having my meaning misrepresented by another: if I am intelligible, it is all that I can expect.' In this last respect, we may safely assure him that he has fully succeeded: he details with perspicuity, and, we have no doubt, with accuracy, all the occurrences which befell him in the prosecution of his discoveries; he describes, with great simplicity, the means he employed for effecting his various operations; the nature of the intercourse he held with several natives with whom he was brought into contact, as well as the rooted prejudices which he had to combat, and the various difficulties created by the intrigues, the treachery, and the avarice of certain Turkish chiefs; and, we regret to add, the jealousy of certain Europeans, of whose conduct he bitterly complains, and apparently not without reason: and on the whole, we may venture to say that he has produced a very instructive and entertaining volume.[28]

This was high praise indeed from one of the most prestigious literary publications in the land. The book sold well, and such was its popularity that a second edition was issued in 1821, and an additional set of illustrations the following year.[29] In its notice of Belzoni's narrative, the *Quarterly Review* again took the opportunity to recount the story of the transportation of the Memnon,

the excavation of the Temple of Abu Simbel, and the discovery of the alabaster sarcophagus in the tomb of Seti I. In addition to these now well known narratives, the review also reproduced a passage recounting a foray into an ancient tomb, which has to be one of the most evocative portions of the work:

> The inconvenience, and, we may add, the hazard of visiting these sepulchres, can only be duly appreciated by those who have made the experiment; and nothing but an extraordinary degree of enthusiasm for researches of this kind could have supported our traveller in the numerous descents which he made into the mummy pits of Egypt, and through the long narrow subterraneous passages, particularly inconvenient for a man of his size. His own account of these difficulties is extremely interesting.
>
> 'Of some of these tombs many persons could not withstand the suffocating air, which often causes fainting. A vast quantity of dust rises, so fine that it enters the throat and nostrils, and chokes the nose and mouth to such a degree, that it requires great power of lungs to resist it and the strong effluvia of the mummies. This is not all; the entry of passage where the bodies are is roughly cut in the rocks, and the falling of the sand from the upper part of ceiling of the passage causes it to be nearly filled up. In some places there is not more than the vacancy of a foot left which you must contrive to pass through in a creeping posture like a snail, on pointed and keen stones, that cut like glass. After getting through these passages, some of them two or three hundred yards long, you generally find a more commodious place, perhaps high enough to sit. But what a place of rest! surrounded by bodies, by heaps of mummies in all directions; which, previous to my being accustomed to the sight, impressed me with horror. The blackness of the wall, the faint light given by the candles or torches for want of air, the different objects that surrounded me, seeming to converse with each other, and the Arabs with the candles or torches in their hands, naked and covered with dust, themselves resembling living mummies, absolutely formed a scene that cannot be described. I such a situation I found myself several times, and often returned exhausted and fainting, till at last I became inured to it, and indifferent to what I suffered, except from the dust, which never failed to choke my throat and nose; and though, fortunately, I am destitute of the sense of smelling, I could taste that the mummies were rather unpleasant to swallow. After the exertion of entering into such a place, through a passage of fifty, a hundred, three hundred, or perhaps six hundred yards, nearly overcome, I sought a resting-place, found one, and contrived to sit; but when my weight bore on the body of an Egyptian, it crushed it like a band-box. I naturally had recourse to my hands to sustain my weight, but they found no better support; so that I sunk altogether among the broken mummies, with a crash of bones, rags and wooden cases, which raised such a dust as kept me motionless for a quarter of

> an hour, waiting till it subsided again. I could not remove from the place, however, without increasing it, and every step I took I crushed a mummy in some part or other. Once I was conducted from such a place to another resembling it, through a passage of about twenty feet in length, and no wider than that a body could be forced through. It was choked with mummies, and I could not pass without putting my face in contact with that of some decayed Egyptian; but as the passage inclined downwards, my own weight helped me on: however, I could not avoid being covered with bones, legs, arms, and heads rolling from above. Thus I proceeded from one cave to another, all full of mummies piles up in various ways, some standing, some lying, and some on their heads. The purpose of my researches was to rob the Egyptians of their papyri; of which I found a few hidden in their breasts, under their arms, in the space above the knees, or on the legs, and covered by the numerous folds of cloth, that envelop the mummy.'[30]

This account of the mummy pits has come to be one of the most famous sections of Belzoni's narrative, and it was the only passage to be printed in the biography of Belzoni that appeared in 1851 in *Household Words*, the periodical edited by Charles Dickens. In this passage are contained all the elements of a great story. There is a touch of gothic horror, danger, adventure, and at the end of all the trials a great reward waiting for Belzoni in the form of more papyri to add to his already extensive collection. In his writing Belzoni shows a perceptive eye for a good story. Reading the account today over 175 years since it was written the power and fascination of the narrative is undiminished by the years; a great testimony to Belzoni's awareness of what it was that the public found fascinating about archaeology.

If Belzoni's account could bring to mind the experiences of entering a tomb for the first time, how much more atmospheric could a life-sized reproduction be? Whilst in Egypt Belzoni had made wax models of the tomb of Seti I (believed at the time to be the tomb of Psammethis), where he had located the celebrated alabaster sarcophagus, with the aim of creating an exact replica on his return to Europe. In 1821 an exhibition the like of which London had never seen before opened at the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly.

Belzoni's Tomb at the Egyptian Hall

The Egyptian Hall was a fashionable exhibition building located in London's Piccadilly, with a façade decorated in the style of the architecture of ancient Egypt, which had been built by William Bullock in 1812 (fig. 5).[31] There could be

no more appropriate location for Belzoni to build his plaster reconstruction of the tomb of Seti I.[32] The exhibition included a full size, brightly coloured model of two chambers of the tomb of Seti I, known as the Hall of Beauties and the Entrance Hall, along with a series of smaller models of other sites which Belzoni had recorded, including Abu Simbel and the pyramids, and a number of authentic artefacts collected on his expeditions (fig. 6). By the time of Belzoni's return to Britain he was a popular figure in London society, and reviews of his Tomb were featured in several popular magazines of the day including the *New Monthly Magazine* and the *Literary Gazette*. It was with a great sense of anticipation that the *New Monthly Magazine* announced Belzoni's proposed exhibition in its section on London entertainments:

> The zeal of Mr Belzoni is beyond all praise, for not only taking drawings of the Pyramids of Cheops and Cephrenes at Memphis, and of Psammethis at Thebes, but also models in wax of their principal figures and sculptures, with a view of erecting *fac similes* of those chambers in some parts of Europe for the inspection of the curious; where there may not only be science enough to give him encouragement, but also pecuniary means sufficient to begin and complete a work of such great interest. No other traveller has entertained this motive in his journey, but has contented himself with a literary description, which has, from the expense, been confined to the libraries of the great and opulent; and, after all, has proved inadequate to give a perfect idea of the objects designed. It would, we think, be well worthy of the Trustees of the British Museum, to have such a work modelled and attached to their collection of Egyptian Antiquities; where the man of learning might have access to it, for the purposes of consulting the antiquities of ancient Egypt, and the curious might at once be instructed and delighted. For, by Mr Belzoni's magnificent scheme ... every one will be enabled to place himself in the very chambers of the most remote antiquity![33]

With the creation of Belzoni's Tomb, archaeology had suddenly become a subject of fashionable entertainment, and the *New Monthly Magazine* contained several further notices of the exhibition, as well as a poem by Horace Smith, a London stockbroker, entitled 'Address to the Mummy at Belzoni's Exhibition':

> And thou hast walk'd about (how strange a story!)
> In Thebes's streets three thousand years ago,
> When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
> And time had not begun to overthrow
> Those temples, palaces and piles stupendous,

Of which the very ruins are tremendous.

Speak! for thou long enough hast acted Dummy,
  Thou hast a tongue – come – let us hear its tune;
Thou'rt standing on thy legs, above ground, Mummy!
  Revisiting the glimpses of the moon,
Not like thin ghosts or disembodied creatures,
But with thy bones and flesh, and limbs and features.

The exhibition certainly had a range of attractions to entertain spectators, and proved to be extremely popular. The opening was noted in *The Times*, and 1900 people are reported to have paid their half a crown to attend the exhibition on the opening day.[34] Although sadly no list of who was there survives, considering Belzoni's widespread fame, and the extensive range of John Murray's contacts, the opening is likely to have attracted many members of the more fashionable circles of London society.[35] In 1822 the *Literary Gazette* featured a review of 'The Tomb,' written by Lady Blessington, in its regular column 'Sketches of Society.' Although it is a satirical piece, it does provide an insight into the wide range of people who visited Belzoni's Tomb, and some of their responses to what they saw there:

Of all the exhibitions that attract the lounger in this overgrown metropolis, few present a more interesting study to the reflecting mind, or a more entertaining scene to the lovers of character than the EGYPTIAN TOMB.

The period in which this excavation was formed is so remote, that its history is involved in an obscurity which adds to it still greater interest, and brings to the mind a thousand reflections on the vanity of all human efforts to force the natural course of events; it forms an admirable subject for the philosopher to contemplate, and illustrates the ever-varying scenes of this mutable world: while the crowds of busy triflers, and listless loungers, that hover round, furnish ample food for amusement to the lovers of eccentricity and character....

After mounting a steep and dark staircase, the first sentence we heard was uttered by a lady, who exclaimed, "O dear, how hot the Tomb is!" and another remarked, "That there was not light sufficient to see the gods." The groups scattered round, formed a striking contrast to the scene itself: at the entrance were two large animals, of the Sphinx species, formed of granite, with lions' heads, and between them was seated an elderly man, in the act of masticating tobacco, whose countenance bore a strong likeness to them. Two or three fine young women, simply but elegantly attired, with their graceful attitudes, and undulating draperies,

formed an agreeable contrast to the stiff and disproportioned forms of the grotesque Egyptian female figures.

A party of school-boys were amusing themselves by discovering likenesses to each other, in the monstrous deities displayed on the wall; and a governess was answering the enquiries of her young pupils, "If there ever existed men with lions', apes', and foxes' heads?" by sententiously reading extracts from Belzoni's Description, not a word of which the little innocents could understand. One old lady remarked, that "The Tomb was not at all alarming when people got used to it;" and another said, "it made her melancholy, by reminding her of the death of her dear first husband, the worthy Alderman, to whose memory she had erected a very genteel one." Two vulgar looking old men declared their conviction that "It was all a hum, for had there been such a place, Lord Nelson would have said *summut* about it, in his dispatches;" and another person of the same class, said that, "For his part, he did not like foreigners; and why did no Englishman never find this *here* place? he should not wonder if, in the end, Mr Belzoni, or whatever his name is, was found to be like that Baron who wrote so many fibs." The first speaker observed that, "Any man, who would go for to say, as *how* men had apes' faces (though his own bore a striking likeness to one) would say any thing."

A gentleman, who appeared to be a tutor, and two young lads, were attentively examining the model, and comparing it with Belzoni's Narrative; and the questions they asked, and the observations which they made, shewed a spirit of enquiry and intelligence pleasing to witness; while his answers, full of good sense and information, marked how well qualified he was to convey instruction.[36]

The Tomb also attracted members of fashionable London society who appear to be rather less interested in what they saw. Lady Blessington next observed the actions of two Dandies who paid a visit to the Egyptian Hall:

Two ladies of fashion now enter, attended by two *Exquisites*, or *Dandies* of the first class, and their exclamations of "What an odd place!" "O dear, now disagreeable the smell is!" attract the notice of the fine lady before mentioned, who has been engaged in a flirtation with her beau for the last half hour; they now recognise each other, and the languid "How d'ye do? I'm delighted to see you; how very funny that we should meet in the tomb!" are uttered at once by all three: and one of the *Exquisites*, who appears to be of the sentimental cast, takes this opportunity of lisping out that, "The presence of such divinities converts the Tomb into a heaven." A vulgar looking man, who has been listening to their chit-chat, and eying them with derision, whispers, but in audible accents, to his wife, a pretty modest looking woman, "My eye! did you hear what that *there* young pale faced chap said to *them there* painted women, about going to heaven? – They don't seem to have any more

chance of that sort of place, than they have thoughts of it just now." The wife gives him an imploring look to be quiet, and whispers, that she believes the ladies are no better than they should be, by their bold looks and loud speaking, and urges him to go to the other side....

The party of fashionables now approached, and one of the ladies exclaimed, "Do pray let us leave this tiresome stupid place, where there is not a single thing to be seen worth looking at, and where the company is so intolerably vulgar. I really fancied it was a fashionable morning lounge, where one would meet every soul worth meeting in town, for, as too looking at a set of Egyptian frights it never entered my head; I have not heard of Egypt since my governess used to bore me about it when I was learning geography; and as to tombs and pyramids, I have a perfect horror of them." Another of the ladies observed, that she "hated every thing Egyptian ever since she had heard of the plagues." And the third begged, that "in decrying Egypt and its productions, they would except Egyptian pebbles, which were beautiful, and took an exquisite polish."[37]

But aside from the fashionables so derided by Lady Blessington, the Tomb appears to have also attracted a wider cross-section of society.

"The tomb levels all distinctions," though a trite observation, is one, the truth of which has never been doubted; and, if it were, a visit to the tomb of Psammis would convince the most incredulous: for here persons of all ranks meet, and justle each other with impunity. The fine lady, who holds her *vinaigrette* to her nostrils, and remarks to her attending beau, "What a dreadfully shocking place it is;" and that "there is not a single person of fashion there," is elbowed by a fat red faced woman, who looks like the mistress of a gin shop, and who declares to her spouse that, "She would give a shilling for a glass of aniseed; for looking at *them there* mummies has made her feel so queerish."

And old lady, and her two grand-daughters, are examining the Pyramid; the old lady has got on a pair of spectacles, and is, with evident labour, endeavouring to decipher a page of the Description; but, unfortunately, she has got the wrong page, and having puzzled herself for some time, at last gives up the task in despair; and in answer to one of the children's questions of "Grandmamma, what is a Pyramid?" the good old lady replies, "Why, a Pyramid, my dear, is a pretty ornament for the centre of a table, such as papa sometimes has instead of an epergne."

A simple-looking country girl is remarking to her companion that "This is not a bit like a tomb; for that she has seen many, but they were all quite different, being small and much of the shape of a large trunk, or else there were head stones; and all had 'here lies the body,' or some such thing on them, with cross bones, death's heads, and hour glasses.[38]

Belzoni's Tomb was designed as a place of entertainment, not of education, and unless you bought the guidebook or already had some knowledge of ancient Egypt, you could have marvelled and little else. Indeed, one of the things commented on by Lady Blessington was the general ignorance displayed by many visitors to the Tomb:

> Some young people attended by their mother, a very showy dressed woman, with many indications of vulgarity in her appearance, now stopped before the ruins of the temple of "Erments," and one of the children asked her "what place the water before them was meant to represent." The mamma replied, she "believed it was the Red Sea, or some such place," but recommended them not to "ask questions, as it would lead people to think them ignorant." This sapient answer seemed very unsatisfactory to the children, who having expressed their annoyance, were promised a copy of the Description, provided they would not look at it until they got home, as mamma was in a hurry.
>
> A lady next to us enquired "if Egypt was near Switzerland?" and was informed by her friend, that it "was near Venice." The ignorance displayed by the greater part of the visitors of the Tomb, on historical, geographical, and chronological points, was truly surprising, and the perfect apathy evinced, was even more so. It was plain that they came to the Tomb merely to pass away an hour, or of the expectation of meeting their acquaintances; but as to drawing any moral inference from it, they seemed as little inclined, as if they had been in the round room of the Opera House on a crowded night. Wrapt up in their own self-satisfied ignorance, the works or monuments of antiquity boast no attraction for them; and strange to say, the metropolis of a country that professes to surpass all others in civilisation and morals, presents, in some of its inhabitants, examples of ignorance and want of reflection scarcely equalled in any other part of the civilised world.[39]

For those visitors to the Tomb who were familiar with published work on ancient Egypt and had seen authentic Egyptian artefacts in the British Museum, the display provided a different kind of experience, as the *New Monthly Magazine* commented:

> The translations of Mr Denon's work, by Mr Holt and Mr Aikin, have familiarized the English reader with the nature of Egyptian antiquities, as far as verbal accounts can effect that object; while accompanying prints, copied from some of those in the French work, have communicated a visual, and therefore a more satisfactory knowledge of part of those relics. But the most gratifying consequence of exploring the remains of ancient Egypt, in its supply of amusement with information, is the

> representation of the Egyptian Tomb, Temples, and Pyramid, recently visited by Mr Belzoni, together with some curiosities brought by him from Egypt. Not only are the former presented to the eye in models which contain, to a fraction, the forms and hue of the originals, but two of the imitated chambers of the tomb are of their exact size; so that to the eye, and, in no partial degree, to fancy's eye, you sit in them as in the realities themselves, and are in the presence of objects that fill the mind with pleasing wonder, conscious as it is, at the time, of its own transient existence in its rapidly wasting tenement, the body.[40]

For many visitors though, Belzoni's Tomb would have been the first time they had seen what ancient Egyptian artefacts looked like. In the early nineteenth century the expense of books on archaeology was a very real impediment to the study of antiquities for those who were not wealthy. For example, the text of Belzoni's narrative was priced at 42 shillings, with the book of illustrations a further 126 shillings. In contrast, entrance to the exhibition was priced at a half a crown when it first opened, which was later reduced to a shilling when its popularity began to decline. Although the half-crown admission price would have restricted entrance to the fairly well off, the shilling entrance fee enabled a much wider cross section of society to visited the Tomb. At the cheaper price a visitor could see the Belzoni's display no less than 126 times before they would have spent a sum equal to the price of his book of illustrations. In the early 1820s archaeological publications and exhibitions were firmly aimed at the wealthier sections of society, but the popularity of Belzoni's Tomb hinted at the possibility of a much wider public interest in the past. Widespread public interest in archaeology was still a long way off, but would begin to develop from this point onwards through the course of the next half-century.

Belzoni's exhibition was closed in 1822, and the contents sold by auction in the Egyptian Hall by Mr Robins of Regent Street.[41] The auction began at midday on June 8, with the first lot up for sale the life-sized model of the tomb, which sold for a staggering £490.[42] Fortunately for the purchaser, the auction catalogue noted that 'the Apartments are so constructed, as to be taken to pieces for removal, and placed in any other way that may be required; but if the present form is adhered to, it will of course render the whole more interesting, as giving a faithful representation of the interior of the tomb at Thebes.'[43] The two life-sized granite statues at the entrance (authentically ancient) sold for £380, while the smaller models sold for between £15, for the

'Ruins of the Temple Erments,' to £35 14s, for two models of the 'Pyramid Sephrenes.'

The success of the exhibition and the widespread renown Belzoni had gained from his researches was not enough to quench his thirst for adventure. In 1822 he set off on an expedition into the heart of Africa, with the intention of visiting Timbuctoo. Having reached Benin in 1823 he succumbed to dysentery and was carried back to Gato and put on board an English vessel anchored there. He died on December 3, aged forty-five years. Belzoni's death had previously been reported in the British press in 1818 before being refuted, but this time the information received proved to be more accurate. He was buried in Gato under a large tree. Belzoni's story retained the power to fascinate future generations, and his adventures were frequently repeated in the British press when mention was made of Egyptian antiquities. He was even made the subject of a children's book, first published in 1821, which was popular enough to merit several reprints.[44] The giant from Padua, perhaps the first celebrity of nineteenth century archaeology, had left his mark.

Archaeology for the Educated Market

In the early nineteenth century interest in archaeology beyond the antiquarian market was effectively restricted to the better-educated sections of society. Publications such as the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review* carried detailed reviews of the latest publications, which would have been impenetrable to those who were not possessed of a detailed knowledge of the latest books published and a thorough grounding in the classics. In the literary reviews archaeology was very much a secondary concern to more pressing contemporary political issues such as foreign war. But in its coverage of Belzoni's discoveries the *Quarterly Review* hinted at the possibilities for making archaeology an interesting and popular news story in its own right. Belzoni was the first detailed and long running archaeological news story of the nineteenth century, but sadly this was a one off. The British public would have to wait almost a quarter of a century for another archaeological story to appear in the press to rival that of Belzoni. In 1818 the *Quarterly Review* had record sales figures of 14,000, so perhaps as many as 70,000 people had read about Belzoni's adventures in the periodical, but the social demographic of these readers would have been restricted to the better-educated members of the

upper classes.[45] Archaeology in the first quarter of the nineteenth century was fairly exclusive reading material. Through the course of the 1820s the number of magazines that catered to the educated reader increased. These included *Blackwood's Magazine* (1824), the *Westminster Review* (1824), the *Athenaeum* (1828), and the *Spectator* (1829). All included archaeology as a part of their content, but they catered to a similar audience bracket to the literary reviews.

Belzoni's popular exhibition marked an important point in the presentation of archaeology to the public. In print it was covered in the popular but fairly exclusive magazines of the day, and many visitors would have been members of fashionable society, but the exhibition also attracted people who would almost certainly have had no contact with archaeology before. The popularity of the exhibition with the public hinted at the popularity of archaeology that would develop over the course of the next half-century. Belzoni's Tomb had entertained the public, but provided little information for those who were not already well informed about the past. What was needed to create a wider audience for archaeology was a source of information on the past that could be afforded and understood by all. By the 1830s the provision of education for the masses was a popular political concern, and it is in this decade with the emergence of cheap educational periodicals that the wider reading public could begin to gain some knowledge of the archaeological past.

Figure 3 Giovanni Belzoni

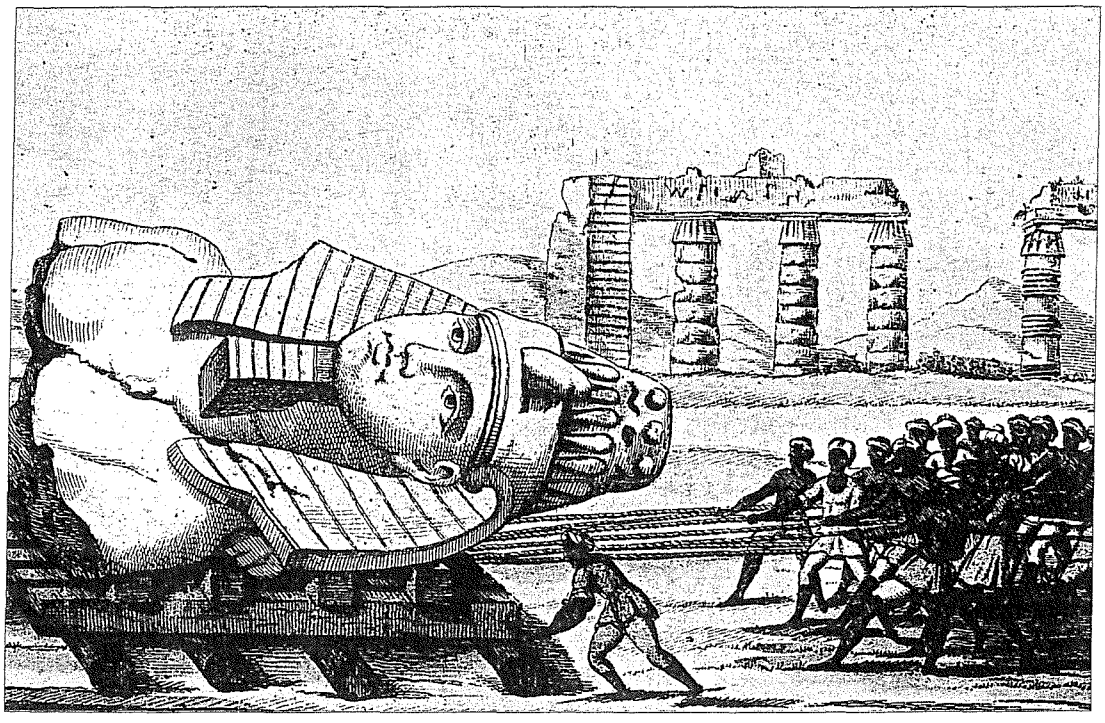


Figure 4 Dragging the head of Memnon

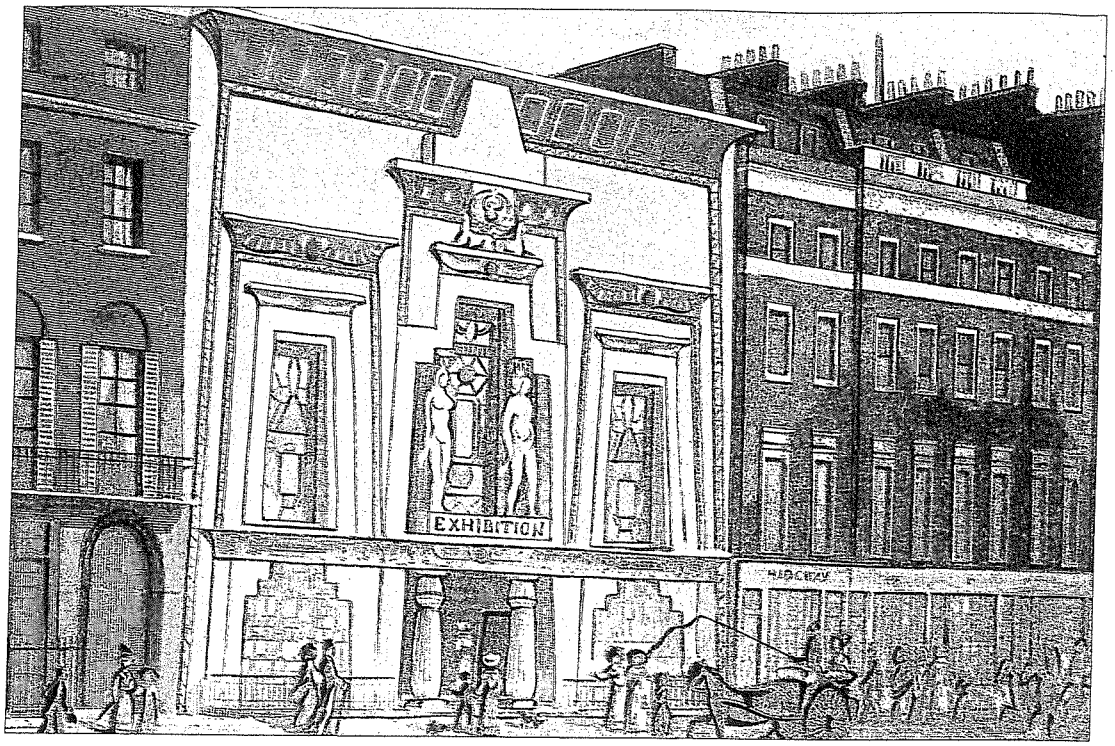


Figure 5 The Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly

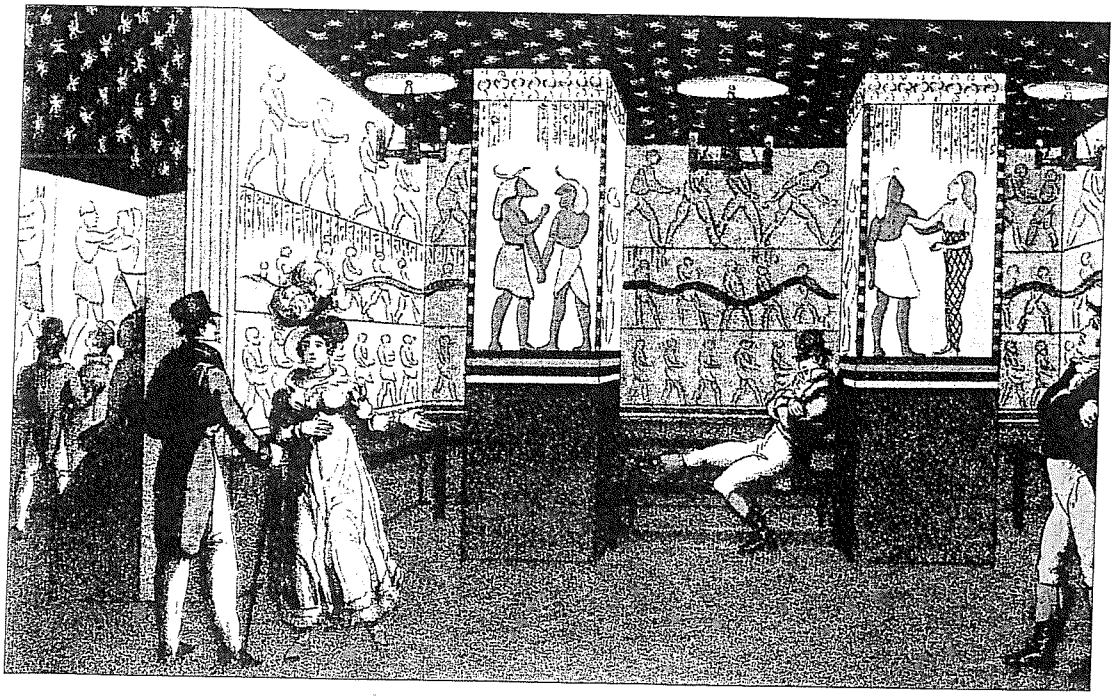


Figure 6 Belzoni's Tomb

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

[1] For a comprehensive assessment of the early years of the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh* Reviews see Shine & Shine (1949) and Clive (1959). The centenary editions of each publication also has a good introductory history: The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 196 (1902); The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 210 (1909). See also Shattock (1989) on the two publications after 1820.
[2] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 15 (1810), page 453.
[3] Hoare (1810, 1811), reviewed in the *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 5 (1810), pages 111-20 & Vol. 6 (1811), pages 440-8. Britton (1805-10), the *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 4 (1810), pages 474-80.
[4] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 18 (1811), page 437.
[5] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 18 (1811), pages 435-6.
[6] Vivant Denon (1802), *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Egypte, pendant les Campagnes du General Bonaparte*. The first English translation, Denon (1802a), by Francis Blagdon appeared the same year.
[7] Reid (2002), pages 31-6, provides a concise introduction to the French expedition to Egypt.
[8] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 1 (1803), pages 330-1.
[9] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 1 (1803), page 332.
[10] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 1 (1803), pages 341-2.
[11] The accounts of the British Reverend Richard Pocoke (1743) and the Danish traveller F.L. Norden (1757) were two of the earliest descriptions of Egypt to be published in Europe. The prospectus for Denon's publication had made the claim that the work would provide a more comprehensive account than either Pocoke or Norden.
[12] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 1 (1803), pages 344-5.
[13] Prices are those given in the official prospectus, reprinted in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 71(2) (1801), pages 928-31.
[14] Clarke (1805).
[15] Hamilton (1809).
[16] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 18 (1811), page 442.
[17] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 7 (1806), page 481.
[18] The *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 7 (1806), pages 480-1.
[19] The most comprehensive biography of Belzoni is Stanley Mayes' *The Great Belzoni* (1959). Other interesting contributions include a short biography in *Household Words,* Vol. 2 (1851), pages 548-552, and an account of his later adventures in the *Cornhill Magazine* Vol. 42 (1880), pages 36-50. Alberto Siliotti (2001) provides an informative introduction to Belzoni in his foreword to the latest reprint of Belzoni's *Narrative and Operations*.
[20] Belzoni's own narrative (1820) provides the best account of his adventures in all their glory.
[21] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19 (1818), pages 422-3.
[22] For more details on Henry Salt see Manley & Reé (2001). Belzoni's *Narrative* (1820) also provides an interesting insight into the strained relations between the two by 1820. Moser (forthcoming) tells the story of how the discoveries were displayed at the British Museum upon their arrival in London.
[23] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19 (1818), page 423.
[24] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 18 (1818), pages 368-70.
[25] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 19 (1818), pages 190-2.
[26] Belzoni (1820, 1820a).
[27] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 24 (1820), page 139.
[28] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 24 (1820), pages 139-40.
[29] Belzoni (1822).
[30] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 24 (1820), pages 155-6.
[31] For further details of the Egyptian Hall and Belzoni's exhibition see Altick (1978), pages 235-52.
[32] Pearce (2000) provides a detailed account of the content of Belzoni's exhibition.
[33] The *New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 3 (1821), page 113
[34] Mayes (1959), page 261.
[35] Mayes (1959), page 260.
[36] The *Literary Gazette*, (19 March, 1822), pages 152-4.
[37] The *Literary Gazette*, (19 March, 1822), pages 152-4.
[38] The *Literary Gazette*, (19 March, 1822), pages 152-4.
[39] The *Literary Gazette*, (19 March, 1822), pages 152-4.
[40] The *New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 3 (1821), pages 615-6.

[41] *Catalogue of the various Articles of Antiquity to be disposed of At the Egyptian Tomb by Auction or Private Contract. The Casts of Bas-Relief, etc., together with all the Collection Part of the Project of Mr Belzoni's Researches in Egypt, Nubia, etc., Will be Sold after the 1st April, 1822*. Printed by William Clowes, London (1822).
[42] Prices given are those written in the copy of the auction catalogue held by the British Library.
[43] Auction catalogue, page 4.
[44] Atkins (1821).
[45] Readership figure based on five times sales.

3

THE PAST FOR THE PEOPLE

"*A little Learning is a dangerous Thing.*" – Then make it greater.[1]

Up to the 1830s the general audience for archaeology had been characterised by its exclusivity, but all this was about to change with the emergence of a new force in the publishing world, the cheap general interest periodical. Long before any serious or institutional study of archaeology existed the British public had the possibility of reading about the subject. Cheap journalism, dealing primarily with gossip, scandal and celebrated murder trials had been a staple of the British press since at least the eighteenth century. Where the publications of the 1830s differed was in their commitment to an educational rather than purely sensational content.

The emergence of cheap periodical publications aimed at providing wholesome fare for the masses was linked to the increased awareness of the need for public education in the reform era. One of the leading figures in the education movement was the Whig politician Lord Henry Brougham, a long-time contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, who, in 1826, was one of the founding members of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, an organisation whose aim was to improve the education of the working population.[2] The educational philosophy promoted by the society was strictly utilitarian in outlook, and was brilliantly captured by Charles Dickens in the character of schoolmaster Thomas Gradgrind, for whom hard facts were the only things worthy of being taught to his students. No one could be in any doubt that education was a serious business. The Society spread the word of public education through its Mechanics' Institutes, local groups which held lectures on science and the practical arts, and through a series of publications aimed at the working man. These publications were the principal way that the

Society reached the people, and were produced in collaboration with the publisher Charles Knight of Pall Mall. Knight began his work for the Society as an author and editor, but took over publication duties when John Murray pulled out. Initially the Society produced two series of publications, one dealing with strictly 'useful' knowledge such as mathematics, practical mechanics and household economy, the other, entitled the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, covered less obviously 'useful' topics, one of which was archaeology.[3]

Archaeology For Self-Improvers

The aim of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge was to provide readers with a simple introduction to a subject of general interest, in the form of an affordable book. The most famous work in the series was George Lillie Craik's *The Pursuit of Knowledge under Difficulties*, published as two volumes in 1830 and 1831, which aimed to show, through a series of examples drawn from the lives of famous people, that a desire for self-improvement could overcome all difficulties placed in its way.[4] As the introduction stated:

> Every man has difficulties to encounter in this pursuit; and therefore every man in interested in learning what are the real hindrances which have opposed themselves to the progress of some of the most distinguished persons, and how those obstructions have been surmounted.[5]

The aim was to encourage their readers to further study and through it to gain self-improvement, even though it may at first appear to be beyond them.

In order to achieve these educational aims though, Knight recognised that the series must also be entertaining. As an advert for the Library of Entertaining Knowledge from 1832 stated:

> The object of this series is to meet the wants of that numerous class of readers, in every condition of life, who are desirous to attain knowledge chiefly through the medium of amusement. In this Series the works of the Society is, to give as much useful information as can be conveyed in an amusing form; and it is hoped, that by presenting to those who are desirous of occupying their vacant time with a book containing some of the most attractive parts of knowledge, they will be gradually led to appreciate the value of a fuller and more systematic pursuit of studies, which instead of being dry and repulsive, contain matters capable of affording delight as well as improvement.[6]

No doubt the concept that learning was to be amusing outraged some of the harder line members of the Society for the Diffusion of Knowledge, who believed facts were all that was needed, but Knight did not appear to have a great deal of sympathy for them. Knowledge presented in an entertaining manner was the key philosophy behind the series and was an idea close to the heart of Knight, who as a publisher recognised that in order for the publications to continue they must bring a profit.

The volumes that made up the Library of Entertaining Knowledge were generally published in two parts, often appearing some years apart, priced at two shillings apiece, and 'illustrated with numerous engravings on wood or on steel.'[7] In order to obtain high quality images at minimal cost new printing techniques were developed (fig. 7). In his memoirs Knight recalls how this process involved many members of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge:

> "Mr Lock is here," writes Mr. Hill. "We have held a committee. He will be in London in a fortnight, quite at leisure, and anxious to attend to our affairs. He has promised to assist at Clowes's [William Clowes, the printer]. I hope you will succeed in assembling everybody." "Everybody" meant not only the patentee of the machine, the wood-engraver, the stationer, the ink-maker, and the ingenious overseer of the printing office, but as many of the committee as I could get together. Imagine a learned society thus employed! Imagine a hard worked editor thus exhorted to interference with a printers proper duty! Yet such was a part of my editorial duty at a time when the great revolution in the production of books to be accomplished by the printing machine, was almost as imperfectly realised as when Caxton first astonished England by the miracles of the printing press. We succeeded in partially overcoming the difficulties of making an illustrated volume not despicable as a work of art, and yet cheap – something very different from the lesson books with blotches called pictures, that puzzled the school-boy mind a half century ago, to distinguish what some daub was meant to delineate; "It is backed like a weasel's," says Brown – "or, like a whale," says Jones – "Very like a whale," concludes Robinson.[8]

When the illustrations appeared in the final works there was no mistaking what they were depicting. The use of good quality illustrations in a cheap work was quite as revolutionary as Knight and his fellow members felt it to be, and was made full use of when the Library of Entertaining Knowledge produced its first works on archaeology.

One of the major selling points of archaeology books has always been the quality of their illustrations, especially when the subject matter is not familiar to the reader, but these profusely illustrated works were often priced accordingly. Denon's narrative for example was priced at 15 pounds in its original format, way beyond the reach of all but the wealthy, and Belzoni's narrative and illustrations had also been expensive at a total cost of 168 shillings. The inclusion of quality illustrations was an important feature of the Library's works, especially as they were aimed at an audience who are likely to have had little in the way of previous contact with what different archaeological remains looked like. Even those who were unable to comprehend the major part of the text were provided with enough images to perhaps engender some further interest in the subject, or a desire to see things for themselves at first hand.

Archaeology is not a topic that you would immediately associate with the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, but through the course of the 1830s books on the past, including archaeology and history, were the most popular theme in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge. During the early years of the century archaeology had been closely associated with the activities of the antiquaries, the typical readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, whose researches were viewed by many to be of purely frivolous value; in fact the very opposite of useful knowledge. The Library of entertaining knowledge was quick to distance its books from the work of the antiquaries of old:

> The minute studies of antiquaries have been a very favourite subject of ridicule with those who have not followed them – sometimes with, sometimes without reason. In this, as in every other pursuit, men are apt to forget the value of the object in the pleasure of the chase, and run down some incomprehensible or untenable theory about some matter that never was and never will be of importance, with a zeal and intensity of purpose which might have been better bestowed upon a better end. But notwithstanding the many jokes, good and bad, which have been levelled at this branch of learning, it is one in which all enquiring minds (and no mind that is not enquiring can be worth much), not entirely engrossed by some favourite occupation, will feel more or less of interest.... Not that this curiosity influences none but those who might wish or be expected to draw profit from its gratification; on the contrary, it seems a temper natural, in greater or less degree, to all alike, reflecting or unreflecting. It is that which causes us to look with pleasure on an antiquated town, to grope among ruins, even where there is evidently nothing to repay us for the dirt and trouble of the search, and generally, to invest every thing entirely out of date with a value which its original possessors would be much puzzled to understand.[9]

The Society considered archaeology to be a subject fitting to the enquiring mind, and indeed the author even go as far as to suggest that there is an innate interest in archaeology in all. It is a topic suited alike to those of 'reflecting or unreflecting' minds.

The philosophy behind the Library of Entertaining Knowledge's coverage of archaeology is summed up by the following passage:

> The days have gone by when archaeological pursuits were little more than the harmless but valueless recreations of the aged and the idle. The research, intelligence, and industry of modern authors and artists have opened a treasure-chamber to the rising generation. The spirit of critical enquiry has separated the gold from the dross, and antiquities are now considered valuable only in proportion to their illustration of history or their importance to art.[10]

There was no room for the trifles of antiquity which had been the favourite antiquarian fare of the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. For the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, antiquities had an important role to play, and understanding their significance was vital in understanding the processes of history or appreciating art. In other words they were useful knowledge. In this scheme of things anything that is not deemed to illustrate one or the other is a mere antiquary's trifle belonging to an age passing by (although it is doubtful if the dedicated readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine* would have agreed with the Society on this point). This had a major influence on the types of antiquities that were covered by the Society's publications as only those things of the most historical or artistic interest were deemed to be in line with the education philosophy of the Society. On a broader level, this view of what was archaeologically significant was very much in tune with that of the *Edinburgh Review* from earlier in the century, perhaps unsurprising as the majority of the authors selected by the Society were drawn from the intellectual elite of society.

The subject of the first archaeological volume, published in 1831, was the buried Roman town of Pompeii, a subject that has been one of the most popular themes in the public presentation of archaeology over the years, but the majority of the archaeological works in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge focussed on the principal contents of the British Museum. The series on the Museum began with a volume entitled *Egyptian Antiquities*, and continued with

books on the Grecian and Roman collections. The introduction to the first volume set out the aims of the books:

> It is necessary to say a few words on the design of this little book, in order to obviate any misunderstanding as to its pretensions. These two volumes form part of a series that will be published on the Antiquities of the British Museum, it being the wish of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge to furnish visitors and others with fuller and more exact information on the works of art in our national collection, than can be comprised within the limits of a common catalogue. But to give both additional interest and value to these volumes, it has been thought advisable not to confine the description to a bare account of what the Museum contains, but to treat generally the history of art among the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, illustrating the text principally, but not entirely, by the specimens in the Museum. With this view the present volumes have been written; and when their size and the title of the series to which they belong are considered, no one will suppose that they are intended as a complete treatise on the antiquities of antient Egypt. The object has been to collect from the best authorities, both antient and modern, such information as will tend to give an interest to what the Museum contains, and to furnish more exact information to the general reader than he will find in most popular books on Egypt.[11]

In addition to the two volume work on the Egyptian galleries, the series also included similar volumes on the Elgin Marbles, and the Townley Gallery. A further volume entitled *Terra-cottas* was planned but never published. Each volume provided a descriptive account of the contents of the galleries, accompanied by details of the historical background to the period and the significance of each of the pieces. In addition, several of the volumes included accounts of the principal sites from Greece and Egypt where the remains in the British Museum had come from. Readers were assumed to have just about no background knowledge on the subject of the book, with each volume providing a condensed synopsis of a number of previous works on the subject. References were provided should any reader wish to follow up what they had read with further research.

The books in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge represent an important point in expanding the number of people who had the possibility of reading about the past. Before the 1830s the archaeological publishing market had been characterised by its exclusivity, both in terms of price, and required levels of education. What the Library did was to provide a condensed synopsis of previous work on the subject under discussion, which had previously only been

available in expensive books, for just two shillings. This role was considered to be the most important that the books would play in a review of the volume on Pompeii from 1832:

> There is, in fact, perhaps no other spot of interest on the globe, which would be found to strike so deep an impression into so many minds; and yet, in this country, but little has hitherto been popularly been known about Pompeii. It has been left undescribed, except in works inaccessible to the generality of readers, either from their high price, or from being written in a foreign language. Here is a little publication, which comes to supply this want. It contains, we believe, the most comprehensive account of every thing relating to the disinterred city, that is to be found in any one work; and although it cannot, of course, be placed in comparison with some of the more magnificent and costly publications which have been devoted to this subject, in respect either to the elaborate character of its investigations and details, or to the splendour of its pictorial illustrations, it may be perused with more advantage by the general reader, who is new to such studies, than perhaps any of these more pretending performances. [12]

As with the books on the British Museum, placing the information presented into the wider historical context was an important consideration:

> The author has aimed throughout to make his descriptions subservient to the explanation of the manners, customs, arts, and general state of society in the ancient world; and the work becomes in this way, a manual of classic antiquities, which may be read with the more pleasure, because quite divested of the parade and formality of a school-book. In no other way indeed would it, we think, be possibly of a person ignorant of, or but specifically acquainted with this department of learning, sooner to acquire both a taste for it, and a tolerably extensive knowledge of some of its most important details. The volumes may be read, however, with interest and advantage by very well instructed scholars; for they contain within a small compass the results of extensive research, and on some of the points which they discuss present more ample and various information, than would be readily be found collected together anywhere else. They are also profusely illustrated by steel engravings and wood-cuts, so that the descriptions of the text can hardly fail to be intelligible and attractive, even to the youngest minds.[13]

The target market for the publications of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge was working class readers, who had previously had little access to reading material with any educational value outside the schoolroom. To achieve the high quality content that the Society expert authors were selected to write the

archaeological books. The volumes on *The Elgin and Phigalean Marbles* and those on *The Townley Gallery* were both written by Sir Henry Ellis of the British Museum, a long time friend of Knight, *Egyptian Antiquities* by Cambridge academic George Long, and *Pompeii* by the architect William Clarke.[14] However, a problem with using such expert authors as these was that they almost entirely lacked the common touch that was vital for the Library of Entertaining Knowledge to succeed. The result was a series of volumes where the casual reader would find little in the way of entertainment, with much of the text pitched at a level way above the education of the majority of the reading public, who for the most part would have received little, if any, education since their early teens. Much of the language would have been more at home in a copy of the *Edinburgh Review* being browsed in a London club, rather than in a cheap book read at a working man's fireside. As Richard Altick has noted, most people who bought the books were not looking for a university level course in instruction.[15]

Although it is a fair criticism to level at the Library's books that they were aimed way above the level of the common reader, their stated target audience, they have an important position in the history of the publication of archaeology. These books were cheap and generally scholarly accounts of archaeology, something that had been almost entirely lacking up to that time. For the first time people could own a synthesis of much of the latest researches that had previously only been available in expensive publications and would have been inaccessible to most outside of the reading room of the British Museum. One can easily imagine the works appealing to the members of a local philosophical society for example, who had the basic grounding necessary to understand what was before them, and it is in this middle class audience bracket that the Library probably found much of its market. Its audience was exactly the sort of people who believed most in the doctrines of self-improvement that the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge preached, and were most likely have persevered with the Library's works. For those who were not up to the level of learning required to get anything out of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, the penny periodicals of the 1830s, in particular the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge's *Penny Magazine*, provided a rather more accessible level of archaeological content.

The Penny Magazine

Although penny periodicals were really a phenomenon of the 1830s, they had first appeared some years previously, with the *Mirror of Literature, Amusement and Instruction*, first published in 1823 and priced at two-pence, having the distinction of being the earliest to achieve any success.[16] The aim of the *Mirror* was 'to afford the greatest quantity of "Amusement and Instruction" at the lowest possible expense, and to enable readers in the humblest circumstances to become acquainted with the current and expensive literature of the day.'[17] The publication took the form of a general miscellany, with themes including literature, science, and history, as well as some articles on archaeology. The majority of the content had its origins in older publications, and the resulting publication had a lot in common with an eighteenth century magazine.[18] Unlike its cheap contemporaries, which often contained radical politics or sensational fiction, the *Mirror* was a generally well-written and informative publication. However, it was not until the appearance the *Penny Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge* and *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* in 1832 that the cheap periodical format really took off.[19] Both contained archaeology, but the coverage provided by the *Penny Magazine* was by far the most extensive, and unlike *Chambers's Journal* it included illustrations.[20]

As Charles Knight recollected in his memoirs, there was considerable opposition from some members of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge to the idea of a penny magazine. 'There was a feeling amongst a few that a penny weekly sheet would be below the dignity of the Society. One gentleman of the old Whig school ... said again and again, "It is very awkward." Lord Brougham, however, was not accustomed to let awkward things stand much in his way.'[21] Brougham got his way and the first edition of the magazine appeared in March 1832. The opening article entitled 'Reading for all' described the aims of the *Penny Magazine*:

> What the stage-coach has become to the middle classes, we hope our Penny Magazine will be to *all* classes – an universal convenience and enjoyment. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge have considered it proper to commence this publication, from the belief that many persons, whose time and whose means are equally limited, may be induced to purchase and to read it. The various works already published by the Society are principally adapted to diligent

> readers, - and to those who are anxiously desirous to obtain knowledge in a condensed, and, in most cases, systematic form. But there are a very great number of persons who can spare half an hour for the reading of a newspaper who are sometime disinclined to open a book. For these we will shall endeavour to prepare an useful and entertaining Weekly Magazine, that may be taken up and laid down without requiring any considerable effort; and that may tend to fix the mind upon calmer, and, it may be, purer subjects of thought than the violence of party discussion, or the stimulating details of crime and suffering.... The false judgements which are sometimes formed by the people upon public events, can only be corrected by the diffusion of sound knowledge. Whatever tends to enlarge the range of observation, to awaken the reason, and to lead the imagination into agreeable and innocent trains of thought, may assist in the establishment of a sincere and ardent desire for information: and in this point of view our little Miscellany may prepare the way for the reception of more elaborate and precise knowledge, and be as the small optic-glass called "the finder," which is placed by the side of a large telescope, to enable the observer to discover the star which is afterwards to be carefully examined by the more perfect instrument.

The *Penny Magazine* was aimed at members of the working classes, who had received little education other than, at best, basic literacy, and could not devote more than a few minutes at a time to reading. For these readers the Library of Entertaining Knowledge would have been way above their level of learning, but the content of the *Penny Magazine* was rather simpler fare.

The magazine was an overnight success, with sales figures reaching as high as 200,000 in the early years. As the preface written at the end of 1832 stated:

> It was considered by Edmund Burke, about forty years ago, that there were eighty thousand *readers* in this country. In the present year it has been shown by the sale of the 'Penny Magazine,' that there are two hundred thousand *purchasers* of one periodical work. It may be fairly calculated that the number of readers of that single work amounts to a million.[22]

The figure of a million readers was probably no exaggeration. If we consider the potential audience for archaeology up to this point numbered tens rather than hundreds of thousands, the publication of the *Penny Magazine* marked a significant increase in the number of people who had the possibility of reading about the past.

Despite the remarkably high sales figures there is some debate over the extent to which the cheap publications of the 1830s actually reached their

target audience of the working classes.[23] If the general level of education of the population is taken into account, the majority of unskilled workers would have had at best a rudimentary knowledge of reading. Their education in most cases would have been limited to basic local schooling up to their early teenage years at best, and the majority would have received no further education unless they sought it out for themselves. Those who are likely to have bought the *Penny Magazine* were the lower middle class mechanics or skilled workers who were interested in self-improvement, who also frequented the newly formed Mechanics' Institutes and local reading rooms. To a large extent the *Penny Magazine* was benefiting those already converted to the cause of self-improvement, rather than those who were the most lacking in general education, however, if we consider the magazine in more general terms, it is hard to ignore the fact that it was selling up to 200,000 copies a week, and presumably at least some of them were being read rather than just set aside to gather dust. The exact details of whether the readers were middle or working class does not alter the fact that archaeology was being made available to an audience that it is unlikely to have reached before, and in remarkably high numbers.

The preface to the first volume informed readers of what they could expect to see in the *Penny Magazine*:

> In this work there has never been a single sentence that could inflame a vicious appetite; and not a paragraph that could minister to prejudices and superstitions which a few years since were common. There have been no excitements for the lovers of the marvellous - no tattle or abuse for the gratification of a diseased taste for personality – and, above all, no party politics. The subjects which have uniformly been treated have been of the broadest and simplest character. Striking points of Natural History – Accounts of the great Works of Art in sculpture and painting – Descriptions of such Antiquities as possess historical interest – Personal Narratives of Travellers – Biographies of Men who have had a permanent influence on the condition of the world – Elementary Principles of Language and Numbers – established facts in Statistics and Political Economy – these have supplied the materials for exciting the curiosity of a million of readers.[24]

The inclusion of more than just hard facts in the *Penny Magazine* was down to the magazine's publisher Charles Knight. Knight, in contrast to many of the other members of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was a moderate in his utilitarian outlook, and pushed for the inclusion of art and

history in the journal. Although perhaps not the most obvious choice of subject matter for a publication aimed at the dissemination of useful knowledge, 'descriptions of such antiquities as possess historical interest' were high on the agenda for the *Penny Magazine*.

The coverage of archaeology in the cheap periodicals was in marked contrast to that of the *Gentleman's Magazine* or the learned literary reviews. The aim was to provide a simple introduction to a reader with very little background knowledge on the subject. Many of the archaeological stories that were contained in the *Penny Magazine* had their origins in the volumes of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge and there is a significant overlap between the contents of the two publications produced by the Society of the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. The majority of articles in the *Penny Magazine* were watered down accounts from the Library, and in many cases the same illustrations were used to save time and money. Just as the Library had focussed on either ancient Egypt or classical antiquities, so for the most part did the *Penny Magazine*. What is significant is that the themes are almost exactly those that could be found in the *Edinburgh Review* or the *Quarterly Review*. The *Penny Magazine* cribbed its content from other periodicals and books, with just about nothing original reported in their pages. The focus was on the dissemination of existing knowledge rather than on the reporting of anything new. In terms of the archaeological themes covered there was nothing revolutionary about the *Penny Magazine*, but its importance lay in its attempts to introduce a mass audience to archaeology for the first time.

The *Penny Magazine's* commitment to including archaeology as a part of its contents was evident from the first page of the opening number a small woodcut and description of the old Charing Cross in London appearing in the second column. However, it was with a series of articles on the contents of the British Museum that the *Penny Magazine's* coverage of archaeology is best shown.

The British Museum for the Working Man

> We hope to do something, speaking generally, to excite and gratify a taste for intellectual pleasure; but we wish to do more in this particular case. We wish to point out many unexpensive pleasures, of the very highest order, which all those who reside in London have within their reach; and how the education of themselves and of their children may be advanced by using their opportunities of enjoying some

> of the purest gratifications which an instructed mind is capable of receiving... Well, then, that we may waste no time in general discussion and, let us begin with the BRITISH MUSEUM.[25]

Leading off the Penny Magazine's series on the British Museum was an article encouraging readers to pay a visit to the museum. It was assumed that few would have been there before so the *Penny Magazine* felt it was its duty to provide the necessary information on how to go about getting in:

> We will suppose ourselves addressing an artisan or tradesman, who can sometimes afford to take a holiday, and who knows there are better modes of spending a working-day, which he some half-dozen times a year devotes to pleasure, than amidst the smoke of a tap-room, or the din of a skittle-ground. He is a family man; he enjoys a pleasure doubly if it is shared by his wife and children. Well, then, in Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury, is the British Museum; and here, from ten o'clock till four, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, he may see many of the choicest productions of ancient art – Egyptian, Grecian, and Roman monuments; and what will probably please the young people most, in the first instance, a splendid collection of natural history.... "But hold," says the working man, "I have passed by the British Museum, there are two sentinels at the gateway, and the large gates are always closed. Will they let me in? Is there nothing to pay?" That is a very natural question about the payment; for there is too much of paying in England by the people for admission to what they ought to see for nothing. But *here* there *is* nothing to pay. Knock boldly at the gate; the porter will open it. You are in a large court-yard, with an old-fashioned house occupying three sides. A flight of steps leads up to the principal entrance. Go on. Do not fear any surly looks or impertinent glances from any person in attendance. You are upon safe ground here. You are come to see your own property. You have as much right to see it, and you are as welcome therefore to see it, as the highest in the land. There is no favour in showing it you. You assist in paying for the purchase, and the maintenance of it; and one of the very best effects that could result from that expense would be to teach every Englishman to set a proper value upon the enjoyments which such public property is capable of affording. Go boldly forward, then. The officers of the museum, who are obliging to all strangers, will be glad to see you. Your garb is homely, you think, as you see gaily-dressed persons going in and out. No matter; you and your wife, and your children, are clean if not smart. By the way, it will be well to mention that very young children (those under eight years old) are not admitted; and that for a very sufficient reason: in most cases they would disturb other visitors.

> You are now in the great Hall – a lofty room, with a fine staircase. In an adjoining room a book is presented to you, in which one of a party has to write his name and address, with the number of persons accompanying him. That is the only form you have to go through; and it is a necessary form, if it were only to preserve a record of the number of persons admitted. In each year this number amounts to about seventy thousand; so you see that the British Museum has afforded pleasure and improvement to a great many people. We hope the number of visitors will be doubled and trebled; for exhibitions such as these do a very great deal for the advance of a people in knowledge and virtue. What reasonable man would abandon himself to low gratifications – to drinking or gambling – when he may, whenever he pleases, and as often as he pleases, at no cost but that of his time, enjoy the sight of some of the most curious and valuable things in the world, with as much ease as a prince walking about in his own private gallery.[26]

It is impossible to tell whether this article would have encouraged any mechanics to abandon their drinking and gambling in favour of the altogether more cultured pastime of a visit to the British Museum, but we do know that visitor numbers rose from around 100,000 in 1831, to over half a million in 1842.[27] If any artisan did decide to devote a day of his hard earned holiday to a visit to the British Museum with his family the *Penny Magazine* provided list of instructions to ensure all round good conduct. 'But that he may enjoy these treasures, and that every body else may enjoy them at the same time, it will be necessary to observe a few simple rules.'[28]

> 1st. *Touch nothing*. The statues, and other things, which are in the museum, are to be seen, not to be handled. If visitors were to be allowed to touch them, to try whether they were hard or soft, to scratch them, to write upon them with their pencils, they would soon be worth very little. You will see some mutilated remains of two or three of the finest figures that were ever executed in the world; they form part of the collection called the Elgin Marbles, and they were brought from the Temple of Minerva, at Athens, which city at the time of the sculpture of these statues, about two thousand years ago, was one of the cities of Greece most renowned for art and learning. Time has, of course greatly worn these statues; but it is said that the Turkish soldiers, who kept the modern Greeks under subjection, used to take a brutal pleasure in the injury of these remains of ancient art; as if they were glad to destroy what their ignorance made them incapable of valuing. Is it not as great ignorance for a stupid fellow of our own day slyly to write his own paltry name upon one of these glorious monuments? Is it not such an act of the most severe reproach upon the writer? Is it not, as if the scribbler should say, "Here am I, in the presence of some of the great masterpieces of art, whose antiquity

ought to produce reverence, if I cannot comprehend their beauty; and I derive a pleasure from putting my own obscure, perishable name upon works whose fame will endure for ever." What a satire upon such vanity. Doubtless, these fellows, who are so pleased with their own weak selves, a to poke their names into every face, are nothing but grown babies, and want a fool's cap most exceedingly.

2ndly. *Do not talk loud.* Talk, of course, you must; or you would lose much of the enjoyment we wish you to have – for pleasure is only half pleasure, unless it be shared with those we love. But no not disturb others with your talk. Do not call loudly from one end of a long gallery to the other, or you will distract the attention of those who derive great enjoyment from an undisturbed contemplation of the wonders in these rooms. You will excuse this hint.

3rdly. *Be not obtrusive.* You will see many things in the Museum that you do not understand. It will be well to make a memorandum of these, to be inquired into at leisure; and in these inquiries we shall endeavour to assist you from time to time. But do not trouble other visitors with your questions; and, above all, do not trouble the young artists, some of whom you will see making drawings for their improvement. Their time is precious to them; and it is a real inconvenience to be obliged to give their attention to anything but their work, or to have their attention disturbed by an over-curious person peeping at what they are doing. If you want to make any inquiry, go to one of the attendants, who walks about in each room. He will answer you as far as he knows. You must not expect to understand what you see all at once; you must go again and again if you wish to obtain real knowledge, beyond the gratification of passing curiosity.[29]

The writer of the article clearly considered it to be highly unlikely that any mechanic would understand much of what he saw at the British Museum, and considering the somewhat patronising tone it is doubtful just how many would have wanted to go there in the first place. For those who were interested in finding out more, and had taken a 'memorandum' of the items they were most interested in, the *Penny Magazine* was there to help. The magazine began its assistance to those who wanted to gain a more detailed knowledge of the antiquities of the British Museum with the Egyptian department.

The Memnon Revisited

Ancient Egypt had been one of the most widely covered archaeological subjects in the early years of the century, but since Belzoni it had received little attention in the periodical press, excepting the first translations of hieroglyphics. Egyptian antiquities had also been the subject of the founding

volume of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge works on the British Museum, and the opening articles in the *Penny Magazine* have their origins in this work. The subject of the first, which appeared in May 1832, was perhaps the most celebrated of all the sculptures housed in the Egyptian Gallery, Belzoni's gigantic head of Memnon (Ramesses II) (fig. 8).

The Memnon was a fitting way to start the series on the contents of the British Museum. Not only was the sculpture suitably spectacular, as all the pieces which were featured in the *Penny Magazine* were, it was also a well-known object that had an interesting story attached to it. The article began by giving readers a brief history detailing the identification of the statue, and its mention in older travel accounts and the classics. This background detail had been considered irrelevant by the *Quarterly Review* just over a decade before, but was a vital component of the article in the *Penny Magazine*, which assumed its audience to have little or no wider knowledge of ancient Egypt. The accuracy of the knowledge presented to its readers was an important consideration in the magazine, and the writer felt it was important to point out that there was some doubt over the links made between the sculpture in the British Museum and classical descriptions of the statue of Memnon made in some older accounts. The bulk of the article though focussed on Belzoni's adventures in acquiring the sculpture.

The *Penny Magazine* began by giving its readers a few details on how Belzoni came to be in Egypt and the circumstance surrounding the acquisition of the head of Memnon:

> Belzoni, whose name must be fresh in the recollection of most people, went to Egypt in 1815, intending to propose to the Pasha some improved mechanical contrivances for raising water from the river in order to irrigate the fields. Owing to various obstacles this scheme did not succeed, and Belzoni determined to pay a visit to Upper Egypt to see the wonderful remains of its temples. Mr Salt, then British Consul in Egypt, and Lewis Burckhardt, commissioned Belzoni to bring this colossal head from Thebes. Belzoni went up the river, and landing at Thebes, found the statue in exactly the place where the Consul's instructions described it to be.[30]

The article then recounted to readers the story of the transportation of the head from Alexandria to London:

> All the implements that Belzoni had for removing this colossus were fourteen poles, eight of which were employed in making a car for the colossus, four ropes of palm-

> leaves, four rollers, and no tackle of any description. With these sorry implements and such wretched workmen as the place could produce, he contrived to move the colossus from the ruins where it lay to the banks of the Nile, a distance considerably more than a mile. But it was a no less difficult task to place the colossus on board a boat, the bank of the river being "more than fifteen feet above the level of the water, which had retired at least a hundred feet from it." This, however, was effected by making a sloping causeway, along which the heavy mass descended slowly till it came to the lower part, where, by means of four poles, a kind of bridge was made, having one end resting on the centre parts of the of the boat and the other on the inclined plane. Thus the colossus was moved into the boat without any danger of tilting it over by pressing too much on one side.
>
> From Thebes it was carried down the river to Rosetta and thence to Alexandria, a distance of more than 400 miles: from the latter place it was embarked for England.[31]

In its retelling of Belzoni's exploits the *Penny Magazine* focussed on the magnitude of the task that Belzoni had set himself, and how he had overcome through sheer hard work and determination. The story, as featured in the magazine, had its origins in Craik's *The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties*, which had used Belzoni as a shining example of achievement in adverse conditions. Belzoni was an ideal example of just how far the cause of self-improvement could take you, and the hand of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge can be felt in its selection. As a biographical piece on Belzoni, which appeared in *Household Words* in 1851, noted:

> Giovanni Belzoni, the once starving mountebank, became one of the most illustrious men in Europe! – an encouraging example to all those, who have not only sound heads to project, but stout hearts to execute.[32]

What better example could the *Penny Magazine* provide for its readers?

After the moral example of the story about Belzoni, the *Penny Magazine* then focussed on its other major task of providing information about the statue itself:

> The Memnon bust consists of one piece of stone, of two different colours, of which the sculptor has judiciously applied the red part to form the face. Though there is a style of sculpture which we may properly call Egyptian as distinguished from and inferior to the Greek, and though this statue clearly belongs to his Egyptian style, it surpasses as a work of art most other statues from that country by a peculiar sweetness of expression and a finer outline of face. Though the eyebrows are hardly

> prominent enough for our taste, and the nose somewhat too rounded, and the lips rather thick, it is impossible to deny that there is great beauty stamped on its countenance. Its profile, when viewed from various points, will probably show some new beauties to those only accustomed to look at it in front.

Accompanying the article were two outline drawings of the statue from the front and side. For a reader with no idea about what they should think about the merits of Egyptian or Greek art, the *Penny Magazine* provided an artistic appraisal of the merits of the statue as a work of art as well as a description of its physical appearance. As readers saw more articles in the series on the British Museum they could begin to build up a beginner's guide to the monuments of the ancient world. Free thinking was clearly not encouraged, as the masses could not hope to understand or appreciate properly what they saw without instruction. For those interested in technical details, the article finished with a summary of the dimensions of the Memnon.

The *Penny Magazine's* article on the Memnon provides a revealing insight into the style of coverage of the publication. Knight's belief that knowledge must be entertaining is evident, but at the same time the stricter utilitarian ethos of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge also makes its presence felt. It was a contradiction that lay at the heart of everything that appeared in the *Penny Magazine*. In wider terms, the style that the *Penny Magazine* employed to present archaeology proved to be very influential. Its articles focussed on a single piece, or collection, and used those to tell a wider story about ancient history, sculpture, or just an interesting tale that was associated with it. This approach had been pioneered in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge volumes, which described its commitment to providing background details as follows:

> [Readers] will at once perceive that a mere knowledge of the names assigned to these pieces of stone would convey no information at all, and that any description of them must be unintelligible, if it does not connect them with the country from which they came, and the monuments of which they are but a part.[33]

In publications such as the *Quarterly Review* readers were presumed to already possess detailed background knowledge of archaeology and ancient history, so no extra details were needed. But when archaeology was presented to an audience who had no such wider knowledge for the first time, providing information on the wider historical context came to be of considerable

importance. This was again demonstrated in the series of articles that the *Penny Magazine* ran on the Elgin Marbles.

The Elgin Marbles

The Parthenon marbles, brought to England by Thomas Bruce, seventh earl of Elgin, between 1801 and 1804, were another of the star attractions in the Museum's collections, and had their own two-volume work in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge. They were also the focus of a series of articles in the *Penny Magazine* of 1832 and 1833 coinciding with the opening of the new gallery of Athenian Antiquities in the British Museum. Readers of the magazine were left in no doubt that the acquisition of the marbles was in the best interests of all:

> It was a proper appropriation of the public wealth to build a room for the due exhibition of the Athenian (or Elgin) marbles. Perhaps one of the most judicious measures of Government, with reference to the advancement of the Arts in this country, was the purchase of these remains. We may go farther, and add, that the removal of them from Athens, where there destruction was daily going forward, to place them where their merits would be appreciated, and their decay suspended, was not only a justifiable act, but one which deserves the gratitude of England and the civilised world.... It is unnecessary for us to go into the controversy over whether it was just to remove these relics from their original seat. Had the Greeks been able to preserve them, there can be no doubt of the injustice of such an act. The probability is that if foreign governments had not done what Lord Elgin did as an individual, there would not have been a fragment left at this day to exhibit the grandeur of Grecian art as practised by Phidias. The British Nation, by the purchase of these monuments, has secured a possession of inestimable value.[34]

As with the Memnon article, readers were provided with a short introduction to the history Athens and its ancient architecture:

> In the age of Pericles (about 500 years before the Christian era), Athens was at the summit of her grandeur. The city was covered with magnificent temples; and... it was fortunate the highest taste directed this profusion. The greatest architect and sculptor that probably the world has seen lived at that time. The erection of the most splendid buildings of Greece was committed to the genius of Phidias; and he produced monuments which will exercise an influence upon art as long as men

> agree in their veneration of the models which are now supposed to contain all the principles of excellence.[35]

To illustrate the fineness of Greek architecture the *Penny Magazine* included an illustration of the Parthenon where the Elgin marbles had resided before the Earl of Elgin's attentions. Unfortunately a picture of the temple of Apollo Epicurius, near Phygalia had been inserted in error, but readers were informed of the mistake some six weeks later, when a new and correct illustration was included (fig. 9). The opening article on the Elgin marbles did not include any specific details on the marbles themselves, but almost two months later, in an article announcing the opening of the new gallery of Athenian Antiquities at the British Museum, readers were provided with rather more detail (fig. 10).

As the *Penny Magazine* had already provided its readers with some background history, they now needed to be told how to appreciate what they saw:

> To a mind uninstructed in the taste for appreciating the higher excellences of art, this wonderful collection may, at first sight, appear uninteresting. The greater number of the figures have been sadly mutilated; some are so worn by time that that little more than the head or outline of the head and body can be traced... But quite enough remains to show the extraordinary genius by which these great works were created, and to present examples for imitation which will produce the most powerful effect upon modern taste. Let the spectator who has a growing feeling for what is grand in art, but is unable to divest himself of the painful associations connected with the dilapidated condition of these sculptures, visit the gallery again and again till the real character of these immortal works has taken possession of his mind.

The writer in the *Penny Magazine* held no great expectations that readers would appreciate what they saw at first, but with perseverance and enough hours put in standing in the presence of the sculptures an appreciation could be gained. In this case very little instruction was considered to be necessary; the great beauty of the art would penetrate even the most uninstructed mind if given long enough. To help this process along the *Penny Magazine* promised its readers, so 'that we may assist the diffusion of this taste, we shall give in future numbers some representations of the more remarkable of these remains, with brief observations on their peculiar merits.' Illustrations of some of the most famous examples from the collection appeared at the end of 1832,

including the statue of Theseus,[36] with further illustrations and descriptions in the first issue of the following year (fig. 11).[37] Regular readers could have no excuses for not appreciating Grecian art by January of 1833.

Other articles on the contents of the British Museum focussed on the Portland Vase and the natural history collections, with a separate article appearing on the Apollo Belvedere. By the end of the series regular readers of the *Penny Magazine* would have been familiar with many of the most spectacular ancient monuments housed in the British Museum, as long as they were Egyptian or Classical sculpture. To complement its museum series, the *Penny Magazine* also provided another element to its archaeological articles by giving its readers accounts of the principal archaeological sites of the ancient world.

THE PENNY GRAND TOUR

Accounts of Thebes and Athens had appeared to complement the articles on the Egyptian and Grecian antiquities, but the site which received the most attention was Pompeii (fig. 12). The *Penny Magazine* provided the following enticing description of the city in a review of the Library of Entertaining Knowledge volumes on Pompeii:

> It is characteristic of the noblest natures and the finest imaginations to love to explore the vestiges of antiquity, and to dwell in times that are no more. The past is the domain of the imaginative affections alone: we can carry none of our baser passions with us thither. The antiquary is often spoken of as being of a peculiar construction of intellect, which makes him think and feel differently from other people. But, in truth, the spirit of antiquarianism is one of the most universally diffused of human tendencies; there is perhaps scarcely any person, for example, not utterly stupid or sophisticated, who would not feel a strange thrill come over him in the wonderful scene which these volumes describe. Looking round upon the long-buried city, who would not for the moment utterly forget the seventeen centuries that had revolved since Pompeii was part and parcel of imperial Rome, and see in vision the living masters of the world moving to and fro along its streets! It would not be a mere fever of curiosity that would occupy the mind, - an impatience to pry into every hole and corner of a scene at once so old and so new. Besides all that, there would be a sense of the actual presence of those times past, almost like the illusion of a dream.

Another article provided a description of a visit to Pompeii made by a traveller in 1822, who had witnessed an eruption of mount Vesuvius first hand:

> In the autumn of 1822 I saw Pompeii under very interesting circumstances. It was a few days after an eruption of Vesuvius, which I had witnessed, and which was considered by far the grandest eruption of recent times. From Portici, our road was coated with ... pumice-stone, and a fine impalpable powder, of a palish grey hue, that had been discharged from the mountain, round whose base we were winding. In many places this coating was more than a foot deep, but it was pretty equally spread, not accumulating in any particular spot. As we drove into Pompeii our carriage wheels crushed this matter, which contained the principle components of what had buried the city: it was lodged on the edges of the houses' walls, and on their roofs, (where the Neopolitan government had furnished them with any); it lay inches thick on the tops of the pillars and truncated columns of the ancient temples; it covered all the floors of the houses that had no roofs, and concealed the mosaics. In the amphitheatre, where we sat down to refresh ourselves, we were obliged to make the guides clear it away with shovels – it was everywhere. Looking from the upper walls of the amphitheatre, we saw the whole country covered with it – trees and all were coated with the pale-grey plaster, not did it disappear for many months after.
>
> Some ignorant fellows at Naples pretended the fine ashes, or powder, contained gold! Neopolitans began to collect it. They found no gold, but it turned out to be an excellent thing for cleaning and polishing plate.
>
> This dust continued to be blown from mountain days after the eruption had ceased. It once made a pretty figure of me! I was riding up the Posilippo road when it came on to rain; the rain brought down and gave consistency to the dust, which adhered to my black coat and pantaloons, until I looked as if I had been rolled in plaster of Paris.
>
> But it travelled further than Posilippo, for a friend of mine, an officer in the navy, assured me that it had fallen with rain on the deck of his ship, when between three and four hundred miles from Naples and Mount Vesuvius.[38]

Readers would have found out very little about ancient Pompeii from reading the article, but the account of a visit to the city after a small eruption is an evocative reminder of the fate which befell it, the very thing that makes Pompeii a subject of such widespread interest. By providing this contemporary account, the *Penny Magazine* brought an event from the distant past to life, which would probably have aroused readers' curiosity about the past more effectively than a more traditional description. If readers had gained an interest in Pompeii they were provided with several more articles on the city, including an account of the wall paintings from Pompeii, which readers were informed, showed 'how few things, in the mechanical practice of painting, have changed

during two thousand years,'[39] and another article which reproduced the mosaics from the House of the Faun.[40]

After readers had visited Pompeii they could continue their tour of the Roman world with a visit to the Colosseum and the Forum in Rome, or the temple of Diana and the aqueduct at Evora in Portugal, even visit the Roman remains at Dover castle, or the amphitheatre at Dorchester. If Grecian antiquities were of more interest Mycenae was included, or if Byzantine times took your fancy, a two part piece on Constantinople was published in 1832. If, however, you had been entranced by the *Penny Magazine's* account of the Memnon in the British Museum, you could also read about ancient Thebes, the Luxor obelisk, or Pompey's Pillar. And if your tastes stretched even further afield, the magazine printed a description of the rock-cut temples of Elephanta in India.

As well as the great sites from around the world the *Penny Magazine* also included a description of Stonehenge, the most famous ancient monument in Britain:[41]

> Stonehenge is the most remarkable ancient monument now remaining in this island; nor indeed is there known anywhere to exist so stupendous an erection of the same character. Even in its present half-ruined state, the venerable pile retains a majesty that strikes, at the first glance, both the most refined and the rudest eye: and the admiration of the beholder grows and expands as a more distinct conception of the original plan of the structure gradually unfolds itself from amidst the irregular and confused mixture of the standing and the fallen portions which for a short time perplexes the contemplation. It is then felt to be the produce, not only of great power and skill, but of a grand idea.[42]

Readers were also provided with the exact location of Stonehenge, and details of the dimensions of the monument itself. We learn that Stonehenge 'stands a short distance from Amesbury,' and that the 'turnpike-road from Amesbury to Shrewton, running in a northwest direction, passes close by.' We even find out that the avenue on which Stonehenge is approached runs 'from north-east to south-west, and it has been crossed obliquely by the turnpike-road.' Further details of the monument follow. The ditch is 'three hundred and sixty-nine yards in circumference,' 'the building stands in the centre of this circular area,' and that 'an outer circle of enormous upright blocks, having others placed upon them, as the lintel of a door is placed upon the side-posts, so as to form a kind of architrave, has enclosed a space a hundred feet in diameter.' All this information has no doubt been diligently copied from Colt Hoare's survey, but

the language used and the total lack of anything that conveys an impression of the 'most remarkable ancient monument' of the opening paragraph, would have almost certainly failed to engage the attention of any but the most obsessive of readers. The analogy made to a door lintel is quite in fitting with a description that fails to raise the excitement levels above that of a description of household architecture. However, it is just possible that an apprentice stonemason reading the account may have derived some useful knowledge of his craft:

> The imposts are fixed upon the uprights throughout by the contrivance called a tenon and mortise; the ends of the uprights being hewn into tenons or projections, and the corresponding hollows being excavated in the imposts. They are oval or egg-shaped. Of course there are two tenons on each upright, and two mortises on each of the imposts, which are of the same number with the uprights. The principal workmanship must have been bestowed upon these fittings: for although the marks of the hewer's tool are visible upon the other parts of the stones, their surface has been left, upon the whole, rude and irregular. They are made to taper a little towards the top; but even in this respect they are not uniform.[43]

The writer of the article managed to reduce Stonehenge, one of the most spectacular archaeological monuments in the world, to the level of a technical manual. It was the *Penny Magazine's* attempts to make its content, including its archaeology stories, more strictly 'useful' that would ultimately be its downfall.

An Eminently Practical Past

As the years progressed the content of the *Penny Magazine* become more 'useful' in its outlook, as the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge exercised tighter editorial control.[44] But even in the first year of publication the odd article on the practical nature of archaeology crept in amongst the more spectacular sites and monuments. One particularly strange piece on Egyptian antiquities appeared in 1832:

> In surveying the great works of antiquity, such as the pyramids of Egypt and other ancient monuments of art, careless observers are apt to consider the works of modern times as puny and insignificant. They are under a mistake – the works of the ancients, and of our ancestors in many instances, were either misapplications of labour and capital, or ignorance of the objects on which to employ them usefully. London has been paved, for the last fifty years, with granite brought from Scotland. If the stones and labour employed in that useful work had been applied in the

> erection of the pyramids, would not those of London have been as stupendous as the Egyptian? and yet daily we tread our pavement without reflecting what a work it has been to form and keep it in repair. A calculation of the number of acres in our vast metropolis, covered with pavement, and of the quantity of stone necessary for its formation and repair during the above period, would present a very curious result.

This somewhat ridiculous article is rather typical of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. There is no way that any but the most unimaginative of minds would compare the pyramids of Egypt to the paving of London; surely only the hardest line utilitarian could have dreamed up such a dreadful concept. To suggest that some of the greatest architectural feats ever achieved in human history are a misapplication of labour is truly the language of the artistic philistine.

The tighter editorial control by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was evident in a number of archaeological articles from the mid-1830s onwards. A fairly typical example comes from 1836, and is entitled 'Trades and mechanical arts of the Anglo-Saxons':

> In the present state and under the fortunate constitution of the British islands, our tradesmen and manufacturers are an order of men who contribute essentially to uphold our national rank and character, and form a class of actual personal distinction superior to what the same order has in any age or country possessed, except in the middle ages of Italy. They are not only the fountains of that commerce that rewards us with the wealth of the world, but they are perpetually supplying the other classes and professions of society with new means of improvement and comfort; and with these new accessions of persons and property which keep the great machine of our political greatness in constant strength and activity.[45]

The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge believed the majority of its readers would have been tradesmen or mechanics, and the article actually says far more about the political agenda of the Society than it does about Anglo-Saxons:

> The Anglo-Saxon artificers and were for some time no more than what real necessity put in action. Their productions were few, inartificial, and unvaried. They lived and died poor, unhonoured, and unimproved.[46]

Readers were clearly intended to reflect at this point on how the lot of the working man had improved over the years. After all wasn't he now sitting by

his fireside improving himself by reading the *Penny Magazine*? Readers were then told of the origins of their trades, whether it was weaving or metalworking. It was all very informative, however there is certainly nothing in its content that would have set readers' pulses racing. It's well intended, but a bit dull. Similar equally 'practical' articles appeared on glass and porcelain making in ancient Egypt, an account of Roman lead mines in Britain, and Roman coin manufacture in France.

It is very easy criticise such dry technical accounts to be found in the later editions of the *Penny Magazine*. However the reasoning for the use of such technical language is the perhaps misguided belief that the readers were after useful facts, particularly those that may have a practical application. Most articles provided some hard facts, and as the majority of examinations throughout the nineteenth century were based entirely on the rote learning of facts, the style may not have been unacceptable to many.

Archaeology was gradually squeezed out of the *Penny Magazine* as it entered the 1840s, in favour of more strictly practical subjects, although an interesting series on Druidical remains appeared in 1840. In the end it was to be this hard line attitude that sent the *Penny Magazine* under in 1845, when falling sales meant that the publication was no longer a viable enterprise. But despite its eccentricities, through the course of the 1830s the magazine had played an important role in introducing archaeology to the mass reading public.

Expanding the Audience for Archaeology

So just how much could a reader with no background knowledge on the subject find out about archaeology from reading the *Penny Magazine*? In the series of articles on the British Museum and the famed archaeological sites that appeared in the early 1830s, the answer is quite a lot. Over the years people have been very critical of the contents of the *Penny Magazine*, but many of its archaeological stories were actually very good and informative introductions to the subject. In their content, the *Penny Magazine* and the Library of Entertaining Knowledge before it included nothing original or innovative in terms of archaeological subject matter: none of the themes would have looked out of place in the *Quarterly Review* from earlier in the century. The innovation lay in the *Penny Magazine's* attempts to introduce the subject matter to an entirely new audience.

The way that this was achieved would also have a long-term impact on the reporting of archaeology. Readers were provided with an easy to read summary of the current understanding of the ancient world constructed around an individual artefact or site, available at a price that just about anyone could afford. Most important though was the *Penny Magazine*'s use of illustrations which provided many readers with their first glimpse of what the great archaeological sites and treasures looked like. Today we take this information for granted, but in the 1830s most people would simply have had no idea what even the most famous archaeological remains looked like. The *Penny Magazine* pioneered the use of illustrations as an integral part of its content, something that a new generation of illustrated publications would draw upon in the following decade.

If we compare the potential audience for archaeology at 1820 and 1840 we see a massive increase in the number who would have had the option of consuming the past as a part of their weekly reading materials. The 1830s set the scene for the widespread popularity of archaeology that would truly begin in the 1840s and continue for the remainder of the century.

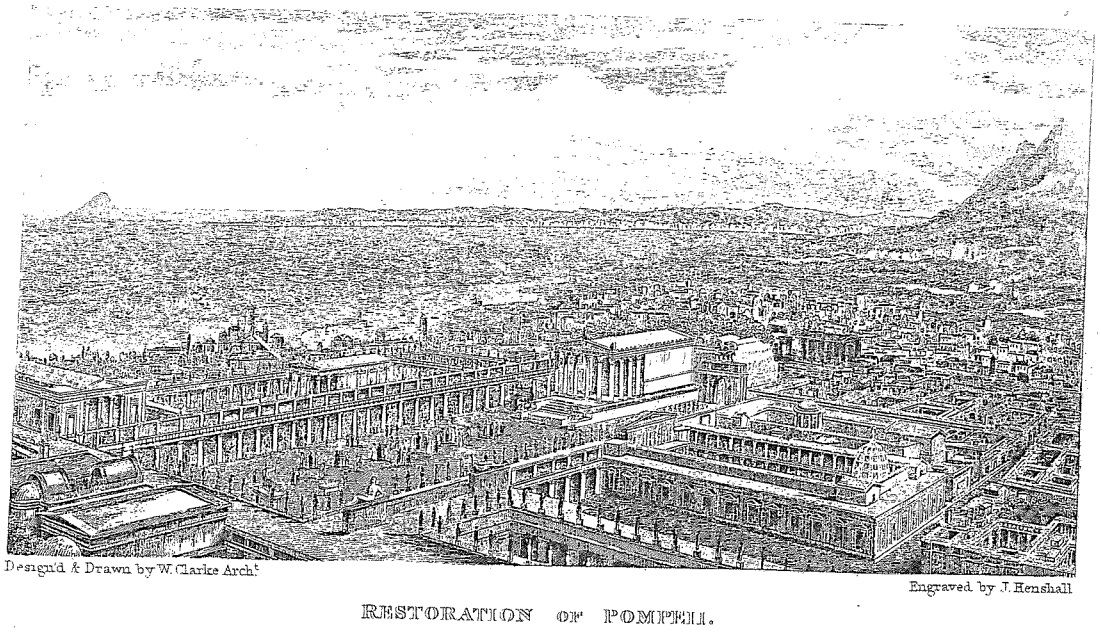


Figure 7 Pompeii in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge

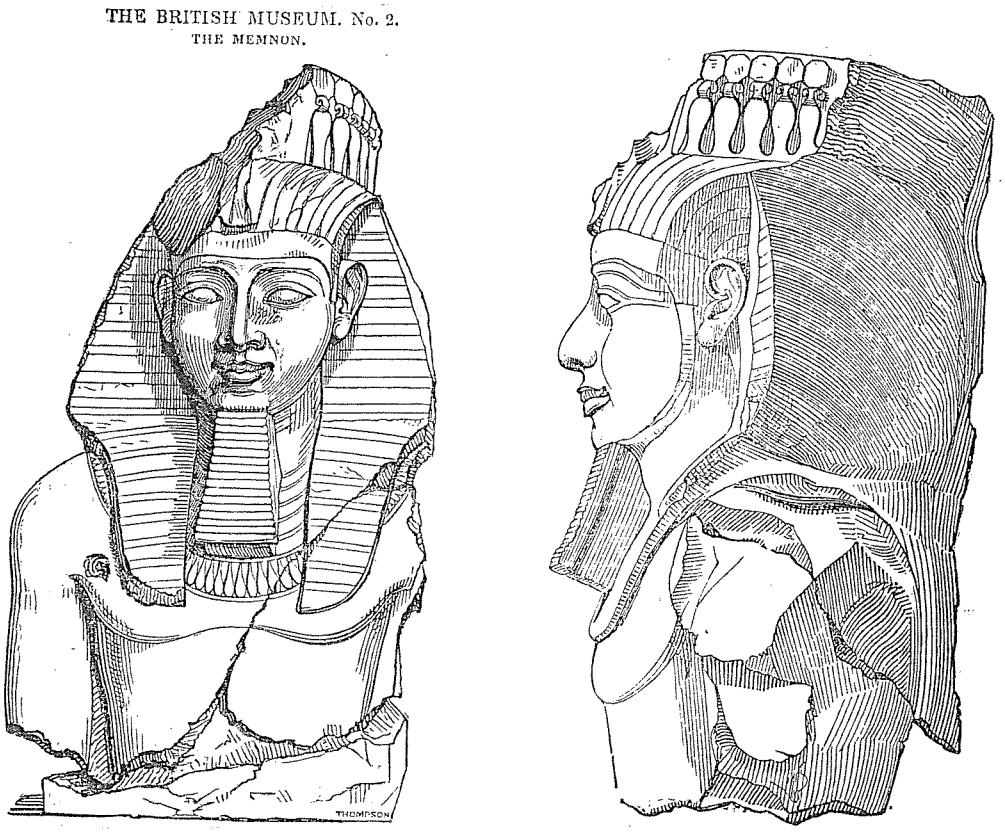


Figure 8 The head of Memnon

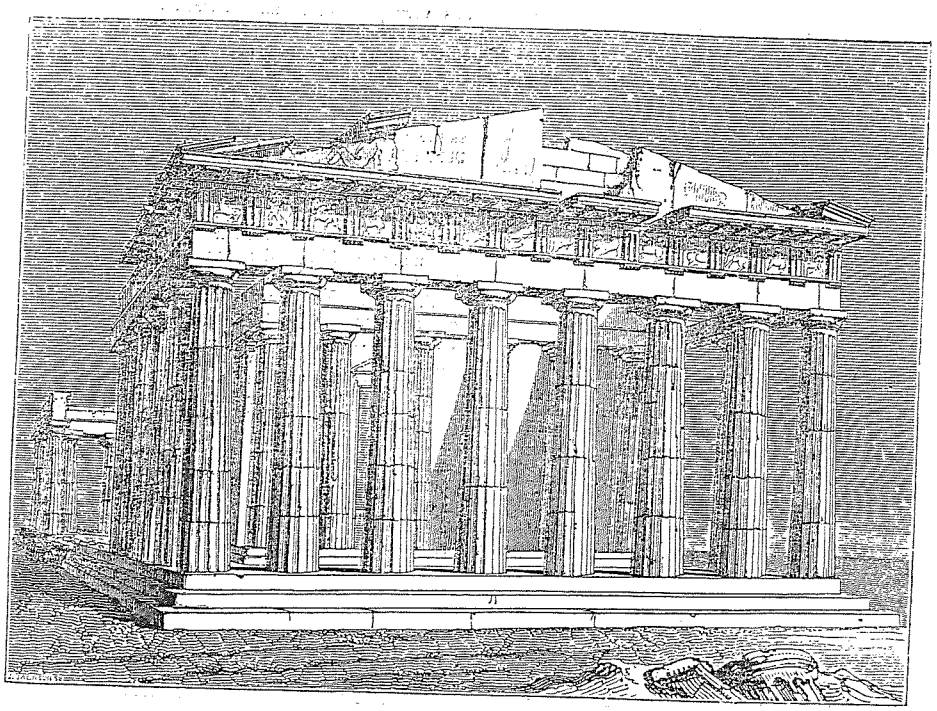


Figure 9 The Parthenon

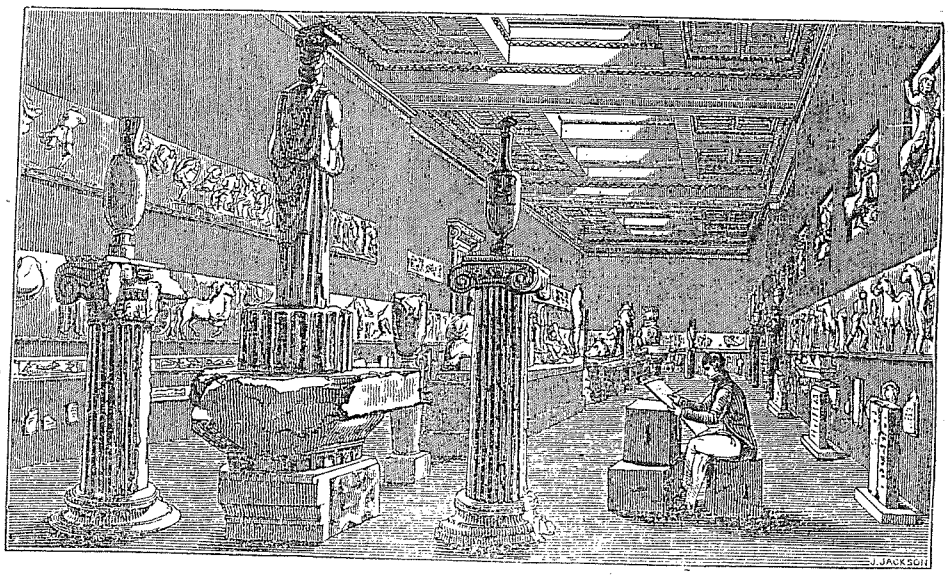
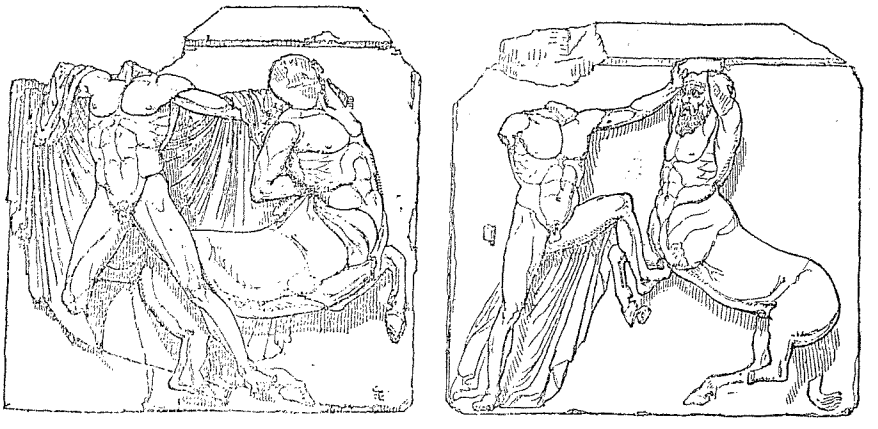
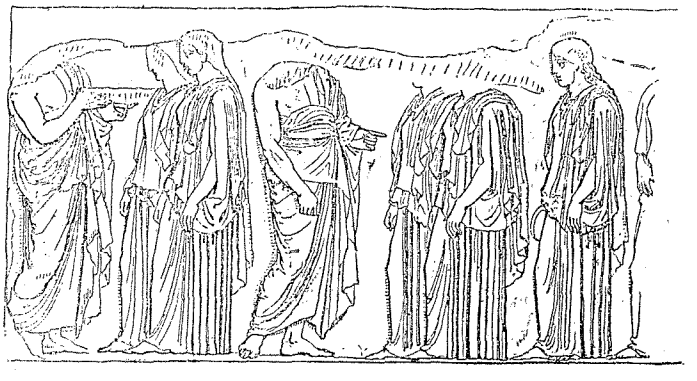


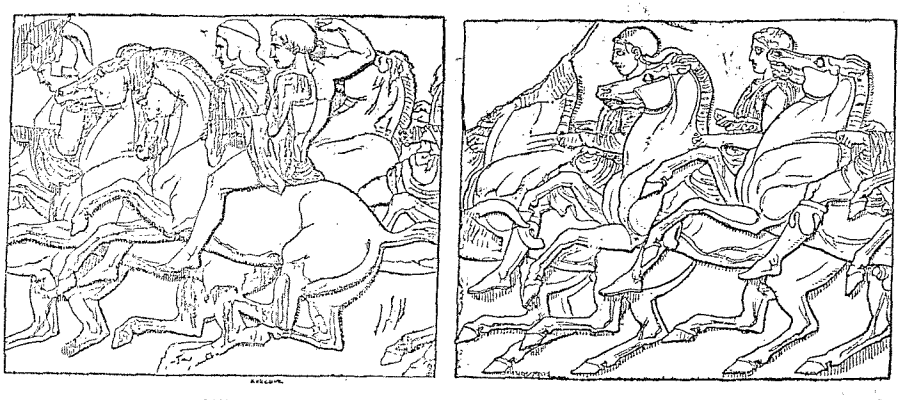
Figure 10 The Grecian Gallery at the British Museum



[Metopes.]



(23) [East side of the Frieze.]



(42) [North side of the Frieze.] (39)

Figure 11 The Elgin Marbles

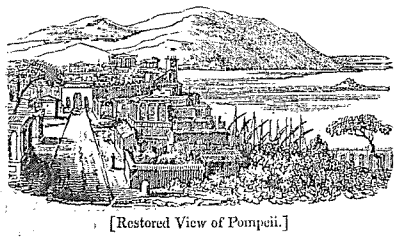
THE PENNY MAGAZINE

OF THE

Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

2.] PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY. [April 7, 1832.

POMPEII.



[Restored View of Pompeii.]

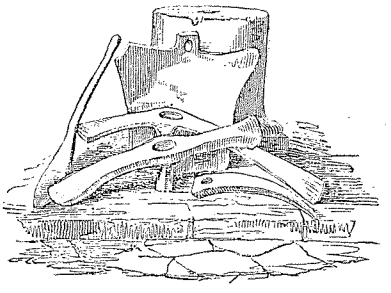
*** The volume on 'Pompeii,' lately published in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge, contains every authentic detail of the destruction of that city by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, A.D. 79; and the second volume, which will be shortly published, will complete the description of the remains of public and private buildings, and of articles of domestic use, which have been discovered in the ruins. The following observations on this interesting subject are from an intelligent correspondent, who has had the advantage of visiting the spot.

It is certainly surprising, that this most interesting city should have remained undiscovered until so late a period, and that antiquaries and learned men should have so long and materially erred about its situation. In many places masses of ruins, portions of the buried theatres, temples, and houses were not two feet below the surface of the soil; the country people were continually digging up pieces of worked marble, and other antique objects; in several spots they had even laid open the outer walls of the town; and yet men did not find out *what it was*, that peculiar, isolated mound of cinders and ashes, earth and pumice-stone, covered. There is another circumstance which increases the wonder of Pompeii remaining so long concealed. A subterranean canal, cut from the river Sarno, traverses the city, and is seen darkly and silently gliding on under the temple of Isis. This is said to have been cut towards the middle of the fifteenth century, to supply the contiguous town of the Torre dell'Annunziata with fresh water; it probably ran anciently in the same channel. But, cutting it, or clearing it, workmen must have crossed under Pompeii from one side to the other.

As you walk round the walls of the city, and see how the volcanic matter is piled upon it in one heap, it looks as though the hand of man had purposely buried it, by carrying and throwing over it the volcanic matter. This matter does not spread in any direction beyond the town, over the fine plain which gently declines towards the bay of Naples. The volcanic eruption was so confined in its course or its fall, as to bury Pompeii, and only Pompeii: for the shower of ashes and pumice-stone which descended in the immediate neighbourhood certainly made but a slight difference in the elevation of the plain.

Where a town has been buried by lava, like Herculaneum, the process is easily traced. You can follow the black, hardened lava from the cone of the mountain to the sea, whose waters it invaded for "many a rood," and those who have seen the lava in its liquid state, when it flows on like a river of molten iron, can conceive at once how it would bury every thing it found in its way. There is often a confusion of ideas, among those who have not had the advantages of visiting these interesting places, as to the matter which covers Pompeii and Herculaneum: they fancy they were both buried by lava. Herculaneum was so, and the work of excavating there, was like digging in a quarry of very hard stone. The descent into the places cleared is like the descent into a quarry or mine, and you are always under ground, lighted by torches.

But Pompeii was covered by loose mud, pumice-stone, and ashes, over which, in the course of centuries, there collected vegetable soil. Beneath this shallow soil, the whole is very crumbly and easy to dig, in few spots more difficult than one of our common gravel-pits. The matter excavated is carried off in carts, and thrown outside of the town; and in times when the labour is carried on with activity, as cart after cart withdraws with the earth that covered them, you see houses entire, except their roofs, which have nearly always fallen in, make their appearance, and, by degrees, a whole street opens to the sun-shine or the shower, just like the streets of any inhabited neighbouring town. It is curious to observe, as the volcanic matter is removed, that the houses are principally built of lava, the more ancient product of the same Vesuvius, whose later results buried and concealed Pompeii for so many ages.



[Implements of building found at Pompeii.]

In the autumn of 1822 I saw Pompeii under very interesting circumstances. It was a few days after an eruption of Vesuvius, which I had witnessed, and which was considered by far the grandest eruption of recent times. From Portici, our road was coated with lapilla or pumice-stone, and a fine impalpable powder, of a palish grey hue, that had been discharged from the mountain, round whose base we were winding. In many places this coating was more than a foot deep, but it was pretty equally spread, not accumulating in any particular spot. As we drove into Pompeii our carriage wheels crushed this matter, which contained the principal components of what had buried the city: it was lodged on the edges of the houses' walls, and on their roofs, (where the Neapolitan government had furnished them with any); it lay inches thick on the tops of the pillars and truncated columns of the ancient temples; it covered all the floors of the houses that had no roofs, and concealed the mosaics. In the amphitheatre, where we sat down to refresh ourselves, we were obliged to make the guides clear it away with shovels—it was everywhere. Looking from the upper walls of the amphitheatre, we saw the whole country covered with it—trees and all were coated with the pale-grey plaster, nor did it disappear for many months after.

Some ignorant fellows at Naples pretended the fine ashes, or powder, contained gold! Neapolitans began

Figure 12 Pompeii in the *Penny Magazine*

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

[1] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 112.
[2] There is no better account on the workings of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge than that contained in Charles Knight's memoirs, *Passages of a Working Life* (1864).
[3] For an overview of the publications produced by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge see Altick (1957), pages 269-270.
[4] Craik *The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties*, 2 Vols, (1830, 1831).
[5] Craik (1830), page 1.
[6] The advertisement for the books in the Library of Entertaining Knowledge was included at the end of volume 1 of Long's *Egyptian Antiquities* (1832).
[7] Price and description are those quoted in the advertisement referred to above.
[8] Knight (1864), pages 115-6.
[9] Clark (1831), pages 1-2.
[10] Planché (1836), page xi.
[11] Long (1832), pages 1-2.
[12] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 338.
[13] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 338.
[14] Ellis (1833, 1836); Long (1832, 1836) and Clarke (1831, 1832).
[15] Altick (1957), page 270-1.
[16] Maidment (1992) provides a useful introduction to the penny periodicals of the 1820s.
[17] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page iii.
[18] Maidment (1992), page 9.
[19] For background to the penny periodicals of the 1830s see Altick (1957), pages 332-9.
[20] Bennett (1984) provides a detailed introduction to the content and editorial character of the *Penny Magazine*.
[21] Knight (1864), pages 180-1.
[22] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1, page iii.
[23] Feldberg (1984) provides a discussion of the readership of the *Penny Magazine*. For further details of working class readers in the period see Webb (1955); Rose (2001).
[24] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1, page Preface
[25] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 14.
[26] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 14.
[27] For British Museum visitor figures see Wilson (2002), page 99.
[28] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 14.
[29] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 14.
[30] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 76.
[31] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 77.
[32] *Household Words*, Vol. 2 (1851), page 552.
[33] Long (1832), pages 4-5.
[34] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), pages 228-9.
[35] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 228.
[36] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), pages 371-2.
[37] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 2 (1833), pages 4-5.
[38] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), pages 9-10.
[39] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 1 (1832), page 200.
[40] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 3 (1834), pages 229-231.
[41] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 3 (1834), pages 69-70.
[42] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 3 (1834), page 69.
[43] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 3 (1834), page 69.
[44] Altick (1957), pages 333-4.
[45] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 5 (1836), page 91.
[46] The *Penny Magazine*, Vol. 5 (1836), page 91.

4

ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE NEWS

Back in 1821, the great popularity of Belzoni's Tomb at the Egyptian Hall had hinted that there was a widespread, but largely unexploited, public interest in archaeology. The following two decades had seen a continued interest in the subject among the antiquarian community and the educated circles of society, as well as the emergence of cheap periodical literature that had brought the possibility of learning about archaeology within reach of anyone in Britain who had the ability to read. By the early 1840s public interest in archaeology was growing, and new innovations in the publishing world, the founding of Britain's first national archaeology society, and spectacular discoveries abroad would push the popularity of archaeology to new heights. As befitted a subject of current public debate, archaeology soon found its way into the pages of the newly formed *Punch* (1841), which provides a fascinating insight into the way that archaeologists and their work was perceived in the first decade of Queen Victoria's reign.

Punch is one of the truly great Victorian publications.[1] From its founding in 1841, the publication provided its readers with a satirical take on fashionable life, including regular comments and cartoons on politics, current affairs and London life. Just about every event of political or social importance that took place in the nineteenth century appeared somewhere in the magazine, and the fact that comments on archaeology were also included is a powerful testament to the public interest in the subject at the time. From 1842, alongside the fare traditionally associated with *Punch*, was a regular column that reported the meetings a fictitious establishment known as 'The Antiquarian Society.' A typical meeting of the Society took place in 1842:

It having been rumoured that a stone had been dug up near Battle-Bridge, the Antiquarian Society sent for the precious fragment, and a Committee was at once appointed to sit upon it.

After having sat for a very long time, the Committee reported that the substance was very hard, and having moved the standing order, asked for leave *not* to sit again, which was at once granted. The letters L E G were found to be distinctly visible. This, it was observed, had been supposed to allude to some *legions* who came in with Caesar, and who were supposed to have made for Gray's Inn Lane with a precipitancy that the miserable nature of the neighbourhood renders rather unaccountable. The Chairman thought that L E G, instead of meaning legions, might more naturally be thought to stand for LEG, and thus we might come to the fact that Gray's Inn Lane was the first place that Caesar put his foot or *leg* upon. (*Hear, hear*). That a battle had been fought there, no one could doubt; for the quantity of old-iron shops in the neighbourhood bear testimony to the large amount of javelins that must have been expended – supposing the iron which is daily brought for sale to have formed part of them.

After several hours' further discussion, it was resolved to place the stone in the hands of a skilful macadamiser, with the view of examining it in more detail than it would be possible to do in its entire state; and this course having seemed the wisest that the Antiquarian Society *could* follow, the meeting was adjourned.[2]

The idea that a group of people met to wildly speculate about old things, drawing spectacularly stupid conclusions, all in a slightly ridiculous manner, was the norm for the column. Other examples had the antiquaries bickering over the identification of a rusted coin, or the discovery of a mummy in London (later identified, by a letter from Julia inviting him to a light supper in the parlour, as a rare sighting of a London policeman!). Although clearly aimed to amuse readers, *Punch* typically had a genuine story behind its columns. By the 1840s the Society of Antiquaries of London had long ceased to be a place where any serious archaeological work was discussed, and had become little more than a private lunching club for many of its members.[3] In content, the column in *Punch* had a ring of truth about it, as all good satire should have. If the discussions of the members of *Punch's* Antiquarian Society are compared to many of the letters that appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* forty years before, many of the comments start to seem rather familiar, and the speculation on what L E G signifies is straight out of Walter Scott. In the 1830s the publications of the Society for Diffusion of Useful Knowledge had attempted to break the association of archaeology with the antiquaries of old, however,

from reading *Punch*, it appears that even at the beginning of the 1840s the link was alive and well in the eyes of the public.

The 1840s were an important period in the development of a serious study of archaeology in Britain. In 1844 the British Archaeological Association was founded, the country's first national archaeology society, which split into two separate societies after a series of internal disputes in 1846 (the other known as the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland).[4] The same year as the British Archaeological Association was founded, *Punch* turned its attention onto the newly formed national archaeological society. To coincide with its launch, *Punch* coined the phrase 'archaeologian' to describe the members of the Association, a phrase that was used whenever archaeology was mentioned over the course of the next decade, and began a new column entitled 'The Archaeological Association.'

For readers who were not quite sure of what an archaeologist was, *Punch* provided the following helpful description:

> Many persons may not be aware that the Archaeologians are a body of *savants* who devote their whole lives to the unrolling of mummies, the opening of barrows, and the pick-axing of ancient tumuli.[5]

If antiquaries were viewed with something close to ridicule, the archaeologists were treated more with a sense of eccentric amusement, although were considered to be possessed of the same tendency to insanity. One column even went a far as suggesting they dip their heads in plaster to repair all the cracks! *Punch's* reporting of the Society's meetings generally appeared around the time that the annual meeting of the British Archaeological Association or the Archaeological Institute were taking place, and when the accounts of the meetings were reported in the press. The fact that meetings were held annually at different locations around the country provided *Punch's* writers with considerable ammunition. The following account of a meeting held at Lincoln provides a good example (fig. 14):

> The archaeologists are at it again, and have been riding their hobbies, rolling about in their barrows, tumbling over their tumuli, and rubbing up their monumental brasses, with more than their usual energy. We last heard of them at Lincoln, where they mounted a dead wall, and, sticking to it like bricks, declared it to be the relic of the "Old Mint of Lincoln." It is usually a sign of weakness to fly to the wall; but the Archaeologists were in great force, and E. Hawkins, Esq., "read a paper upon the

wall;" his brother members sitting, of course, upon the wall to support and encourage him. He went into the wall brick by brick; dwelt forcibly upon the buttress; revelling among the mortar; and hanging upon the coping with affectionate tenacity.

He followed the cement from the lime-kiln to the hod; he handled cleverly the clay that gave the material for the foundations; and then, taking a rapid glance at walls in general, he touched upon the Great Wall of China; passed gracefully over the walls of the Colosseum, and came playfully down upon Blackwell with a pun that shook the old wall of the Mint of Lincoln with the laughter of his audience. He then proceeded on a digression on wall-fruit, and went cleverly into the peach, which he laid open with such effect, that in his mouth the peach seemed to be a different thing from what it appeared before he set his tongue and his jaw in motion, to show what might be done with it.

After the paper on the wall was concluded – a paper by which, if walls have ears, the subject of the discourse must have been greatly edified – an energetic Archaeologian insisted on reading a paper about "The family of the Dymocks," which might have been very interesting if Mr and Mrs Dymock, or any of the little Dymocks, had been there to hear it; but as this was not the case, the audience stole away by degrees, and the *savant* was for some time holding forth alone on "The family of the Dymocks," until a rustic voice, exclaiming, "Holloa! you chap; come down off that there wall," induced him to look around, and led to the discovery of his loneliness. By way of gratifying the Archaeologian, who had enquired if there were any barrow in the neighbourhood, he was wheeled home in what was supposed to be his favourite vehicle; and, his remonstrances being set down to the score of modesty, were of course wholly disregarded.[6]

There can be little doubt where the learned archaeologian was being taken in his preferred means of transport; the nearest place where good food, and even better drink, was to be had. Eating and drinking were certainly considered to be among the more popular of the pursuits that the members of the Archaeological Association spent much of their time engaged in. Archaeologists have always had something of a reputation as lovers of the good things in life and, according to Mr Punch, the members of the British Archaeological Association would go to any lengths to combine business with pleasure:

Those "odd fellows" the Archaeologians have been enjoying their annual "out" at Chepstow, where the river Wye has suggested a number of wherefores, to which the stream has we hope given a wise answer. These *savants* have visited among other places a spot "supposed to be the remains of an ancient priory, and now the site of premises occupied by a wine merchant." The visit to the wine merchant was natural

> and perhaps excusable after a long morning's prowl among the old walls of Chepstow Castle, which was probably very dry work, but we disapprove of the paltry attempt to mix up a thirst for information for a thirst for something else, by the assumption that the wine merchant's establishment had been "formerly an ancient priory."[7]

Unfortunately, after their researches at the wine merchant's, the learned members of the Archaeological Association were reported to be too ill to attend the planned evening of lectures in the town!

Although intended to amuse readers, the accounts of the Archaeological Association that appeared in the pages of *Punch* provide a revealing insight into some of the ways that the archaeologists and their work were perceived in the middle of the nineteenth century. Many of the associations with the antiquaries of old were still present in the minds of the public at a time when archaeology was trying hard to get itself taken seriously by the scientific community.[8] The very fact that archaeology was regularly featured in a publication so well known as a commentator on the times is a powerful testament to the subject being a topic of fashionable discussion in the 1840s. Although what archaeologists did was often a subject of humour, there can be little doubt that the British public were fascinated by the subject. The problem was that the sort of subject matter that the members of the Archaeological Association were interested in was considered by many to be a little bit dull, a matter which *Punch* noted in 1846:

> Various papers have been read, but the most interesting papers appeared to be the morning papers; which were perused with eagerness by those who had been listening to the dry details of Archaeology.[9]

Many of the papers read at the meetings of the British Archaeological Association would not have looked out of place, in terms of subject matter, in the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine* from early in the century. The general reading public now demanded rather more. By the 1840s they had been brought up with accounts in the popular press of some of the most spectacular sites and treasures of the ancient world, like Belzoni's Egyptian discoveries and the spectacular remains of the past that had been covered by the *Penny Magazine*.

In 1842 perhaps the single most important event in the reporting of archaeology to the mass reading public in the nineteenth century took place. On May 14 of that year the first issue of the *Illustrated London News* hit

London's streets, and over the course of the next decade the publication would establish itself as the home of popular archaeology.

Archaeology in the Illustrated London News

The appearance of the *Illustrated London News*, the first illustrated newspaper to be published in Britain, marked a major change in the way that news was brought to the public. The paper was founded in 1842 by Herbert Ingram, a Nottingham newsagent, bookseller and entrepreneur, who had made his fortune from the sale of the bestselling laxative known as Parr's Life Pills.[10] Before the founding of the *Illustrated London News*, pictures had frequently been used in popular magazines, but had rarely featured in newspapers. Ingram saw that a paper that contained illustrated reports of the news of the day would occupy a unique position in the publishing market. As James Bishop has noted, 'the publication of the first issue [of the *Illustrated London News*] ... marked a revolution in the gathering and presentation of news and events.'[11] The cheap mass production of good quality images had been pioneered by publications such as the *Penny Magazine* during the 1830s, however the *Illustrated London News* provided its readers with illustrations of a far higher quality than any penny publication had been able to offer. The paper employed a number of talented illustrators, including Melton Prior, and it was this commitment to providing numerous illustrations as the primary medium of reporting news that would be the paper's greatest selling point.

The *Illustrated London News* hit the streets on Saturday May 14, 1842, priced at sixpence. The first edition sold 26,000 copies, with sales doubling within the first few weeks of publication and continuing to rise through the course of the 1840s. By 1851, the year that the *Illustrated London News* published the first views of Sir Joseph Paxton's design for the Crystal Palace, sales had reached 130,000, which increased to around 200,000 copies in 1855, with Melton Prior's series of illustrations from the front at the time of the Crimean War. Special editions, such as the wedding of the Prince of Wales in 1863, could sell as many as 300,000 copies.[12] A figure of at least a million readers each week by the mid-1850s is a realistic estimate. The *Illustrated London News* found its main audience among the wealthier middle and upper classes, although copies would almost certainly have filtered through households to those who would have unable to afford the fairly high cover price themselves.

Most of the paper's content was made up of society gossip, war correspondence, travel accounts, and comments on London life and entertainments, but alongside these fairly traditional subjects for a newspaper of the time, archaeology also found a place. This marked an important change in the presentation of the past to the mass reading public as archaeology was being reported alongside the latest news, placing it in direct competition for column space with the other events of the week. For the first time, how newsworthy a story was became a primary consideration in the public presentation of archaeology.

In many ways the coverage of archaeology in the *Illustrated London News* in the 1840s and 1850s is a combination of all the styles of archaeological reporting that had gone before it. Many of the articles on archaeology covered smaller discoveries made in Britain, often coin hoards or Roman remains, uncovered whilst digging foundation trenches or in the creation of new roads and railways; exactly the sort of story that would have featured in the *Gentleman's Magazine* at the beginning of the century. For example, the very first issue of *Illustrated London News* included a short article on the Roman Wall of London, which had recently been uncovered during building work. However such articles were usually short with, at most, a single small illustration, reflecting their relative lack of importance as items of news. In addition, however, the *Illustrated London News* also included a number of longer and more detailed articles on archaeology in the 1840s that ranked as important news items, and it was in these rather more spectacular stories that the paper had its greatest impact on the presentation of the past to the public.

For archaeology to be allotted a significant amount of column space in the *Illustrated London News* the story had to be truly newsworthy, and ideally also have the potential to include some visually appealing illustrations. As an important story could be spread across several pages and have a number of detailed illustrations, selecting a subject that could justify this outlay of column space and effort was an important consideration. New discoveries of spectacular remains of the past proved to be the ideal subject matter, particularly if they had been transported to London for the collections of the British Museum, which enabled the paper's artists to get a good look at them. These stories drew on the widespread public interest in archaeology in the early 1840s brought about by the founding of the British Archaeological Association,[13] and by selecting the most visually appealing material also made full use of the

format of the *Illustrated London News*, which was so well suited to the presentation of archaeology.

In 1843, the opening of an exhibition at the British Museum displaying the classical marbles collected by Charles Fellows from Xanthos in Turkey provided the paper with the theme of its first substantial archaeological news story. The article pioneered many of the conventions that the *Illustrated London News* would employ in its reporting of archaeology for the rest of the century and beyond. A full page of illustrations depicting the Xanthian marbles was included, along with an accompanying description of the best pieces (fig. 13). The paper's account of a sculptured sarcophagus provides a good example of the sort of description that readers were presented with:

> Our engraved perspective views and the separate detailed views of the bas-reliefs on the sides, will make the whole intelligible. The north side is divided into three compartments; in the centre one, a monarch dressed in the double tunic and mantle, bearing the paternal staff – the sceptre of antiquity – is seen, presenting a helmet to a fully accoutred warrior; in the end compartments appear the harpy-like figures, so common in Egyptian sculptures; they are in ascending positions, and bear in their hands and claws dead human figures, significant, we conjecture, of the entrance of the soul on a happy immortality. The south figure is also disposed in triple tablets. In these the same harpy-like figures occur. In the centre a royal personage is seen, receiving the offerings of a female figure, who presents him with pomegranates and a pigeon. On the east side a venerable king, seated on a throne of state, listens to the address of a child, who presents him with a cock. Behind the chair stand the officers of state, and at the back of the child a man in the act, apparently, seconding the act of the supplicant. The western side exhibits two queen-like female figures, seated on thrones, in attitudes of reserved and formal state; between them three heavily draped females, their long hair bound by a tiara, plaited and dishevelled. In front of the former figures a cow suckling a calf appears. The design of these groups, as there is no inscription on the tomb, is not known but their general meaning is obvious. May they not be conjectured to represent the character of the deceased? Do we not see him in the northern sculpture, invested by the king – perhaps his father – with military command? And of the rest, may we not suppose that the southern tablet exhibits his wife, sacrificing, in his absence, and offering to propitiate the favour of the gods, and secure his peace; that in the eastern we see his martial boy, praying that courage, typified by the cock, may be given to him on the day of battle; and in the western, that we see his family – his daughters, his wife, his mother – mourning him dead?[14]

Readers of the *Illustrated London News* could look at the illustrations and match what they were seeing with the narrative they had just read. The text on its own would have been largely meaningless without the pictures, which was a very different style of presentation to the primarily literary accounts of the past that had dominated earlier in the century. In its combination of illustrations and narrative the article on the Xanthian Marbles provided a template that many other archaeological stories would follow in the years to come. Four years later, when Henry Layard made a series of spectacular new discoveries in the east, the *Illustrated London News* was ready to present them.

Treasures From The East

In the mid-1840s the name of Henry Layard was almost entirely unknown by the British public, and Nineveh was nothing more than a semi-mythical city from the bible.[15] A decade later Layard was the most famous archaeologist in the world, a bestselling author, and just setting out on career in parliament; talk of Nineveh was everywhere.[16] What had occurred in the interim to bring this about? Henry Layard has always been a character who has fascinated chroniclers of archaeology (fig. 15). He was an adventurer and romantic in the old mould, a self-made man without the independent financial resources of the collectors of old. Layard was born in Paris in 1817, and spent much of his early life in Italy. On his return to England he began to study law, but the work had little interest for Layard with 'his thirst for knowledge, his love of adventure, and foreign tastes and habits.'[17] In 1839 he left England to explore the world. A biographical piece that appeared in the *Illustrated London News* picks up the story:

> It was during these various journeys that Dr Layard prepared himself for the great task to which his life and talents were to be devoted. In his wanderings through Asia Minor and Syria he had scarcely left a spot untrodden which tradition hallowed, or a ruin unexamined which was consecrated by history.... Dr Layard says: - "I had traversed Asia Minor and Syria, visiting the ancient seats of civilisation, and the spots which religion had made holy. I now felt an irresistible desire to penetrate to the regions beyond the Euphrates, to which history and tradition point as the birth-place of the Wisdom of the West."
>
> With these feelings Dr Layard looked to the banks of the Tigris and he longed to dispel the mysterious darkness which hung over Assyria and Babylonia. He, accordingly, made preliminary visits to Mosul, inspecting the ruins of Nimroud and

> Koyunjik, and, fortunately, obtained an interview with Sir Stratford Canning at Constantinople, when on his way to England. Sir Stratford immediately discovered and appreciated the character and talents of Mr Layard. His knowledge of the east, and of its manners and languages, recommended him in a peculiar manner to the notice of our Ambassador, who persuaded him to remain with the embassy, and employed him on many important occasions. Sir Stratford took a deep interest in the excavations made by the French Consul [M. Botta], and he permitted and aided Mr Layard in carrying on those interesting researches...[18]

After his meeting with Sir Stratford Canning, Layard again headed east to begin the excavation of the ancient palaces of Nimroud and Nineveh. There he would make what have become some of the most celebrated archaeological discoveries of all time.

The discoveries made by Henry Layard in modern day Iraq provided the Victorian public with its first great archaeological news story. What made Layard's findings so newsworthy was the fact that they were entirely new discoveries that appeared at a time when archaeology was already subject of popular interest. The discoveries also came at a time when coverage of the Californian gold rush was a regular theme in the *Illustrated London News*, and the idea of digging for gold and excavating the treasures of the past are stories that share a number of common themes. The hunt for the lost biblical cities of the east had begun in earnest in the early 1840s and was a race between two men and two nations; Paul Emile Botta, the French consul to Mosul, representing France and Henry Layard Britain. Botta's most famous excavations took place at Khorsabad and he was first to make his discoveries and display them in Europe. However in the British press it was the name of Layard that became most widely associated with the archaeology of the east.

Layard's discoveries were the first long-running archaeological news story to appear in the British press since the *Quarterly Review* reported Belzoni's discoveries in Egypt, with the *Illustrated London News* providing the British public with the most detailed illustrated coverage available. Between 1847 and 1854 the paper devoted more column space and illustrations to the story than any other archaeological discovery. The first article appeared in the edition for June 26 1847, and detailed the arrival of the first remains sent by Layard to the British Museum. As the *Illustrated London News* had no correspondent on the spot when Layard was making his discoveries (although making up illustrations

was not unheard of), the story focussed on the arrival of the first sculptures in London:

> The accounts that have reached this country from time to time of the recent excavations and discoveries amongst the supposed ruins of Nineveh, have excited the curiosity not only of the antiquarian but of all scriptural students, from the illustration which they afford of passages of Holy Writ, of which all material traces appear to be lost. We are indebted for such remains as have been hitherto come to light to the indefatigable labours of M. Botta, the French Consul at Mossal [Mosul], and to our countryman Mr Layard; and, it is no more than justice to the latter to remark that he was the *first* to indicate the probability of these ruins, though his suggestions were so coldly received by our Government that he was left to pursue his researches unaided, excepting by the private resources of Sir Stratford Canning. The French Government, however, with its accustomed liberal sympathy in the cause of science, stepped in, and most nobly assisted M. Botta, who has thus been enabled to precede M. Layard in the discoveries of sculptures, &c., &c., at Khorsabad, which have, some time since, been forwarded to Paris. The prompt liberality of our neighbours has, at length, had some effect upon ourselves, as we are informed that some pecuniary assistance has been transmitted to Mr. L., though, certainly, somewhat at the eleventh hour; for he energetically worked, regardless of obstacles, and succeeded in forwarding to this country some of his important discoveries, which have within the last few days arrived safely at the British Museum. These interesting remains consist of two fragments of a colossal statue of a human-headed bull, and eleven Bassi Relievi, the whole from a vast building upon a mound at Nimroud, on the left bank of the Tigris, about twenty-five miles south of Mossal, and the site, as there is every reason to believe, of the most renowned and ancient city of the Assyrian Empire. It would be idle to attempt to assign a date to these interesting sculptures without fully and carefully investigating the inscriptions that belong to them, but have not yet reached England. The extent and magnificence, however, of the two palaces described by Mr Layard, and of that discovered at Khorsabad by M. Botta, as well as the elaborate detail of the sculptures, lead us to the conclusion that they are of such remote antiquity as to afford evidence of the Old Testament.... The walls of the palace at Nimroud, from which these works were taken, are of unburnt brick or clay, incrusted with slabs of marble eight inches thick and seven feet wide; the height cannot be ascertained at present, as the inscription has been cut off to render the slabs more portable.... The decorations of these palaces seem to have been arranged in horizontal compartments alternately filled with sculpture, and with the cuneiform character of the country, so that each wall presented a record of the valour and achievements of

> the great King, both in war and in chase, written in the vernacular of Nineveh and in the universal language of art.[19]

At the beginning of the piece the *Illustrated London News* noted that the discoveries had already 'excited the curiosity' of those interested in antiquities and scripture. The story of the new Assyrian discoveries had been covered in detail by the *Atheneaum*, the *Builder* – a journal specialising in architecture – had featured several reports written by Layard himself on the discoveries, and the prestigious *Art Journal* also provided illustrations and commentary, but these were all specialist publications that had a fraction of the circulation of the *Illustrated London News*.[20] Although the paper was not the only place that people could have read about the discoveries in the East, for many general readers the *Illustrated London News* reports would have been their first contact with Layard's discoveries. The initial report had focussed entirely on the sculptures that had just arrived in London for display in the British Museum, which set the pattern for the entire series of articles on Layard's discoveries; unsurprising for a metropolitan newspaper, which would have sold the majority of its copies in the capital. Although the discoveries had taken place several years before it was not until the remains arrived in London that the story became newsworthy. This is probably partly down to the *Illustrated London News* not having a correspondent on the spot, but also goes deeper. An archaeological discovery in the East was something of interest for an antiquarian reader, whereas the arrival of spectacular sculptures in London was a matter of current affairs, and therefore *news*.

Accompanying the article was a set of five illustrations of the new arrivals, spread across two pages. The engravings included two of the famous hunting scenes – one a bull hunt, the other a lion hunt – two panels with standing winged figures, and the human head from an enormous statue. These illustrations would have been many people's first opportunity to see what ancient Assyrian remains looked like, unless they had already made a trip to the British Museum. The following description, which accompanied the illustration of the Lion Hunt (fig. 16), provides a good idea of the paper's accounts of Assyrian sculpture:

> The Tenth Relievo represents a Lion Hunt. The king in his chariot, drawn by three horses, which the charioteer urges forward to escape a lion which has already placed his claw upon the backs of the chariot, infuriated at the four arrows which

> have already taken effect. The King at this juncture aims a deadly wound at the monster, whose tail is admirably indicative of rage and fury. Behind the lion are two of the King's bearded body-guard, fully-armed, and holding their shields and daggers in readiness for defence in the event of the prey escaping the shaft of the King. A wounded lion prowls crouched upon the ground in front – the agony expressed in its action being well contrasted with the fury in the former.... The King's body-guard wear the conical cap, with a large tassel depending from under the hair at the back of the head; the charioteer is uncovered, and carries a whip in the right hand; and the King himself is dressed as heretofore described, and is armed with a sword, with a lion's head upon it near the handle. In its place behind the chariot is the King's javelin, decorated with the fillet.[21]

As with the earlier article on the Xanthian marbles, the description provided is a detailed interpretation of the ancient sculptures that is designed to be read in association with the pictures provided.

The *Illustrated London News* prided itself on the quality of its illustrations, and one of the aims of its reports on the Nineveh sculptures was to provide its readers with a full and accurate record of the newly arrived remains, so that 'the series of articles, when concluded, will form a complete catalogue of the entire collection of Assyrian antiquities in the British Museum.'[22] For scholars of ancient writing who were unable to visit the British Museum to make an accurate copy of the inscriptions for themselves, the *Illustrated London News* was a valuable aid to their research. In March 1849 the paper included a detailed illustration of a Cuneiform tablet, which it was hoped would, 'meet the eye of many who may not be able to obtain a correct copy of the original without difficulty.'[23] The paper considered it to be an added benefit that the picture 'may excite curiosity and induce examination and comparison in others who, perhaps, would never, otherwise, have turned their attention to the subject.'[24] Although primarily a popular publication aimed at a general newspaper reader, the *Illustrated London News* at times provided a level of detail in its archaeological articles that would have been of interest to those with a more extensive knowledge of the past.

In its aim of providing a full and accurate record of the sculptures arriving at the British Museum, the *Illustrated London News* was indebted to the publisher John Murray for providing illustrations of the monuments that the paper's own artists had been unable to gain access to:

> In accordance with our express desire to convey precise Illustrated Information upon subjects which but for the means we present would be unattainable by a large portion of the British public, we resume our former articles on the Sculptures from Nimroud, by describing those which have recently arrived; and regret that the impediments thrown in the way of our artists by the British Museum have hitherto retarded an account which we were desirous of supplying some weeks ago. As it is, we owe our acknowledgements entirely to the courtesy of Mr John Murray, who, after expending several thousands in getting up two extensive works upon the subject – "Layard's Illustrations of the Monuments of Nineveh" (with 100 folio plates), and "Layard's Narrative of Researches and Discoveries in Nineveh) – has most generously placed such drawings as we required at our disposal; notwithstanding that by doing so he affords us an opportunity of preceding the publication of the works in question by some days, and we thus cordially thank Mr Murray for his liberality.[25]

This arrangement seems a remarkable one for a publisher to make, however it may have been a rather clever bit of marketing. The *Illustrated London News* almost entirely restricted itself to accounts of the sculptures themselves rather than any detail of their discovery; if readers wanted more they would have to buy the book.

Layard's own account of his discoveries, entitled *Nineveh and its Remains*, appeared in 1848, and proved to be hugely popular.[26] In a letter from 1850 Layard recorded the publication of his book:

> In every way the most sanguine expectations of my friends (I will not say of my own, for I had none) have been surpassed. Of notoriety I have plenty, and the very liberal arrangement of my publishers has enabled me to realise a *very handsome* sum. Nearly 8000 copies were sold in the year – a new edition is in the press, and Murray anticipates a continual steady demand for the book, which will place it side by side with Mrs Rundell's Cookery, and make it property.[27]

To sell eight thousand copies made Layard's book a bestseller, and many more people would have read *Nineveh And Its Remains* at public reading rooms or lending libraries. But to put this figure into perspective, at the same time the *Illustrated London News* was selling around 100,000 copies of each edition, therefore at least twelve times as many people are likely to have seen Layard's discoveries in the paper than in book form. In the early 1850s several cheaper accounts of Layard's discoveries also appeared on booksellers' shelves, including an official abridged version aimed at railway travellers, which is

reported to have sold 12,000 copies in its first print run.[28] But even when cheap books are taken into account, total readership is still only a fraction that of the *Illustrated London News*. For many British readers, the paper would have remained their primary source of information on the recent discoveries in the East.

After the publication of *Nineveh And Its Remains* the public's fascination with the Assyrian discoveries continued to grow with every fresh arrival of sculpture in London. As the *Illustrated London News* reported in March 1849:

> Lively as was the curiosity excited by Mr Layard's excavations, the interest in the subject is even still increasing, if we may judge from the eagerness with which Mr Layard's "Narrative" has been devoured, and by the learned speculations and discussions which have originated in various quarters.[29]

In the summer of 1850 public interest reached new heights when the *Illustrated London News* reported that one of the great winged bulls from Nimroud was to be brought to London and displayed in the British Museum:

> The English public will be rejoiced to hear that the Great Bull, and upwards of a hundred tons of sculpture, excavated by our enterprising countryman, Dr Layard, are now on their way to England, and may be expected in the course of next September.[30]

Accompanying the story was an illustration depicting the embarkation of the Bull from Nimroud at Morghill, on the Euphrates (fig. 17).[31]

When the Winged Bull arrived in London the *Illustrated London News* provided its readers with the following description of the perhaps the most famous Assyrian sculpture in existence:

> The interest excited by our former articles on the important Nimroud Sculptures, offers us the highest inducement to continue our notices; and we hasten, accordingly, to describe the large shipment which arrived at the British Museum a few days ago. The new importation consists of ten colossal slabs, with numerous fragments, some of which are those of an enormous Bull. And although the collection is not, generally speaking, so replete with the varied and historical interest which distinguished those which preceded it, yet these last specimens are, on the whole, more perfect, and less affected by the operations of time and exposure to the periodical rains of that region of Assyria.
>
> Among the present remains is the celebrated statue of a Bull, so long sunk in the mud at Bussorah, together with its compeer the Lion – both entire, and in

extraordinarily perfect condition. In order to afford the public the earliest opportunity of judging these extraordinary, thought-stirring sculptures, we have prepared representations of both; and propose, in a forthcoming Number, to continue our notice of the Nimroud Sculptures published in former numbers, so that the whole will form a complete guide to this section of the British Museum.

No. 1 of the present series is the Human-headed and Eagle-winged Bull.... The specimen immediately before us is of gypsum, and of colossal dimensions, the slab being ten feet square by two feet in thickness. It was situated at the entrance of a chamber, being built into the side a door, so that one side and a front view only could be seen by the spectator. Accordingly, the Ninevite sculptor, in order to make both views perfect has given the animal five legs. The four seen in the side view show the animal in the act of walking; while, to render the representation complete in the front view, he has repeated the right fore leg again, but in the act of standing motionless. The countenance is noble and benevolent in expression; the features are of true Persian type, he wears and egg-shaped cap, with three horns, and a cord round the base of it. The hair at the back of it has seven ranges of curls; and the beard, as in the portraits of the King, is divided into three ranges of curls, with intervals of wavy hair.... The elaborately sculptured wings extend over the back of the animal to the very verge of the slab. All the flat surface of the slab is covered with cuneiform inscription; there being twenty-two lines between the fore legs, twenty-one lines in the middle, nineteen lines between the hind legs, and forty-seven lines between the tail and the edge of the slab. The whole of this slab is unbroken, with the exception of the fore feet, which arrived in a former importation, but which are now restored to their proper place.[32]

The Nineveh Winged Bull provided the British public with a single powerful image to associate with Layard and ancient Assyria, which came to be so closely associated with Layard that *Punch* often pictured him with the body of a winged bull in its cartoons (fig. 20). Accompanying the article in the *Illustrated London News* was an illustration of the Bull in its news home at the British Museum, the subject of the enquiring glances of two visitors (fig. 18). Today it remains one of the Museum's most well known artefacts.

After the article on the Winged Bull, the *Illustrated London News* continued to report each new arrival of Assyrian antiquities. In February 1852, when a new consignment of sculpture was sent to London, the paper followed the remarkable journey of the 'most striking and important piece,' a 'colossal lion, the weight of which is upwards of ten tons,' up the front steps of the British Museum:

> The subject of our Engraving represents the Lion in its transit from the courtyard in front of the Museum into the building, and the workmen busily engaged at their labour. The piece of sculpture itself was brought from the Docks on a truck drawn by eleven horses, and when in the courtyard was lifted from the carriage and placed securely on a massive framework of wood; being shored up on either side, as in our Engraving, to keep it from swaying over whilst it was being dragged to its place. This operation was skilfully performed, and the process of dragging it up the incline to a level landing under the portico did not occupy more than one hour. The Lion was placed on its bed in such a manner that during its being moved it was going backwards: this was done to avoid the necessity of turning the huge mass when in the hall of the Museum, so that, in fact, it was dragged at once to the spot it was intended it should ultimately occupy, when lifted from the framework and rollers which had taken it to its resting-place. The Lion, in its general form, resembles other examples with which the public are now familiar; but we believe it is the largest monolith which had reached England from the buried city of the East.[33]

This piece of precision engineering, which has a flavour of Belzoni's adventures with the head of Memnon, enabled the lion to safely make its perilous journey into the Museum (fig. 19). Perhaps even more remarkable is the fact that it had made it in one piece. As an article from December 1848 reported, a number of the sculptures had sunk during their voyage to England and, though recovered, 'suffered considerable damage from their submersion.'[34] Several smaller pieces were also reported to have been damaged by careless unpacking and repacking. Still the majority of the sculptures, excepting those that had been deliberately cut up for ease of packing, arrived intact; a great feat considering the length and difficulties of the journey involved.

The Nineveh sculptures proved to be a popular attraction at the British Museum, with many people who had read of the discoveries wanting to see them in person. In May 1850 the *Illustrated London News* had remarked 'that the interest raised by the exhibition of these remarkable monuments of a remote historic period does not decline, is fully proved by the number of visitors who daily throng the room at the British Museum in which they are deposited.'[35] In December 1850 the paper predicted that the Nimroud sculptures would 'prove very attractive to Christmas visitors to the Museum,'[36] and the following week went on to describe the Assyrian sculptures as 'foremost among the novelties at this truly national establishment, and especially fitted for the gratification of the holiday visitors.'[37] Considering their popularity it is no surprise that the Assyrian sculptures were allotted their own

gallery in the British Museum in the spring of 1853, an event that did not go unnoticed by the *Illustrated London News*. The paper provided its readers with an illustration of the new gallery, which included many of the artefacts that had featured in the paper over the course of the last six years, and a description of the new display. What was perhaps most significant though was that the picture appeared on the opening page of the edition for March 26, 1853 (fig. 21). Archaeology had truly become front-page news.

Layard's discoveries from Nimroud and Nineveh remained newsworthy for a total of seven years from 1847 to 1854, a remarkable feat if we consider that the reading public of the nineteenth century was no less fickle than that of today. The *Illustrated London News* was not shy in praising its own role in making his work such a subject of popular interest:

> With the rich fruits of Dr. Layard's researches, the public have become familiar through their frequent representation in THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS. We have sought to picture the most attractive specimens of each cargo as soon after its reception as possible; and we are fully convinced that such early illustration has been the direct means of popularising the interest and value of these speaking relics of ancient art.[38]

We can never know if Layard would have achieved the fame and fortune that he did without the *Illustrated London News*, but there is no doubt that the combination of Layard's discoveries and the format of the paper were a winning combination for presenting archaeology to the public.

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR THE MASS-MARKET

With the arrival of the *Illustrated London News* new possibilities for the presentation of archaeology were opened up. There is no doubt that archaeology is a highly visual subject, and one that is particularly well suited to an illustrated format of reporting, but in order to make an archaeological story a success it relied on interesting and newsworthy content. Layard's discoveries were new and exotic and had not been previously published in book form, therefore the story was suitably newsworthy for the *Illustrated London News* to commit considerable time and column space to its presentation. The story appealed to the public's interest in archaeology at the time, and the fact that it was continued over a seven year period shows that it was a great success. In the combination of a visually interesting presentation provided by illustrated journalism and a spectacular discovery, an ideal method for reporting

archaeology had been found. This had the wider effect of dictating that only the most spectacular discoveries had the necessary news value, which would have an impact on the public presentation of archaeology for the rest of the century and beyond.

The reporting of Layard's findings in the *Illustrated London News* put archaeology into the public forum on a previously unprecedented scale, and the obvious public appeal of the subject did not go unnoticed when the time arose to plan the contents for a permanent display to fill the newly erected Crystal Palace at Sydenham. The display was to be a spectacular recreation of many of the most spectacular architecture from the ancient world, and gambled on the widespread public interest in archaeology, generated by publications such as the *Illustrated London News*, for its for its success.

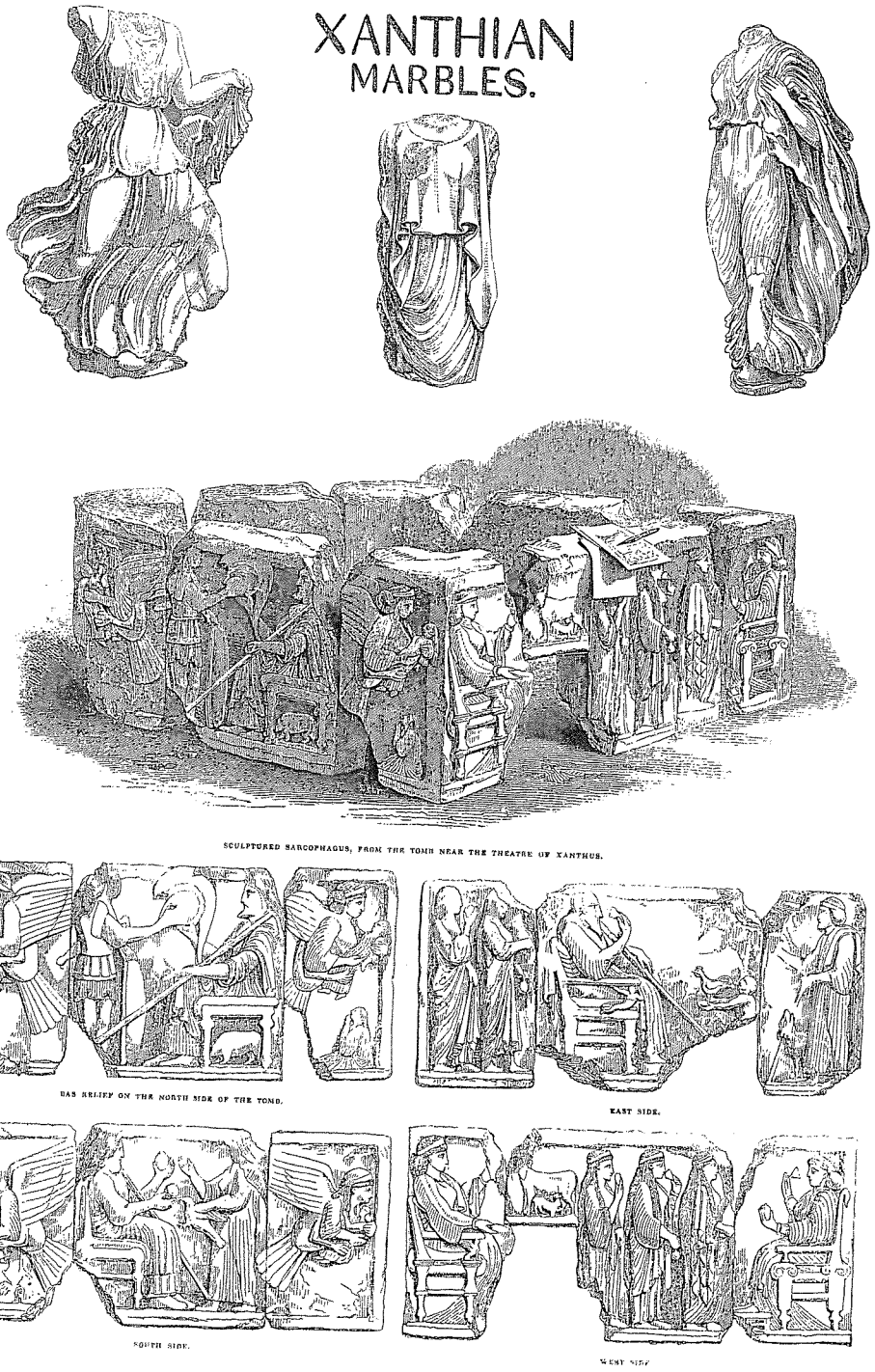


Figure 13 The Xanthian Marbles

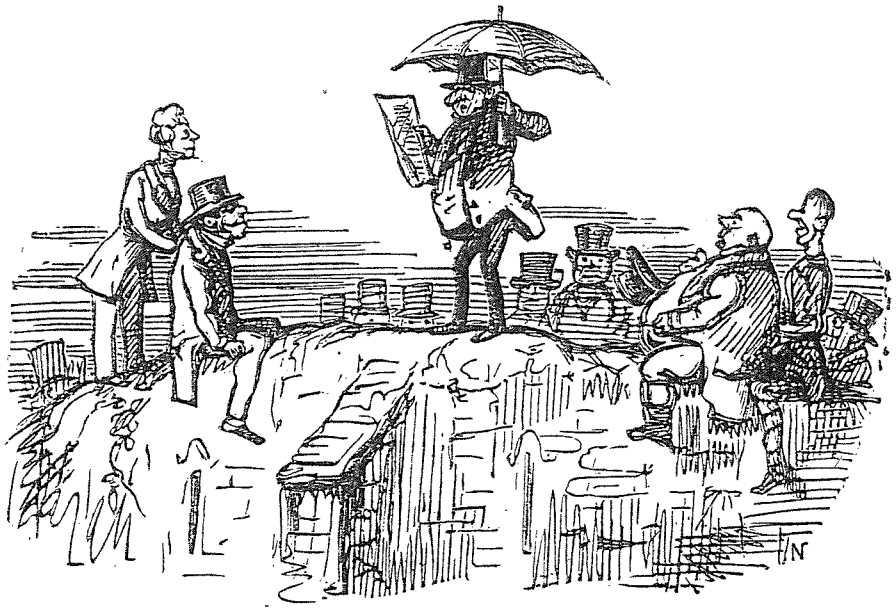


Figure 14 Members of the Archaeological Association

Figure 15 Henry Layard

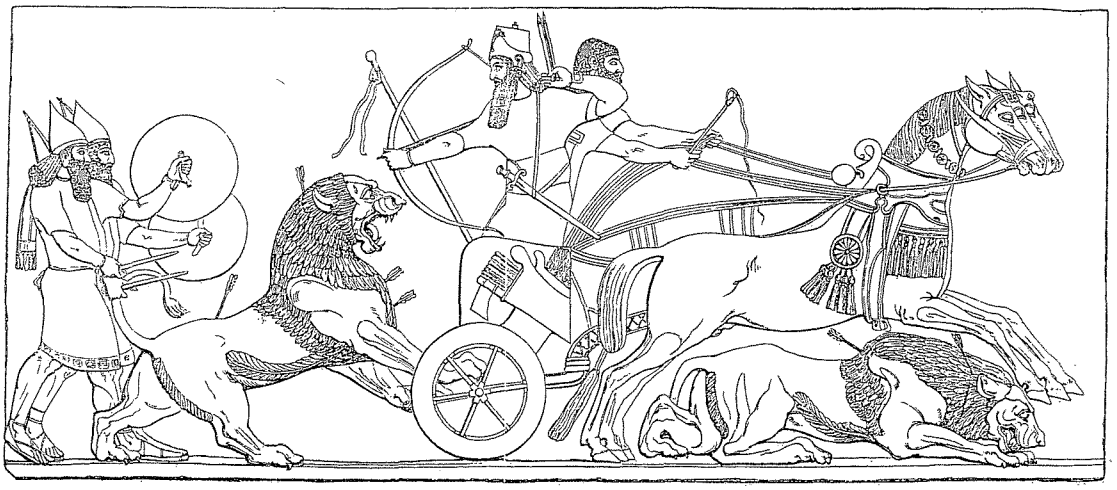


Figure 16 The Lion Hunt

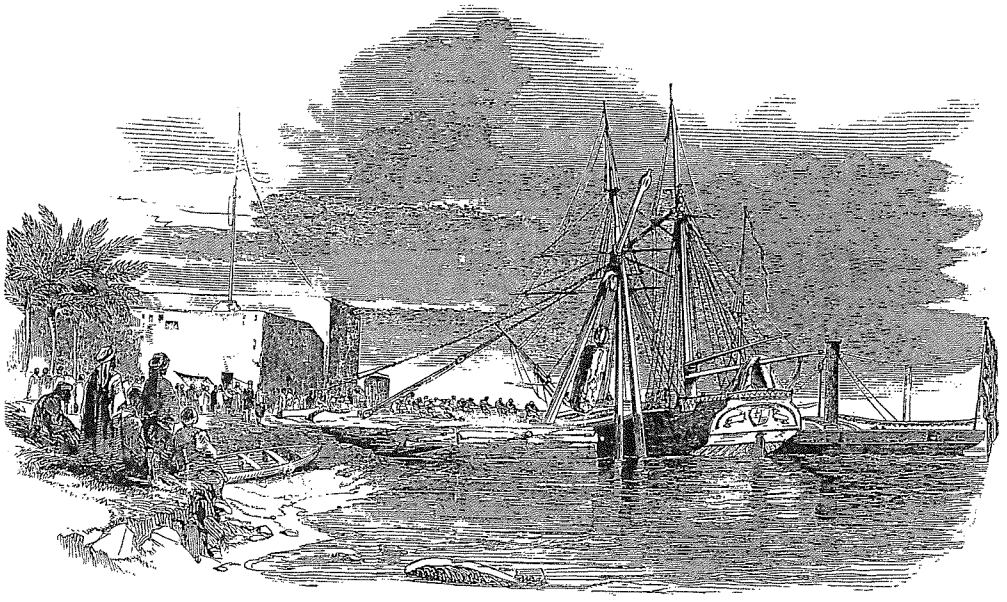


Figure 17 The embarkation of the Winged Bull

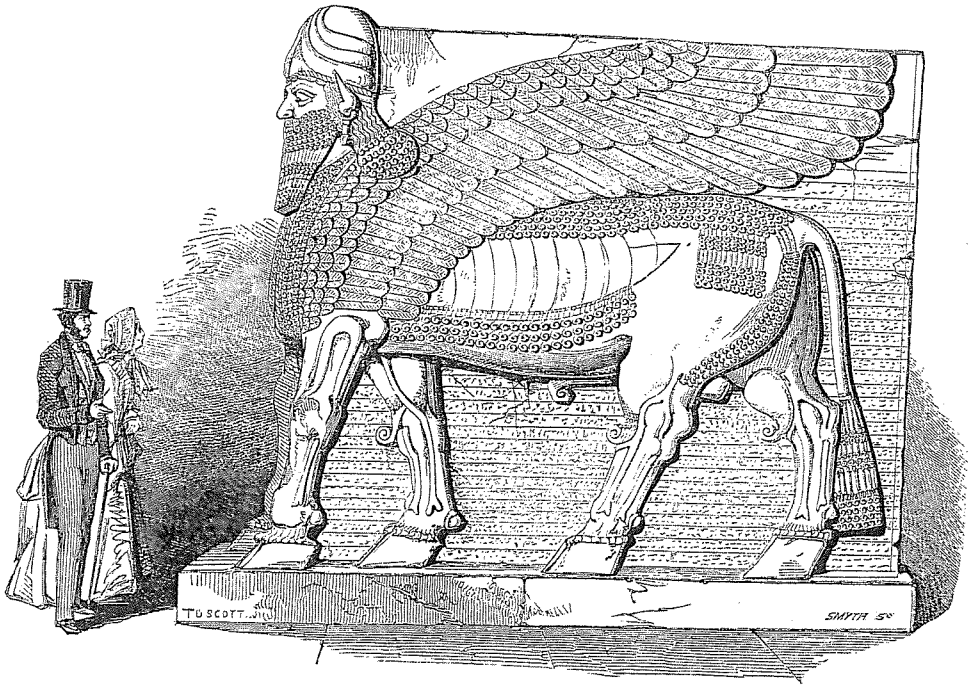


Figure 18 The Winged Bull in the British Museum

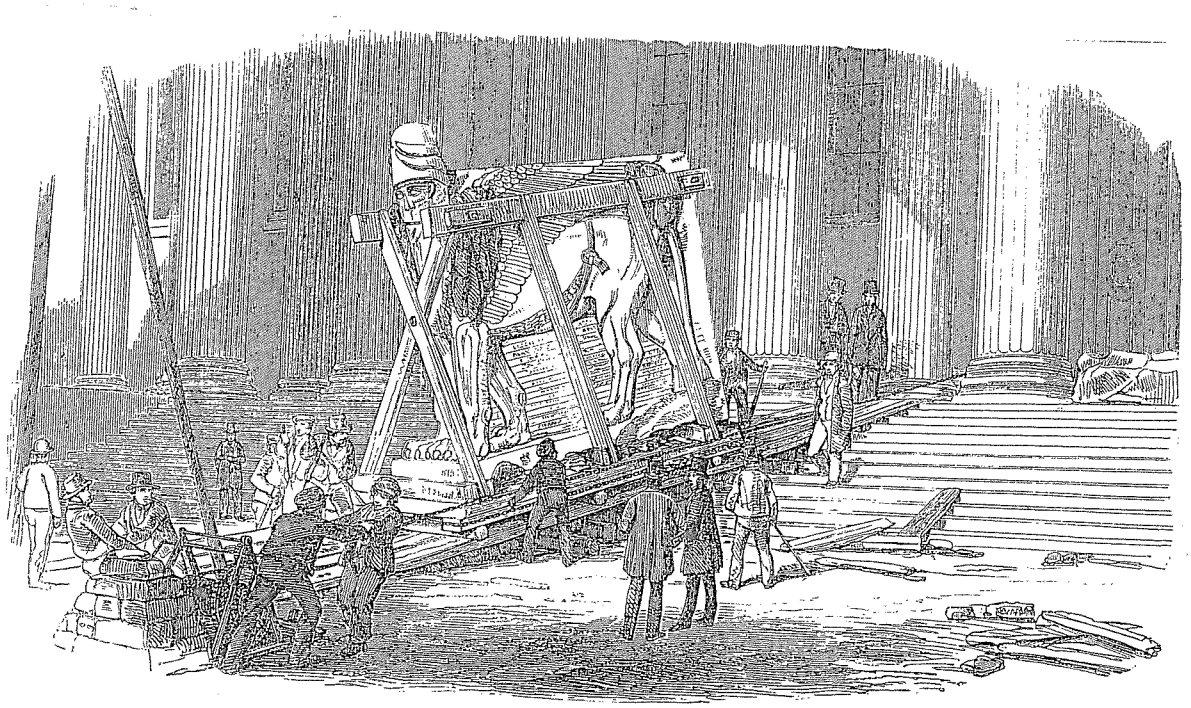


Figure 19 Winged Lion ascending the steps of the British Museum

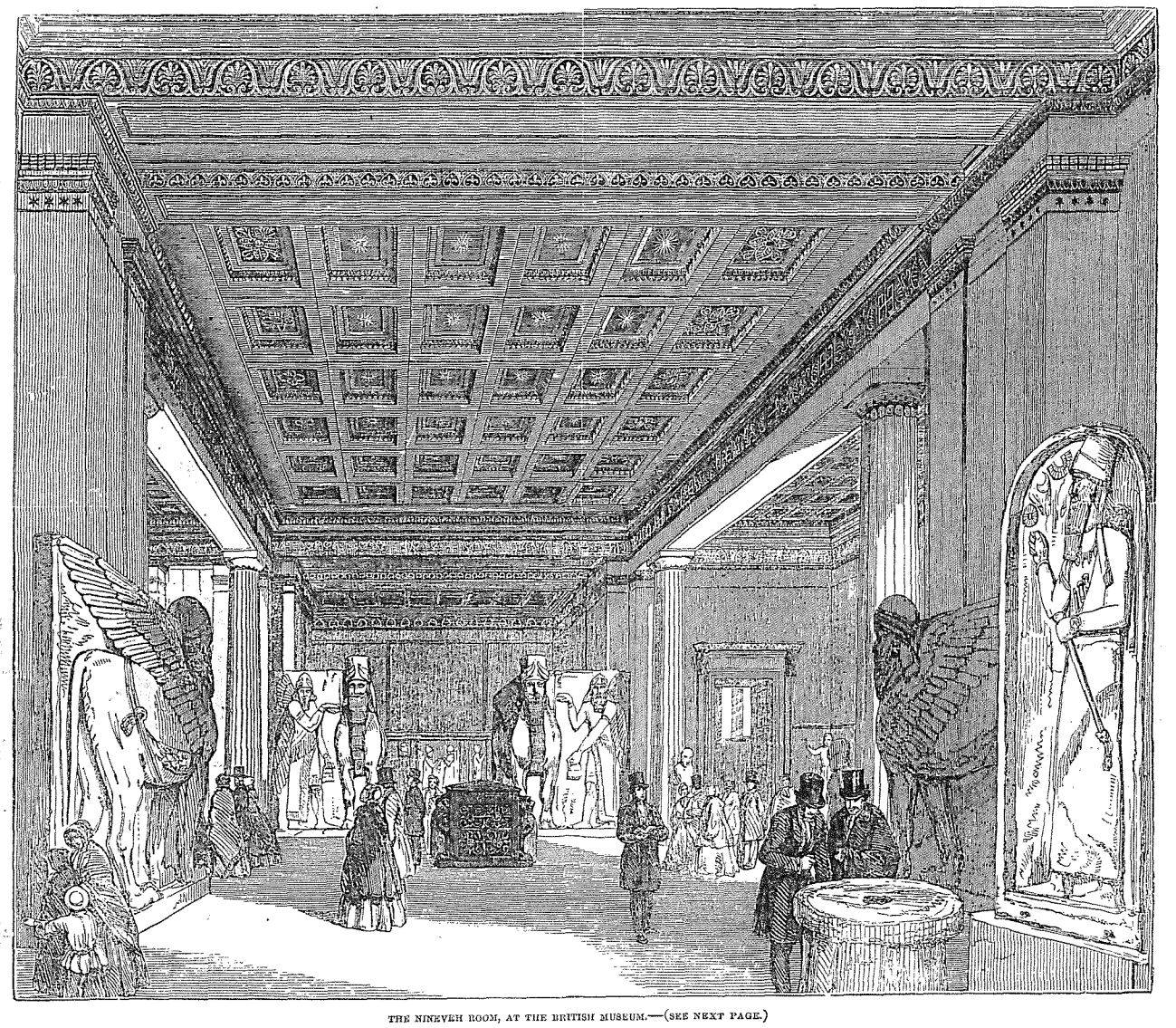
Figure 20 Layard in Punch

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

No. 614.—VOL. XXII.] FOR THE WEEK ENDING SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1853. [SIXPENCE.

MINISTERIAL POLICY AND MINISTERIAL PROSPECTS.

AN early-arriving Easter has reduced the first span of the regular Session to a period of less than six weeks; and yet, within even that short space of time, the Cabinet has amply proved the sterling quality of its policy, and the solid materials of its structure. Already has the sneer of "coalition" become out of date and gone out of use. Already has Mr. Disraeli found the satiric phrase of "all the talents" drop pointless from his lips. The very idea of the varied materials of which the Cabinet was formed appears to have faded away; and the House and the country to have come to the practical conclusion that the union Ministry has settled down into a state of permanent firmness and prosperity. The plain truth is, that the material of the Cabinet was never in its nature mutually antagonistic or repugnant. It was simply different—brought from different quarters, and by different means; but the general nature of the whole was to cohere and coalesce—and cohere and coalesce it has done accordingly. The prophets who prophesied Lord Aberdeen and Lord John Russell leading separate and quarrelling cliques, and Sir James Graham and Lord Palmerston at fiercest loggerheads, have proved but false prophets, and now sit dumb upon the benches. Mr. Disraeli it was who concocted and led the single party attack which has been made upon the Treasury Bench, with the war-cry of disrespect to Foreign Powers upon his banners. The consequence was, however, an ignominious repulse. The accused member of the Cabinet was so ably defended by his colleagues; and the line was so deeply and clearly drawn between official and individual responsibility, that the onset, however brilliant and however fierce, ended in total failure. Since then the Derbyites have been falling deeper and deeper into disorganisation. As to their old leader, they have all but flung off their allegiance to him. Mr. Disraeli cannot now count upon the obedience of a single man of the "large-acred squires," who this time last year were following him so closely, and backing him so stoutly. Nor do the party show any signs of rallying. As in ancient days it used to be the practice of the barbaric hordes, who sometimes overwhelmed a peaceful country, and who only looked to plunder for their pay, to desert their leader as soon as he was beaten, and put up one of their own comrades in his place; so are there symptoms of Mr. Disraeli's bâton being wrested from his hands and entrusted to those of the bucolic Sir John Pakington, whom the country gentlemen can at any rate confide in as one of themselves. At all events, the Oppo-



THE NINEVEH ROOM, AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.—(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

Figure 21 The Nineveh Room at the British Museum

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

[1] Altick (1996) provides a fascinating study of the early years of *Punch*.
[2] *Punch*, Vol. 3 (1842), page 62.
[3] Evans (1956) provides the most comprehensive history of the Society of Antiquaries available.
[4] See Evans (1949); Chapman (1989); Vyner (1994); Wetherall (1994, 1998) on the national archaeology societies, and Piggott (1976c); Levine (1986) on local societies. During this period the first archaeological chair in a British University was founded at Cambridge in 1851.
[5] *Punch*, Vol. 7 (1844), page 141.
[6] *Punch*, Vol. 15 (1848), page 72.
[7] *Punch*, Vol. 27 (1854), page 84.
[8] See Wetherall (1998) for a discussion of the links between archaeology and the scientific community in the period.
[9] *Punch*, Vol. 11 (1846), page 78.
[10] Bishop (1992) provides a good introductory history of the *Illustrated London News* and Sinnema (1998) a more detailed discussion of the contents. See Hibbert (1975); de Vries (1967) for a general idea of the content of the paper. Jackson (1885) provides an early discussion of the nineteenth century pictorial press, and Anderson (1991) a more recent assessment.
[11] Bishop (1992), page 29.
[12] Bishop (1992), pages 30-33.
[13] Wetherall (1994, 1998) provides a detailed account of the debate surrounding founding of the British Archaeological Association.
[14] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 11, 1843), page 98.
[15] Larson (1996) provides a detailed account of Layard and Botta's work. For more detail on Layard see Layard (1903); Kubie (1964) and Larsen (1996).
[16] Bohrer (2003) provides a comprehensive account of the wider consumption of the new Assyrian discoveries in Britain, France and Germany.
[17] The *Illustrated London News*, (Jan 11, 1851), page 23.
[18] The *Illustrated London News*, (Jan 11, 1851), page 24.
[19] The *Illustrated London News*, (June 26, 1847), page 409.
[20] Bohrer (2003) provides a detailed assessment of the coverage of the story in the *Athenaeum* and the *Art Journal.*
[21] The *Illustrated London News*, (June 26, 1847), page 412.
[22] The *Illustrated London News*, (Aug 28, 1847), page 144.
[23] The *Illustrated London News*, (Mar 31, 1849), page 213.
[24] The *Illustrated London News*, (Mar 31, 1849), page 213.
[25] The *Illustrated London News*, (Dec 16, 1848), page 373.
[26] The full title of Layard's book (1849a) was *Nineveh and its Remains: With an account of a visit to the Chaldean Christians of the Kurdistan, and the Yezidis, or devil-worshippers; and an inquiry into the manners and arts of the ancient Assyrians.* A separate book of plates appeared in the same year (1849b). Layard would publish a further account of his work in 1853.
[27] Layard (1903), page 191. Letter addressed to Mr Mitford in Ceylon, March 22, 1850.
[28] Layard's abridged edition appeared in 1852, entitled *A Popular Account of the Discoveries at Nineveh*. The sales figures come from a letter reproduced in Layard (1903), page 202, dated July 18, 1853, addressed to Mr H. Ross, London.
[29] The *Illustrated London News*, (Mar 31, 1849), page 213.
[30] The *Illustrated London News*, (July 27, 1850), page 71
[31] The *Illustrated London News*, (July 27, 1850), page 72.
[32] The *Illustrated London News*, (Oct 26, 1850), pages 331-2.
[33] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 28, 1852), page 184.
[34] The *Illustrated London News*, (Dec 16, 1848), page 373.
[35] The *Illustrated London News*, (Mar 2, 1850), page 150.
[36] The *Illustrated London News*, (Dec 21, 1850), page 484.
[37] The *Illustrated London News*, (Dec 28, 1850), page 505.
[38] The *Illustrated London News*, (Jan 11, 1851), page 23.

5

WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

The widespread reporting of Henry Layard's discoveries in the illustrated press had given the public an appetite for archaeology and raised the visual profile of the past to new levels. In 1854, just when ancient Assyria was becoming slightly less newsworthy, one of the most spectacular public presentations of archaeology ever devised was opening in the newly erected Crystal Palace at Sydenham in south London (fig. 22). Under the 'fairy-like framework'[1] of the new Palace, a collection of plaster of Paris models of ancient architecture and sculpture, representing almost every period of the ancient world, had been created. The archaeological displays at the Sydenham Crystal Palace were the culmination of all the reporting of archaeology in the popular press that had gone before it, and were an instant subject of fascination with the British periodical press. Articles on its contents appeared in publications ranging from the prestigious *Quarterly Review*, to cheap popular publications such as the *London Journal*, giving archaeology a public profile on a scale never before seen. These articles provide a unique insight into the diverse range of responses to the Sydenham display from a variety of different periodicals; something that no other historical source can offer.

After the closure of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the materials from Hyde Park had been bought by the newly formed Crystal Palace Company with the intention of erecting a new and permanent exhibition at Penge Park, Sydenham.[2] Work began on the new Crystal Palace in 1853, with the grand opening, attended by the Queen and Prince Consort, taking place on July 10 the following year. The Great Exhibition had been a celebration of the manufacturing prowess of the Victorian age, bringing together exhibitors from all over of the world. The Sydenham display had a rather different content:

> Unlike the contents of the first Crystal Palace, where the great PRESENT was exhibited in ten thousand varied forms – here the dim GONE-BY will be brought face to face with the creatures of TO-DAY.[3]

The new Crystal Palace was to be a celebration of the splendours of the ancient world, containing the finest specimens of art and architecture of all ages. As the *Quarterly Review* described it:

> All the yet discovered history of the world, as written on relics of art, is here stored for our amusement or study. The new old world of Nineveh, recovered from the dust to which it had for thousands of years returned – the image of a perfectly developed pagan civilization now utterly passed away – showing refinements in knowledge which the world has forgotten, and barbarities in life which, to its shame, it has not – the remote progenitor of many a custom still in usage, and most of all, related to us in the art which has alone preserved it to us. Egypt! that ancient of lands, impelled by an overwhelming destiny to work out her instincts for art in the sublimity of size, and thus rearing up stern and imperishable monuments to point the contrast between her former and latter condition. Greece! with all her forms of ineffable beauty, the perfection of which alike transcends imitation and comprehension, and which have served since their restoration to the world as a revelation of all true disciples of art. Rome! with her gallery of intense portrait individuality – the hard-working stoics who built her up, and the effeminate voluptuaries who pulled her down. Pompeii! the very dwelling-place of those who lived through the most momentous period of this world's history, and yet knew it not; and then the long line of Christian monuments of art, their stony stiffness, their vital strength, the timid gropings after truth and nature, the earnest beautiful bud, whether of ideality or reality – the glorious efflorescence of both![4]

In a similar manner to the original Crystal Palace from Hyde Park, the new Palace was divided into a series of display courts, set at the sides of the main thoroughfares. But instead of each court representing a different nation, each of the ten architectural courts was decorated in a style designed to represent a period of the ancient past, with fully coloured, plaster of Paris recreations of buildings and sculpture. The prestigious *Art Journal* appropriately described it, not as a World's Fair, but as a 'world's museum.'[5]

The creation of a large-scale display on the ancient past by a private company, designed to make a profit, attests to the important place of archaeology in the popular imagination in the 1850s. However, the archaeological recreations in the Sydenham Palace were an experiment with a

precedent, albeit one on a somewhat reduced scale. Giovanni Belzoni's Egyptian tomb, displayed in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, in 1821, was an earlier attempt to provide visitors with an experience of the past based on colourful recreations of ancient architecture and sculpture. Where the displays differ markedly though is in their intended audience. Belzoni's exhibition had been aimed at the affluent members of London society, whereas the Sydenham Crystal Palace was an exhibition for the people. The press of the day soon named it the People's Palace:

> Everybody must be anxious for its success – inasmuch as it will remove a reproach long hanging over this country – that it has no grand collections, no places of recreative and instructive resort – no palace, in fact, of the people. Such a place we shall certainly have this summer – and that not extracted by profligate sovereigns, corrupt ministers and subservient legislators, from the pockets of an oppressed people; but, as the British are proud to do all things, by mere private enterprise.[6]

It was to be a palace for the people, built by the people, for the people: a place of amusement and education for all. In contrast to the Great Exhibition of 1851, the Sydenham Palace was entirely a private enterprise, paid for by the shareholders of the Crystal Palace Company, with no financial aid from the exchequer. The whole project was regarded at the time as a celebration of entrepreneurship, a trait that was considered to be quintessentially English.

One of the aims of the Crystal Palace was to be an educational experience for the people, however the philosophy behind this was very different to the efforts of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in the 1830s. From mid-century there was a growing change in public education, away from the dry education of the Mechanics' Institutes and other such worthy institutions, towards a growing acknowledgement that enjoyable entertainment was as important a part of the recreation of the people as moral improvement. The educational value of the display was one of the favourite subjects of discussion in the highbrow journals, such as the *Westminster Review*, the *Art Journal* and *Blackwood's Magazine*. One of the most prestigious, the *Quarterly Review*, provided the following comment on the change in public education that was taking place:

> Meanwhile, though opinions may differ as to those present or future wants of the community on which the success of such an undertaking depends, yet few will question that there have been mistakes in the past which contribute to favour its

> beginning. The well-meaning teachers of the lower orders, and of youth of all classes, for the last quarter of a century, have erred in their estimate of the average human mind. Mechanics' Institutes, lectures, swarms of new publications, and Wylde's Great Globe,* have failed in their mission; and a pedantic period has disposed the world to give a warmer welcome to any scheme acknowledging our more poetic tendencies.[7]

The *Art Journal* also picked up on the theme and noted the importance of offering people an alternative to other, less savoury, pastimes:

> The very elaboration and splendour of a gin-palace proves that the poorest and most degraded classes occasionally like to see something superior to their own squalid homes. It is unwise that the humbler classes should be left so entirely to the care of tasteless and low-minded speculators for what little amusement they obtain; how far better would it be if better men held out the means of cheerful relaxation and instruction, which might readily be so combined, that each person might be almost insensibly improved.[8]

As the *Westminster Review* was keen to point out, providing people with an interesting alternative way to spend their leisure hours had the potential for widespread moral improvement, especially when it took the populace away from drinking, brawling, gambling and other 'low' pursuits.[9]

However outside the most prestigious publications, or those with strict educational aims themselves, the Palace represented not so much a new and improved educational experience, but an opportunity for a magical day out. *Household Words* provided the most powerful criticisms of previous attempts at public education, which is not surprising considering the journal was edited by Charles Dickens, a noted critic of the worst excesses of utilitarianism:

> O, BROTHERS GRIMM; O, Madame, Anois, O, Sultana Scheherazade and Princess Codadad, why did you die? O, Merlin, Albertus Magnus, Friar Bacon, Nostradamus, Doctor Dee, why did I implicitly believe in your magic; and then have my confidence utterly abused by Davy, Brewster, Liebig, Faraday, Lord Brougham and Dr. Bachnoffer of the Polytechnic Institution? What have I done that all the gold and jewels and flowers of Fairyland should have been ground in a base mechanical mill and kneaded by you – ruthless unimaginative philosophers – into Household Bread of Useful Knowledge administered to me in tough slices at lectures and forced down my throat by convincing experiments? Are the Good People, the Brownies, the

* James Wylde's Monster Globe was erected in Leicester Square (1851-1861) and contained a plaster of Paris reconstruction of the earth at a scale of ten miles to the inch.

> Leprechauns, the Banshees, the Witchwolves, White Ladies, Witches, Pixies, Wilis, Giants, Ogres, Fairy godmothers, Good Women in the Wood, Genii, Ghoules, Afrites, Peris, Elves, to give up the ghost; and am I to be deprived of all the delicious imaginings of my childhood and have nothing in their stead?[10]

Household Words referred to the Crystal Palace as 'Fairyland' and was by no means alone in its magical references. Several other journals referred to the magical nature of the display, and *Punch* topped one of its Crystal Palace illustrations with a fairy carrying a magic wand. Today with spectacular Hollywood films complete with CGI reconstructions, even Las Vegas casinos built to resemble the Colosseum or the pyramids, the past has become familiar to all of us; a hundred and fifty years ago this was simply not the case. It is easy to forget what a truly new and magical experience the display at Sydenham would have been for many people who went there.

Of all the accounts of the historical courts that were published, by far the most detailed descriptions of the contents of the Crystal Palace appeared in the cheap illustrated magazines, aimed at the popular end of the periodical market. Publications such as the *London Journal*, *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, *Hogg's Instructor* and *Reynold's Miscellany* were priced at a penny or penny and a half, and reached a sometimes huge, and generally fairly poorly educated, readership. The *London Journal* for example sold 300,000 copies per issue, with *Cassell's Paper* just behind with sales figures of 200,000. Unlike those periodicals aimed at a better educated readership, which focussed on providing an intellectual critique of the contents or the educational opportunities the display offered for the working man, the cheap magazines provided accounts which were primarily designed to inform their readers about the contents of the palace, and help them to better understand what they were seeing there. The readers of these popular but low-brow magazines were assumed to have very little knowledge of the ancient world by the writers, and most publications provided detailed historical accounts in their articles on the courts themselves. The descriptions of the Palace that were featured in the cheap periodicals provided much of the background information that uneducated visitors would need to understand more about the Sydenham displays if they visited the Palace and, for many visitors, these accounts of the historical courts would have been vital to getting anything out of their visit.

Bradbury and Evans, the official publishing partner of the Crystal Palace Company, held a monopoly on the production of guidebooks to the courts. The

official series comprised a general guide to the Palace and gardens, written by Samuel Phillips and illustrated with engravings of photographs taken by P.H. Delamotte, and individual volumes describing each of the courts, written by such eminent figures as the artist George Scharf Jun., and Henry Layard. The books were intended to be accessible, informative and easy to read, and were 'written in a popular style, with a strictly instructive and educational aim,' according to an advert from the period.[11] The official volumes were on sale in each of the display areas, and the number of and weight of these guides did not go without comment. As the *London Journal* noted:

> There are guide books, it is true, but they are useless – for they are so numerous that you require a carpet-bag to hold them, and, if you are rich and can keep one, a footman to carry it.[12]

The total price for the official guide and collection of volumes to the individual courts was 13 shillings 6d, well beyond the means of the many working class visitors, exactly the people who were one of the target audiences of the Crystal Palace. For those who had not read a guide before their visit the educational value of the Crystal Palace displays was a somewhat limited experience. As in the British Museum, those who encountered a display for the first time, with no prior research, reading, or reference to a guidebook, could expect to understand remarkably little of what they were seeing. Labelling was minimal, and description was just about non-existent; visitors could marvel and speculate but little else. As the *London Journal* described:

> There was plenty of blind amazement, abundance of torpid admiration; but no studying, no instruction, no lectures – not even a Westminster Abbey verger kind of cicerone to explain a single object.[13]

A number of unofficial guides existed and, fortunately for less wealthy visitors, the penny periodicals provided a number of comprehensive beginners guides to the courts in the Crystal Palace. Of all the features of the Crystal Palace it was the Historical Courts which received the most attention in the press of the day.

The Historical Courts

> The portion of the building upon which the architectural courts abut is magnificently striking. The eye at a glance takes in a scene of grandeur which, while it dazzles the imagination, invites the minutest attention. Such a grouping of wonders from the

> quarries of art and science was never beheld before – the idea of such an historical illustration of the past experiences of the human mind was not entertained until the suggestion for a permanent Crystal Palace assumed the definite form of a fact all but accomplished.[14]

The design of the majority of the Historical Courts was undertaken by Owen Jones, the 'colour king,' and the architect Sir Matthew Digby Wyatt. Jones was in charge of the courts on the western side of the northern transept, including the hugely popular Egyptian court, as well as the Grecian, Roman and Alhambra Courts. Wyatt's courts at the eastern side were often lumped together under the title of 'Christian Art,' where visitors could move from Byzantine times, to medieval, to Renaissance, and through the small Elizabethan Court to the finish in the Italian Court. As well as the Christian Art Courts, Wyatt also designed the Pompeian House located in the southern transept, which was one of the most well-loved displays in the Palace (fig. 24). The *Leisure Hour* considered the Pompeian House to be a marvel to behold:

> One almost expects to see the Roman himself step forth in the *toga virilis*, and take the place of the policeman A 2001, as guardian of the *dulce domum*.... In looking around upon the delicate gorgeousness of painted columns and ceilings it is curious to note how colours which, less artistically combined, would have produced a tawdry and repulsive effect, are so learnedly employed as to harmonise thoroughly, and to suggest, as they should, the ideas of tranquillity and repose.[15]

Originally the court had been designed to be used as a refreshment area, but was rejected as being too small. Alongside the two principal architects, Sir James Fergusson added his experience of the architecture of the ancient world, to create an Assyrian court, reportedly with the assistance of Henry Layard.

The Palace was to display the finest artistic treasures from all parts of the world, with each of the courts containing a combination of full colour reproductions of ancient architecture and sculpture, lovingly created in plaster of Paris. To create the displays Owen Jones and Digby Wyatt were dispatched to many of the finest museum collections in Europe to obtain permission to make the casts for the thousands of individual items that would make up the Historical Courts. These casts were assembled at Sydenham ready to be moulded by a team of sculptors from around Europe. Visits to the Modelling Court, as the workshop area was known, were commonplace among those who wanted a sneak preview of the contents (fig. 23). Reports of these visits were a

common occurrence in the press of the day and gave the general public a detailed description of the progress of the work on the Palace.[16]

Aside from the architectural courts, there was also a display area for manufacturers, as well as several industrial courts including the Sheffield Court and the Stationary Court, and an ethnographic display, complete with model savages and wild animals. The area outside the palace was no less spectacular. The gardens, laid out by Paxton, were said to rival those of Versailles, complete with lakes and spectacular fountains, and were also home to a collection of models of extinct prehistoric reptiles, located on an island in the lake. The latter were one of the most popular features of the palace with the general public, perhaps rivalled only by the food and refreshments areas.

To the outrage of many abstainers, alcohol was freely available in the Crystal Palace. *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper* reproduced the following account from the *Weekly News and Chronicle*:

> A group of persons, apparently mechanics, was seated on the edge of one of the slopes fronting the terraces, taking some refreshment. I saw *six quart pots* upon the grass, and a *seventh* in the process of being emptied. One of the party, evidently *inebriated*, was *singing a tavern song, the chorus of which was tumultuously taken up by the rest of the party*, who, in my opinion, *were inebriated too*.[17]

There were also reports of the reports of the displays being damaged by drunken behaviour, however these were refuted by the *Westminster Review*:

> We have attended that place more than most people – spending whole days, from the opening till the time the policeman came to send us away; and we have never seen a tipsy person, nor witnessed any misbehaviour but that which is the result of pure ignorance – such as fingering the gilding in the Alhambra court, using a knob of the tomb of Coeur de Lion to lean over by, trying the strength of a plaster finger here and there, and so on.[18]

Suggestions that the 'refreshment rooms will have greater attraction than even the gorgeous splendour of the Byzantine Court,'[19] made by *Cassell's Paper* were something of an exaggeration. Most reports on the Crystal Palace concentrated on the more positive aspects of the display.

At the Crystal Palace, for the first time anywhere in the world, it was possible to experience a near complete collection of ancient architecture under one roof. Although some of the wealthier visitors would have viewed many of the sculptures in their original locations, and taken in many of the sites as part of

European tours, it is doubtful just how many would have been able to visit the remains of ancient Assyria and Egypt, outside of the great European museums. There can have been very few visitors to the Palace, if any, who had visited all the sites represented in the Crystal Palace, in the days before Thomas Cook had opened up travel to a new range of tourists. The *Westminster Review* makes this point, as well as accurately predicting the rise in the travel industry that was to come later in the century:

> This institution is instead of travel, as well as books. This is not only the case in the Natural History department, where scenes and productions, polar and tropical, are presented which not one visitor in a million has ever witnessed by travel, or will ever witness. It is yet more effectively the case in regard to scenes which will be reached by most people, of a few generations hence.[20]

For those unable to afford the luxuries of foreign travel:

> gratified and instructed "sight-seers" ... will here recreate themselves in body and mind as effectually as a nobleman used to do by an European tour. Nay, more, for here will the wonders of the old and new worlds unite to show him their beauties.[21]

This comparison with the Grand Tour makes an interesting point. Anyone who was not wealthy had no chance of travelling abroad (except on military service), and probably travelled remarkably little within their own country. A visit to the Palace condensed many of the sites that would have been encountered on a European tour into a display under one roof to provide the masses with a grand tour of their own. Travel to the Crystal Palace though was considered to be somewhat safer than travel to exotic parts to view ancient remains. An account of the Nineveh Court that appeared in *Reynolds's Miscellany's* pointed out the many advantages of visiting Sydenham as a substitute for foreign travel:

> By such revivals as these, travelling becomes almost a work of supererogation. Here, safe from the matchlock of the Turcoman and the bullet of the Kurd, we may see the facsimiles of Persepolis and Nineveh.... Here, out of reach of the *bacsheesh* war-cry, safe from opthalmia, the plague, cheating monshees, cowardly escorts, thievish arabs, and lying guides, we may wander and meditate – finding little but an Eastern atmosphere wanting to give the final charm to Eastern contemplation.[22]

The contents of the historical courts drew on the themes of archaeological coverage provided by the periodical press from earlier in the century. Here

visitors could see Belzoni's Egypt, Layard's Nineveh, the wonders of Greece, Rome, Pompeii, and other treasures of the ancient world in all their splendour. It was fitting that the two courts that greeted visitors when they entered the palace from the northern end dealt with perhaps the two most common themes of the popular coverage of archaeology in the period up to the mid 1850s, Egypt and Assyria.

The Egyptian Colossi

> Here is Rameses, and here are all his dynasties. Here is the god Anubis. Here Isis, cat, dog, crocodile, and cow divinities; hieroglyphics, sarcophagi, strange doorways with winged summits, beetling massive columns with palm tree capitals. Where are the priests of Isis, to feed the crocodiles upon cakes of flour and honey?... Where is Pharaoh's butler, and where is Pharaoh's baker? Yonder is the frowning, gigantic, towering, enigmatic head of the sphinx. Where is the desert, and where are the pyramids, and the Hebrew brickmakers, and the straw, without which they could not make the bricks? Yonder are the legs of Memnon; where is his temple, where the plain of Thebes, where Memphis, where the labyrinth of Moeris, and the mysteries?
>
> Rub your eyes. Dear me! dear me! This is not Egypt; but merely a court in the Fairy Palace.... The sphinx is only plaster of Paris, and two Italian modellers in dusty moustaches and blouses, flaked with white like the frost of a twelfth cake, are giving the finishing touches to the legs of Memnon.[23]

The colossal dimensions of Egyptian architecture made it ideally suited to the Crystal Palace, and upon entering the palace from the northern end visitors were immediately thrust into the world of ancient Egypt. Dominating the nave, stood a pair of seated figures, modelled on the giant statues from the temple of Abu Simbel in Nubia, with an avenue of twenty sphinxes flanking the approach to the Colossi (figs 26, 27). The statues made a hugely impressive sight, with the pair standing over seventy feet high, mirroring the dimensions of the originals in Egypt. As such an instantly visually stunning display it is not surprising that the Colossi were often the first feature of the palace to be commented upon in the popular press. In the words of *Chambers's Journal*, 'they must, to use a familiar phrase, be seen to be believed.'[24] A writer in *Hogg's Instructor* was equally enchanted by the display:

> At the extremity of [the Northern Transept], on our left, two enormous seated figures rise in their solemn state to the very summit of the roof. Leading up to these immense figures is an avenue of colossal sphinxes, reaching the whole length of the

> transept, and forming with the figures themselves the most extraordinary spectacle in the entire building. The seated figures are restorations, of the exact size of the originals, from the façade of an ancient temple excavated from the solid rock at Aboo-Simbel in Nubia.... The colossal figures are seventy-two feet in height, and are by far the largest representations of the human form at present known. Seen here, in contrast with the wondrous lightness and aerial grace of the vaulted transept bending immediately above their heads, these stupendous figures have an air of awful and mysterious grandeur...[25]

The mystery and exoticism of Egyptian sculpture, along with its 'naivety' of form and colouring, were frequently noted. For example the *London Journal* commented that, 'these gigantic statues, fixed full before us in all their vastness, but still bearing about them a dread, mysterious, half-dreamy interpretation of a buried past...'[26] However it was generally considered best not to look too closely at the figures. 'When examined closely, they are unsightly caricatures of humanity; but when placed on an elevation, their vast proportions fill the imagination with awe and amazement.'[27]

The popular journals were fascinated by the Colossi, although more intellectual publications were less easily convinced. The *Illustrated London News* described them as 'abnormal and idol-like,'[28] and the *Quarterly Review* was even more damning:

> Surely, if conspicuousness to the eye were the end proposed, those two Egyptian giants were prominent enough in all conscience, without the help of polychromy. These were about the last objects in the Crystal Palace which ran any risk of being overlooked by the public. Before their colossal proportions the polychromatist might have safely rested from his labours. All that should have been done for them was to have let them alone in their enormity, and allowed their true characteristics – the sublimity of their size, and the negative grandeur of their expression, – to speak for themselves; or, at most, to have added those scorched granite hues which have been painted on the original by the heat of thousands of suns. But no; such a capacious field for the exercise of polychromy was not to be neglected: if it be right to paint the lily and gild refined gold, the larger the scale on which the operation is conducted the better. Red, blue, and yellow were, therefore, ordered by the hogshead; first, second, and third coatings of raw house-paint were poured in (for Memnons of plaster are thirsty souls), till at length the beau ideal of the new art was attained, and Gog and Magog sit there, shorn of half their size by the staring propinquity of their colours, and with no expression left in their features but that of a grin of delight at the gay clothes in which they are attired.[29]

Gaudy they may have been, but the Egyptian Colossi were without doubt the most famous display in the Crystal Palace, and were the primary image used by most illustrated publications in their reports of the display. They were a wonderful visual spectacle, but few attributed a great deal of historical importance to them. For most commentators the figures provided an impressive centrepiece, but had little historical or educational value. If visitors wanted to gain any knowledge of ancient Egypt, they were far better off visiting the Egyptian Court, located a short distance away (fig. 25).

> The names Belzoni and Champollion, and a host of others, here occur to us. The constructors of this court have done much within a space of about 100 feet square. There is a small court with square pillars and lotus pillars. There is a larger court with eight colossal figures, a series of gorgeous pillars perched op on walls, and a multitude of hieroglyphics and paintings of chariots, soldiers, captives, eagle-headed men, birds, sphinxes, implements, tools, machines. There is a larger court, with pillars, and figures, and sphinxes; and a yet larger, with sixty-four columns painted in the most brilliant hues.[30]

The entrance to the Egyptian court was guarded by an avenue of lions, modelled on a pair of originals known as Lord Prudhoe's lions, from the British Museum. Adorning the frieze around the entrance to the outer portion of the court was a message of welcome to the Queen and Prince Consort, written in hieroglyphics by Joseph Bonomi, the sculptor of the court. Two hieroglyphic cartouches representing the royal couple adorned the entrance. The full greeting, as quoted in the official guide, ran as follows:

> In the 17th year of the reign of her Majesty, ruler of the waves, the royal daughter Victoria lady most gracious, the chiefs, architects, sculptors, and painters, erected this palace and gardens with a thousand columns, a thousand decorations, a thousand statues of chiefs and ladies, a thousand trees, a thousand flowers, a thousand birds and beasts, a thousand fountains (tanks), and a thousand vases. The architects, and painters, and sculptors built this palace as a book for the instruction of the men and women of all countries, regions, and districts. May it be prosperous.[31]

Just about every publication that reported on the Sydenham display devoted a significant space to describing the Egyptian court, which included a collection of some of the most famous of the ancient architecture of Egypt. This included a model of the temple of Abu Simbel, the façade and hall of columns from

Karnac, the portico of Philae, the tomb from Beni Hassan and the court of Amunothph III. Unlike the Colossi, the contents of the Egyptian court were reduced to around one third of life size. As well as recreations of monuments remaining in Egypt, casts of sculpture housed in London, Paris and Turin were included in the court. Several publications mentioned the possibility of bringing Cleopatra's Needle, gifted to the nation by the Pasha of Egypt Mohammed Ali in 1817, to England to form the centrepiece to the Crystal Palace display.[32] However the plan never got off the ground, probably due to the huge cost involved.

The official guide to the Egyptian Court was written by Owen Jones and Joseph Bonomi, and included 'an historical notice of the monuments of ancient Egypt', written by Samuel Sharpe.[33] In this volume we learn from Owen Jones that:

> The authorities which have served for the reproduction of portions of various Egyptian monuments forming the "Egyptian Court," are a series of original drawings and measurements which I made on the spot in 1833, in company with the late Charles Goury; and the published works of Sir Gardner Wilkinson, Champollion, and others.[34]

He also cites the 'invaluable aid' provided by Mr Joseph Bonomi, who, since his ten year stay in Egypt (1824-34) 'studying the sculpture and the hieroglyphics', 'has ever since been exclusively occupied with Egyptian art.'[35] The aim was to convey 'that peculiar character of sculpture, which those who have visited Egypt will at one recognise,'[36] and to those who had not had the privilege of such travel, to 'furnish [them with] some idea of the exquisite beauty, refinement, and grandeur of Egyptian art; which most published works, and the hitherto attempted reproductions more especially, have failed to give.'[37] The display of ancient Egypt worked on a number of different levels. More educated visitors to the Palace would have been familiar with what just about everything depicted looked like, either from seeing the originals, or from an illustrated book. However few would have visited Egypt, and the experience of seeing the sculptures fully coloured an in three-dimensional form must have provided many with a very different experience of the past to what they had previously been used to. For a visitor with no previous exposure to Egyptian architecture, the display must have been mind-blowing.

For those who could not afford the official guide, many of the cheaper publications included an account of Egyptian history as a part of their report on

the palace. In many cases this appears to have derived from the text of the official guide, which essentially acted as a press release detailing the official background to the display. Publications such as the *London Journal* and *Reynolds's Miscellany* provided their readers with all the background information they would have needed to have a basic knowledge of the history and chronology of ancient Egypt, and some idea what some of the sculptures may have represented. Much of the information conveyed is similar to that from the publications of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in the 1830s, however the more poetic and romantic associations of the past were now allowed to play a part. To accompany its piece on the ancient Egyptian displays, the *London Journal* provided its readers with the following account of ancient Egypt, which gives a good example of the style of its coverage on the Crystal Palace:

> When we gaze upon their stupendous architecture, we cannot resist the feeling of awe which steals over the senses, when we think we are in the presence of the monuments of a people who flourished at the long distance of forty centuries from the present year of grace and more healthful influences.... But the history of Egypt, meagre as it is in quantity, from beginning to end, reads like a thrilling romance. Her ruins draw us back with vigour to her earliest days, and plunge us irresistibly into speculations more pleasing to the fancy than intelligible to the understanding.[38]

The language used captures something of the magic of the Crystal Palace, which was so much a part of the displays there. You could visit ancient Egypt if only you suspended your belief in reality for a few moments and let yourself be taken away by the experience.

Layard's Nineveh

> Back to a more distant period than either Greece or Rome is the fancy led; and the imagination is enabled to realise the marvellous creations of those strange people spoken of in the Scriptures.[39]

The Assyrian Court, or Nineveh Court as it was commonly known, was set apart from the other ancient history courts, and was located in the northern end of the Palace near the Egyptian colossi (fig. 28).[40] The court was designed by Sir James Fergusson, a recognised expert on the architecture of the east, reportedly with the assistance of Henry Layard, the famed discoverer and

excavator of Nineveh.[41] Layard's discoveries in the East had been the most widely featured theme of the popular reporting of archaeology for the previous seven years, with publications such as the *Illustrated London News* providing their readers with a detailed account of the archaeology of the ancient Near East. The association of Layard's name with the exhibition was a clever marketing ploy for by the Crystal Palace Company, as it gave the popular press an easy way link the display to the recent, and phenomenally popular, discoveries. As *Reynolds's Miscellany* confidently proclaimed, 'every one is familiar with the extraordinary discovery of Nineveh.'[42] Layard's name also gave a stamp of quality to the reconstructions in the Crystal Palace, as *Chambers's Journal* recounted:

> Here the name of Layard comes to one's thoughts in a moment. We remember how the labours of one man in the East have furnished the materials whence this gorgeous court has been constructed; and we cannot fail to acknowledge, that when the directors of the Crystal Palace sought the services of two gentlemen who have written and studied so much on the subject as Dr Layard and Mr Fergusson, they gave a liberal guarantee that the best which could be done would be done. And here we have the result.[43]

To further reinforce the association Layard provided the text for the official guidebook, which provided visitors with a useful summary of his previous work.[44] In fact Layard's involvement was probably limited to writing this text, but the association was enough to conjure up all the romantic associations attached to his journey of discovery in the East, and all the tales of his exploits that were a feature of earlier reports of his discoveries. 'The discoveries of Nineveh by Mr Layard are the greatest conquests ever wrung from oblivion. No diver ever ventured down into those rank, silent waters, and brought back such a goodly jewel,'[45] was the way that *Reynolds's Miscellany* summed up the popular appeal of Layard's discoveries.

The court itself was the largest of the architectural display areas, and contained a number of recreations of ancient Assyrian architecture. As *Reynolds's Miscellany* pointed out to its readers:

> This court is more extensive than any other devoted to the illustration of one phase of art. It is 120 feet in length, 50 feet wide, and has an altitude of 40 feet, from the floor line. Its chief interest, however, consists in the fact of its illustrating a style of art of which no specimen has hitherto been presented in Europe; and which, indeed,

> until the last few years, lay unknown even in the country where its remains have been unexpectedly brought to light.[46]

Several publications noted that the original sculptures, on which the Nineveh Court was based, were now housed in the British Museum, and many visitors would have already seen some of the original sculptures that had been deposited there over the course of the previous seven years. But the Crystal Palace display afforded the first ever opportunity to see the sculptures *in situ*, embedded in the architectural form of an Assyrian palace, and fully adorned in hues of blue and yellow, based on the fragments of gilding still clinging to some of the friezes. The *Art Journal* went as far as to suggest that, 'the original works in the museum doubtless derive additional interest from the elucidation they receive at Sydenham.'[47] *Chambers's Journal* was one of several publications to note that, unlike the other architectural courts, no attempt was made to base the display on actual buildings and architectural features:

> Recollecting that until Layard ferreted out Nineveh, it was nothing but a mound of earth-covered bricks, we may easily understand that supposition has had much to do with this Nineveh of the Crystal Palace. It is not a model of any particular building; it is a grand fiction, in which an attempt is made to show how the ancient palaces and temples of Nineveh, Seleucia, and Persepolis, were adorned.[48]

The suppositious nature of the court did not go un-remarked in the *Westminster Review*:

> We see enough in the Assyrian and Egyptian courts to warn us that the imagination of individuals may assume to furnish history, when it has really nothing to offer but ground of conjecture. The best minds must be engaged for such a work.[49]

Punch was another notable detractor from the display, perhaps not surprising when we consider the publication's generally less than enthusiastic reception of Layard the politician:

> This court ought to be removed from the Crystal palace. Under the flimsy pretext of illustrating the history and manners of an ancient people, Mr Layard and Mr Fergusson, and their accomplices, have contrived to insert into the building an elaborate squib upon our glorious constitution and several other of our glories and social advantages.[50]

Despite this criticism in the more upmarket publications, the court was generally considered to be a great success by most commentators.

Hogg's Instructor provided its readers with one of the most complete accounts of the court. In contrast to the majority of the other courts, comparatively little was known about Assyrian history, therefore many accounts that appeared in the periodical press therefore turn to the most widely available accounts of the ancient East which all would have been familiar with; those contained in the bible:

> The largest and last of these courts, on the western side of the nave, is that devoted to the illustration of our recently acquired knowledge of the art, the religious and social customs of the ancient Assyrians. Prepared by Mr Fergusson, under the superintendence of Mr Layard, we have in this Nineveh Court a reproduction in little of one of the gorgeous palaces of the Assyrian kings. Huge winged and human-headed bulls guard the entrance, and look sternly down upon the approaching visitor. Inside there are painted chambers of the prophet. 'She saw men portrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans portrayed with vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity.' Here, too, are huge eagle-headed figures, supposed to represent the god Nisroch of Scripture, before whose altar Sennacherib was slain by his sons; here are kings, and priests, and divinities – soldiers crossing rivers on inflated skins, armies besieging cities, and battering down the walls, charioteers pursuing the flying foe, and bands of prisoners pinioned, and led along in triumphal expression. It is marvellous to observe how much maybe learned from the sculptured slabs and richly-coloured paintings around these interesting chambers, with their massive columns and elaborate cornices; and one cannot but be struck with the thought, how large a proportion of these representations refer to scenes of bloodshed and slaughter, in which unhappily the nations of the earth are still so frequently involved.[51]

Just as the Colossi of Abu Simbel became the single iconic image of the Egyptian displays as the Crystal Palace, the human headed winged bulls occupied the same position in the Assyrian Court. In contrast to the Egyptian Court however, very few illustrations of the Nineveh Court appeared. Perhaps it was not considered to be as instantly spectacular as the other courts, or maybe editors considered that the public had been given enough pictures of Assyrian remains over the last seven years.

As well as the detailed descriptions of the Nineveh Court, many publications also speculated on the merits of Assyrian art. Comments on the brutality and barbarism of Assyrian art, like those in *Hogg's Instructor*, were common at the time. In general the lower market publications, such as the *Leisure Hour*, limited themselves to providing a gut impression for their readers, commenting on their 'bold and primitive grandeur.'[52] *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper* provided a similar comment stating that:

> Of the meaning of these outrageous-looking monsters shown in the picture we can make very little now. Doubtless they were objects of veneration; but whatever may have been their origin or design, it is difficult to conceive any figures more symbolic of strength or power.[53]

The essential characteristic of Assyrian art was agreed upon in a number of publications: power. 'The predominant feature of Grecian art is Beauty; and of Egyptian, Repose; that of the Assyrian is power,'[54] was the opinion of *Reynolds's Miscellany*, and similar sentiments were expressed across a wide range of publications. A number of publications commented on the artistic merits of Assyrian art, with frequent comparisons being made with the art of Greece and Egypt. A generally expressed sentiment in publications was that, 'in point of artistic merit, the productions of the Assyrian chisel stand midway between those of Egypt and those of the early Greeks.'[55] In commenting on artistic merit though the last word must go the prestigious *Art Journal*, which was somewhat damning of the artistic merits of Assyrian art:

> With the exception, however of some few parts we have lauded, there can be no doubt that the Assyrian remains, in an Art point of view, especially as regards to sculpture, are useful chiefly as results to avoid. They are not subjects worthy of imitation. There are some fine points about their Art, but these they have in common with the works of more intellectual and refined nations, only in a lesser degree; while their evil points are all their own, or, at any rate, only shared by those styles whose barbarisms we all repute.... They are beacons to avoid, rather than lights to work by.... As affording illustrations to our sacred records, they possess their highest interest.[56]

As a final comment on the Assyrian Court a passage *Reynolds's Miscellany* provides an interesting link between the display and the way that the east was considered in the mid-1850s:

> If we are philosophical, we may muse over a great nation whose religion, manners, dominion, and language have become a mere battle-ground for antiquaries – whose history has not only withered into fable but the pleasant seat of whose empire has grown into a desert – the abode of silence and death.
>
> It is a very long time ago since the world's childhood, when Europe was unknown and uncared for by these Asian kings, who held half the world in awe. Time has brought about its revenges. The East has sunk into its dotage; its ruined cities are mere mines of curiosities. The desert has gone on assimilating life to its own arid desolation – the wild beasts have recovered their long-lost dominion, – and only savage tribes dispute with them the possession of the high places of the earth. Empires have passed away since then like the shiftings of the clouds in summer. Europe has felt the dawn of civilisation, and in the East lingers now only the sadness of a perpetual sunset; and a new world has been discovered to inherit the traditions of Europe, as we now do the glory, the fame, and the conquests of the East.[57]

THE GRECIAN COURT CONTROVERSY

If reports had stressed power and brutality of Assyrian art and commented on the size and repose of Egyptian sculpture, a reader, whatever journal they were looking at, was left in no doubt as to the primary feature of Greek art; sublime beauty and unsurpassed genius (fig. 29). The *Leisure hour* described the contents of the court as 'an assemblage of the most marvellous productions of human genius.'[58] Despite the overwhelmingly positive response to the display at Sydenham – the impression given in the press is that it would have been extremely mean spirited to be too critical of such a public-spirited act – the display was not entirely without controversy.

The greatest dispute arose over the decision made by Owen Jones to present all of the architectural reproductions fully coloured, or 'polychromed' to use the word of the day. A particular area for criticism was the colouring of the Greek marbles, in particular the Parthenon frieze, whose figures were decorated so as to appear as close as possible to the colours of everyday life. This proved so controversial that Jones was forced to issue an apology, which appeared as one of the guidebooks to the exhibition.[59] Taking into consideration the reverence with which Greek art was considered during the period, it should come as no surprise that the response of the press was highly vocal. The following damning critique appeared in the *Leisure Hour*:

> Turning our eyes aloft, we see the noble frieze of the Parthenon elevated to an appropriate height; but we are puzzled to account for the strange tricks which some whimsical personage has been playing with the basso relievos. It would appear as though *carte blanche* has been given to some travelling showman to do his best to improve them, and that he had painted them as near as he could guess in the colours of life. The result has been the transformation of the works of the old Greek Phidias into the works of Mrs. Glass or Mrs. Grundy, moulded in coloured sugar to ornament the top of a twelfth cake. Others of the figures, not coloured, are stuck into a bright blue background, with a result so utterly and instantaneously destructive of the delicate effect of this species of sculpture, that the only wonder is that the hand which held the brush with the blue paint in it did not drop it instinctively after the first touch.[60]

Comments on the colouring appeared in a wide range of publications, but it was the highbrow publications which provided the most damning criticisms. The *Quarterly Review* was highly critical, but the most vitriolic condemnation appeared in the pages of *Blackwood's Magazine*:

> [M]ore culprits have been known to have been tarred and feathered than are even the pretended specimens of painted marbles on record. We would, out of consideration for the peculiar taste of the decorators, mitigate the punishment, by allowing the received proportion of Mr Jones's blue and vermillion to be mixed with the tar.... Besides, as fine feathers make fine birds, and choice maybe made of the brightest colours, it would be a fine sight, and one that would very much take the fancy of the public, to see the Polychromatists stand materially and bodily plastered, stuccoed, coloured, tarred and feathered, in the Crystal Palace, in their own glory or shame, as they may be pleased to take it, as living specimens of colouring interferences, to the infinite amusement of all beholders, and a caution to modern decorators.[61]

A sensed of outrage jumps from the pages of both *Blackwood's Magazine* and the *Quarterly Review* that the most perfect exemplar of taste, the art of Greece, should be so defaced by what they consider to be an experiment in ignorance. The fine grains of the argument are discussed in detail in *Blackwood's*, with a minute dissection of Jones's *Apology*, and numerous references to various classical authorities cited by the author. The evidence, they find, is somewhat lacking.

The Grecian court was not the only one to be coloured, both the Egyptian and Assyrian court were similarly decked out, and were criticised by the *Quarterly*

Review generally for their gaudiness, but painting Grecian art was a step too far. The *Quarterly Review* went as far as to suggest that such colouring was designed to make the display more appealing to the masses:

> Under the high sounding, but now ever ridiculous, name of Polchromy they have introduced an element which may be familiar to the sailor in his figure-head, to the mechanic in his tea garden, and to the child of five years old in the picture-book he has polychromed for himself, but which is simply a puzzle to the ignorant and a torture to the enlightened. We shall be told perhaps that no such view to the accommodation of all tastes presided over the application of the paint-pot; but this would invalidate their only excuse; for if investing Egypt and Nineveh in the gaudiest hues of Manchester cottons, if the colouring Anglo-Saxon effigies with a coarseness of illusion Madame Tussaud would disdain, and if the transformation of the glorious Panathenaic Procession into a bad Pilgrimage to Canterbury – derogatory alike to Stothard and Phidias – were not intended to please the ignorant, for whom it could have been designed.[62]

There is no evidence to suggest that the colouring of the palace was in any way an attempt to appeal to the masses. Indeed, if we read Owen Jones's apology, it appears he had a genuine and deep-rooted belief that ancient sculpture was coloured. Such detailed debate as that contained in *Blackwood's Magazine* and others passed by the majority of the cheaper journals. They were able to make a passing comment on the colouring, then let it go, whereas the more educated journals just could not let it pass without detailed commentary. It is likely though that much of this debate would have gone entirely unnoticed by the majority of visitors to the Crystal Palace, who were there for nothing more than a good day out.

A Visit To The Palace

One of the great strengths of the Great Exhibition of 1851 was that it brought a wide cross section of Victorian society into contact with one another for the just about the first time. The *Art Journal* noted that the:

> wholesome and ameliorating influence of its great prototype in Hyde Park was universally felt, and cheerfully acknowledged; all classes mingled within its fragile walls of glass with good feeling and a better opinion of each other, coming forth strengthened into a worthy friendship, the result of a closer and more intimate knowledge.[63]

Hope was expressed that this would again happen in the new Palace of the People, and this indeed appears to have occurred. It is implied in many accounts that such a mingling of classes would promote the moral improvement of the lower types, just by being in the presence of those of a higher education and social status than themselves. It appears that a number of wealthier visitors were especially attracted by the possibility of mingling with the masses:

> A great number of people who could, and willingly would, pay the five shillings, prefer the shilling days, when the whole place is alive with eager students and happy holiday-makers, to the dull Saturdays, when grand dresses trail along the nave, and aristocratic parties dine in the refreshment-rooms, while the courts were absolutely deserted. One fine Saturday lately, there were only two persons in the whole series of courts, all day. So much for a day of gentility at any time in the week![64]

This sentiment was again echoed in the *Quarterly Review*:

> But here, more than ever we, feel that we are not alone, nor that our imaginary class of society is here alone – here, still more than before, we feel how good it is to be brought in contact with multitudes of our fellow creatures, otherwise too seldom met by us except in some form that appeals to pity or censure – multitudes of the humble and the unknown wandering like ourselves through a maze of innocent pleasures, and loving to have them so.[65]

One of the most interesting commentaries on the Crystal Palace appears in the *Westminster Review*, and provides a unique glimpse into the reception of the displays in the Sydenham Crystal Palace. The article records a number of visitors' responses to the displays, including the experiences of agricultural labourers, artisans and the lower middle classes:

> Much might be learned of the popular mind if a few sensible persons would spare the time and attention for a score of days, to observe the comparative attractiveness of the different shows, and to overhear the remarks made by all sorts of people. These last are often very painful, and sometimes astonishing and mortifying beyond measure; but it is therefore all the more necessary that we should hear them.[66]

It is impossible to tell how accurate the accounts that appeared actually were, but there were probably a few grains of truth in many of them, albeit pushed a bit. As it is so rare to have any record of the spread of knowledge about the

ancient world among different population groups the article makes interesting reading. The first group of visitors to come under scrutiny was the labourers:

> The largest crowd is always to be found in the Natural History department. There children stand, with their thumbs in their mouths, staring at the polar bear and the reindeer, or peeping into the Greenland hut. The labourer in the smock frock wanders with his hands in his pockets, from one group of savages to another, evidently wondering whether all those brown fellows and yellow termagants are really men and women. The same labourer in the Greek court is a pitiable spectacle. He saunters on, swinging his feet in his thick shoes, looking up vacantly at the "images," in which he sees, as yet, no beauty: but when he arrives at the elephant in its rage and pain, or where the wounded tiger and the hunters are confronting each other, his dull face lights up, and he stands for half-an-hour before a single group.[67]

It seems that a labourer could understand the natural history and ethnography displays, but the Greek Court was entirely beyond comprehension. As Greek art was held to be the highest exemplar of taste, and most labourers would have been almost entirely uneducated, this is perhaps not surprising. Next to come to the attention of the writer were the artisans and school children who visited the display:

> But we have dwelt on the uninstructed class for to long – though we think their share in this national boon the most important. For the next class – the school-children, the artisans and trades-people, Natural History is still the most attractive. After sitting down, on their arrival, to their lumps of cake or their sandwiches, they go first to the savages and the beasts ... and they are disposed to visit the antediluvian region at the bottom of the garden. They have their own conceptions of the Flood, and, therefore, an interest in seeing what sorts of creatures lived, as they have been told, before that event. "What *are* those?" exclaimed a passenger in the railway carriage, as it ran along the embankment above the gardens. "The antediluvian animals, to be sure," a comrade informed him. "Why antediluvian?" "Because they were too large to go into the ark; and so they were all drowned." Such was the explanation. Whole classes of people go to see these monsters, every one provided with more or less of a theory, after the manner of this railway passenger: but how much better to go with an untenable theory than with no ideas whatever![68]

It is interesting to note the strong reactions to the natural history and geological displays which received significantly less coverage in the popular press than the architectural displays. In contrast, the supposedly better educated middle-classes of visitors were more interested in the historical

displays but, according to the *Westminster Review*, no less ignorant in their responses:

> We have said above that remarks are daily overheard there which cause pain and amazement from the ignorance they reveal; and in overhearing them it is impossible to avoid the belief that the ignorance of our middle-class people is greater in proportion to that of the educated than it could possibly have been in former times. It is curious enough to see a party of well-dressed tradespeople taking a final look as they walk down the nave at the sound of the gong, and to hear one of them say, as they pass the inscribed statue of he Huntress – "And there's Dinah." It is curious to hear the speculations on the extreme greenness of half-bronzed group of the three Printers – Gutenberg, Faust, and Schoeffer – and to hear a child told by its parent that those are Robin Hood and Little John, dressed all in green. When the neighbouring cast of the Eagle slayer was in an equally verdant state, except the head and arms, which were so darkened as to make the figure look like a negro, it was strange to hear the earnestness with which a genteel-looking girl thought it necessary to explain that the cast was not to remain so – that it was not finished.[69]

This was mild ignorance when compared to what was to follow in an account of visitors in the Pompeian House:

> But stranger and more sorrowful was an incident which took place in our presence in the Pompeian Court, one day last month. An elderly tradesman and his wife (to judge by their appearance) were sitting on a bench, looking about them. The wife pointed out the Impluvium, declaring it to be the warm bath, and made some more mistakes which were too much for the compassion of a widow lady who overheard them. She explained what the central space was for, and a good deal besides, during which the old man wandered off to some distance. When the widow-lady pointed out the main entrance with its *Cave Canem*, the wife observed that she supposed the door opened on the rail-road. Obviously puzzled, the lady replied, "The road:- yes, the road – the street – passes that way." Soon she came to the description of the chambers – "the small rooms where people lived." "And pray, ma'am," asked the wife, "will they soon be occupied?" She was actually without trace of an idea of what the place was; and when she was told of the burning mountain, and the ashes, and the burying of Pompeii, she was so astonished that she begged to be allowed to call her husband, to hear the wonderful story. This incident seems to us truly shocking; and persons like those, however comfortable in station and purse, are unqualified for such benefit of travel as the Crystal Palace affords: but they must be taken as belonging to the social phase which is passing away; – as hovering fragments of the painful dream which the light of knowledge and prosperity is rapidly dissolving.[70]

It would appear that the meaning of a number of the displays passed some visitors completely by, and that for many the educational opportunities that had been available for the previous quarter of a century had not been utilised. However, these examples are almost certainly selected as extreme cases to shock and amuse the *Westminster Review's* educated readers. But the very fact that there is some surprise that an ordinary artisan's wife should not know the story of Pompeii is in itself significant; if we look back just a quarter of a century there would have been no such expectations, and the *Westminster Review* would appear to have some justification in its claim that such widespread ignorance was passing by. As a final word on the value of the Palace as a place of entertainment and education has to go to *Blackwood's Magazine*:

> But before we lay down the pen, we would not have it supposed that we are not sensible both of the merits and advantages of the crystal palace, It ought to be, and doubtless will be, the mean of improving the people, and affording them rational amusement. There has been a little too much bombast about it, as a great college for the education of the mind of the people – too much eulogistic verbitage, which sickens the true source of rational admiration. It will improve, because it will amuse; for good amusement is education both for head and heart. The best praise it can receive is, that it is a place of permanent amusement ... nothing could be devised more beautiful and appropriate for those who, mainly want such relief from the toils and cares which eat into life.[71]

There can be no better last word on the Crystal Palace.

War in the Crimea effectively put an end to discussion of the Sydenham display in the periodical press, although in a few examples coverage resumes exactly where it left off after the conflict had ceased to become newsworthy. Although archaeology was less of a hot topic than foreign conflict, it appears to have been well up on the list of subjects for journalistic coverage. The Crystal Palace was again in the news in 1866, but this time in somewhat less fortunate circumstances. Fire swept through the northern end of the building, destroying the Assyrian court and the Egyptian Colossi entirely, and causing extensive damage to the Alhambra court. The event was met with a great feeling of sadness by the popular press, and plans were immediately discussed for the rebuilding of the damaged sections. Although this work never took place, it is clear from reading reports of the fire just what an important position the

People's Palace held in the popular imagination of the times. However, by the end of the century, the popularity of the Sydenham Crystal Palace was on the wane. It remained open until a catastrophic fire on the night of November 30, 1936 destroyed the building and its contents beyond any hope of repair. One of the greatest ever public presentations of the ancient world was no more.

Archaeology's Increasing Popularity

During the first decade of its opening over fifteen million visitors saw the displays at the Crystal Palace, bringing archaeology to the attention of the public in numbers not equalled until the age of television.[72] It also attracted a genuine cross section of the population, so for the first time members of even the least educated classes could experience archaeology, even if their understanding of what they saw may have been somewhat limited. The Sydenham Crystal Palace was the pinnacle of the popular presentation of archaeology in the nineteenth century.

The archaeological displays at Sydenham were the culmination of the increasingly visual presence of archaeology in the popular press in the period from 1830 onwards, which had gathered pace with the publication of the *Illustrated London News* in the 1840s. The themes selected for incorporation in the display corresponded closely to the archaeological themes that had already been established as worthy of reporting in the popular press through the earlier part of the century, and transformed the two dimensional image from the printed page into a three dimensional celebration of the ancient world. The Palace drew on the periodical press for its themes, and in turn the displays were brought to a wider audience by the same periodicals. This was particularly important for visitors who lacked previous knowledge of the ancient world, who otherwise would have found the displays to be largely unintelligible in terms of the archaeology they represented.

At Sydenham archaeology was truly for everyone, but it was a high point in the public presentation of the past that would not be reached again in the nineteenth century. Although spectacular future discoveries would feature in a wide range of periodical publications in the period after 1860, it was in the illustrated press, aimed at a reasonably well-educated middle class audience, where the public presentation of archaeology would develop. This coverage would establish archaeology as a part of the cultural awareness of British society, a position which the subject has occupied ever since.

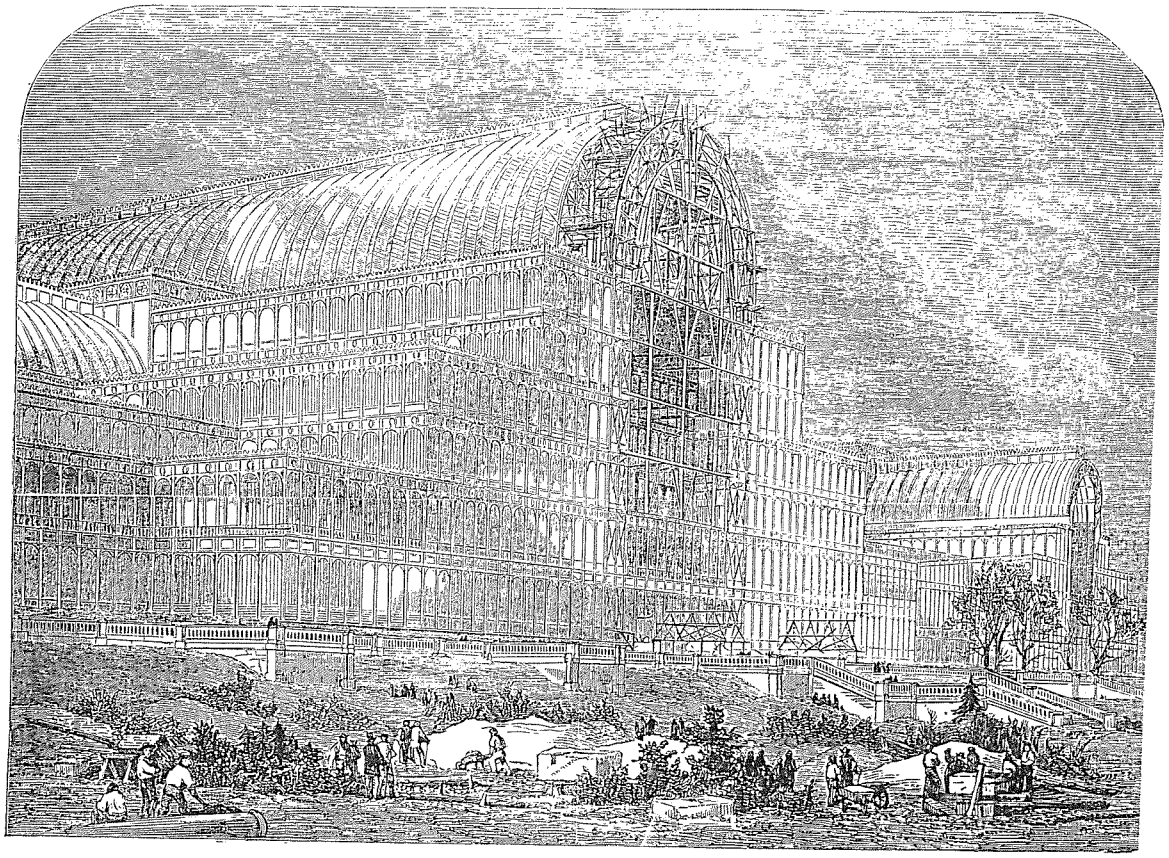


Figure 22 The Crystal Palace, Sydenham

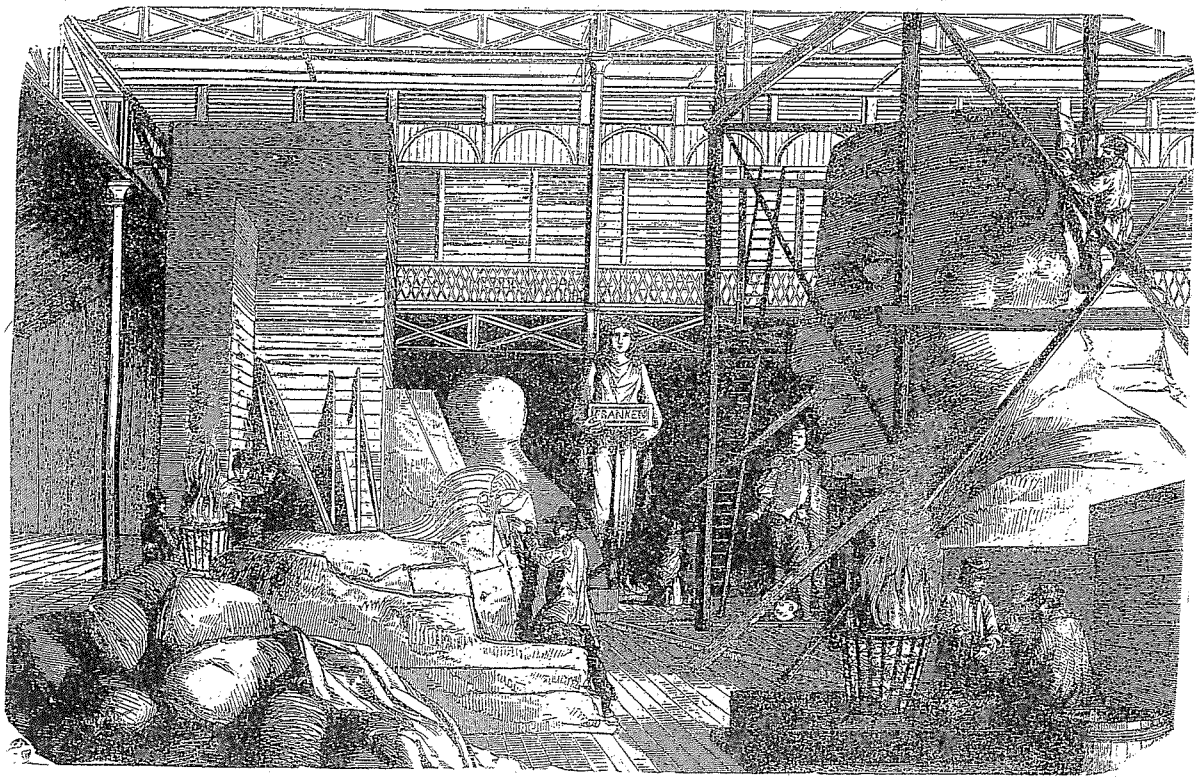


Figure 23 The Modelling Court

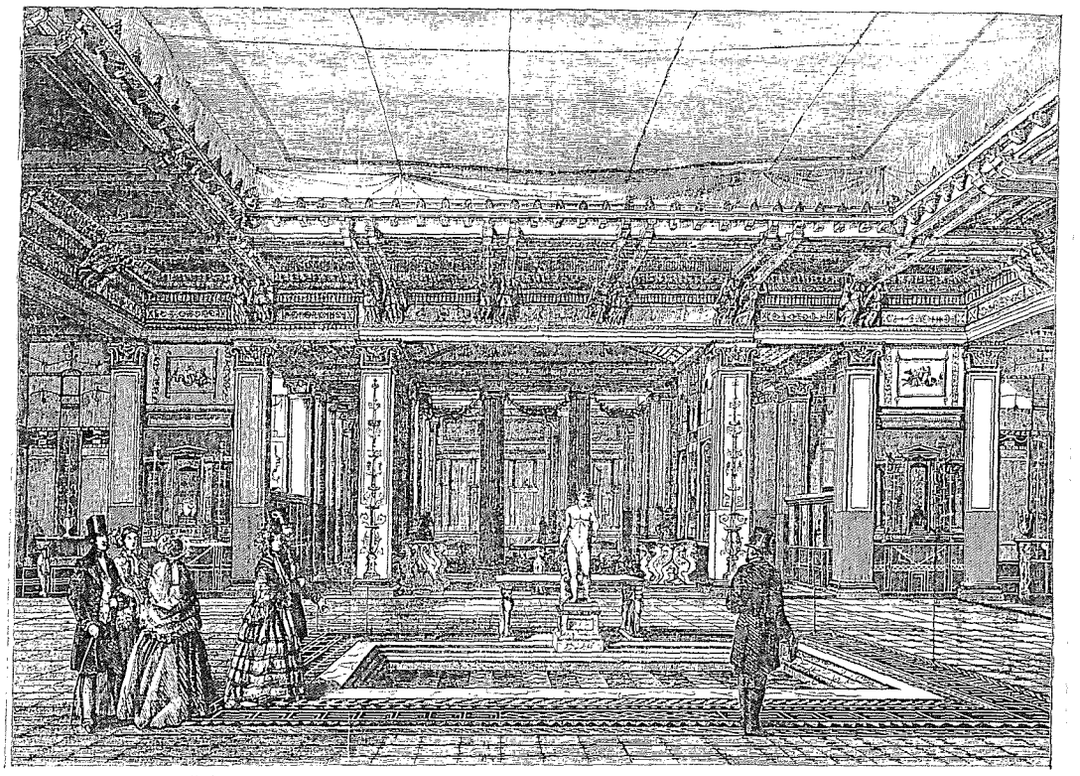


Figure 24 The Pompeian House

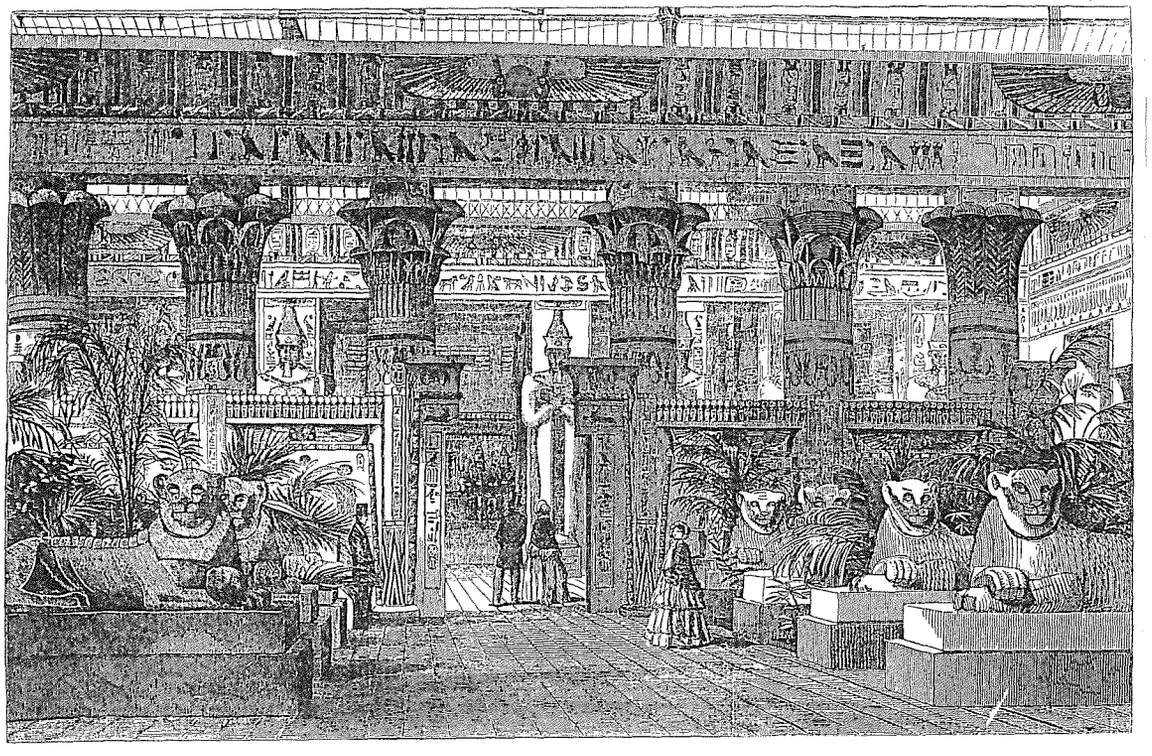


Figure 25 The Egyptian Court

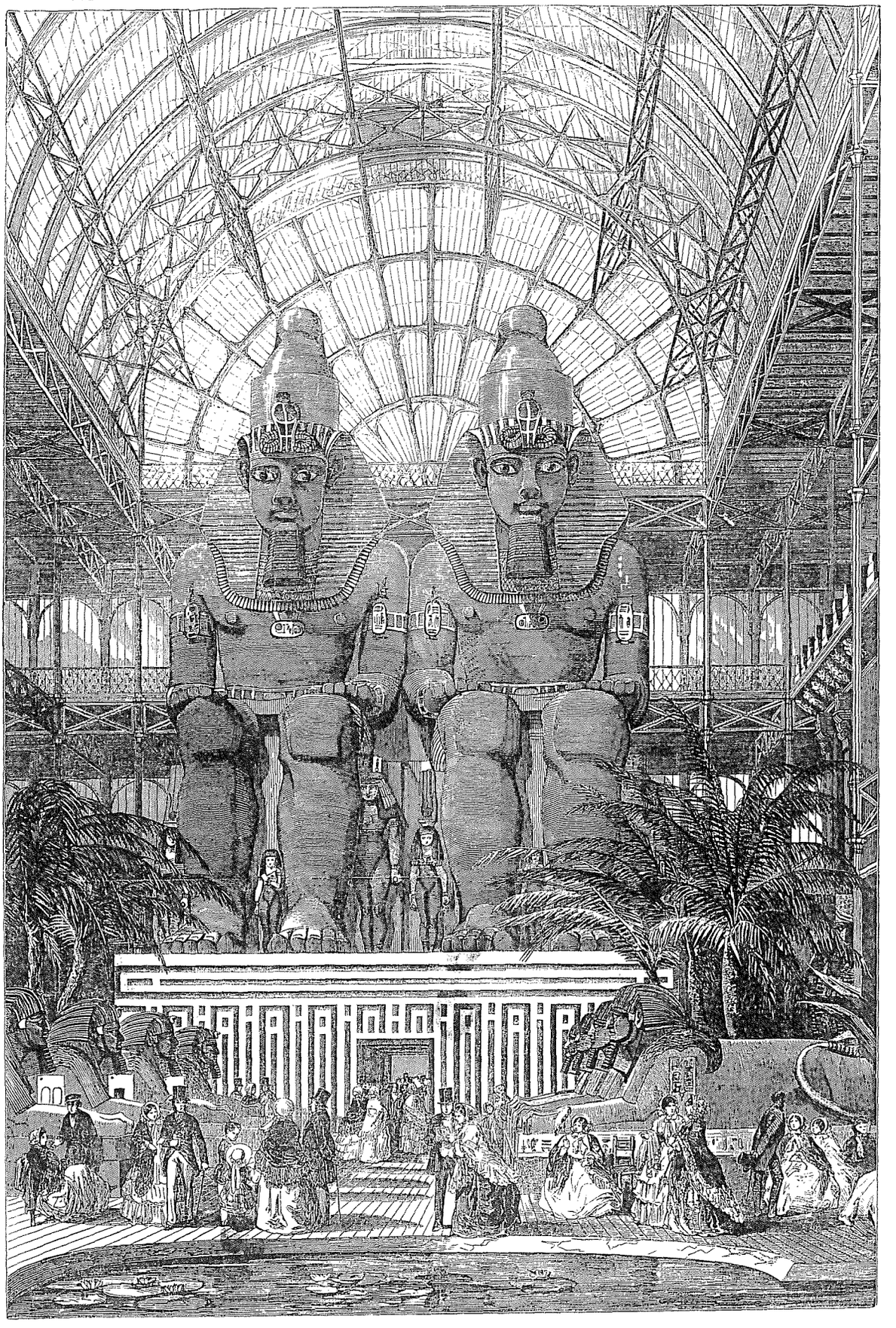
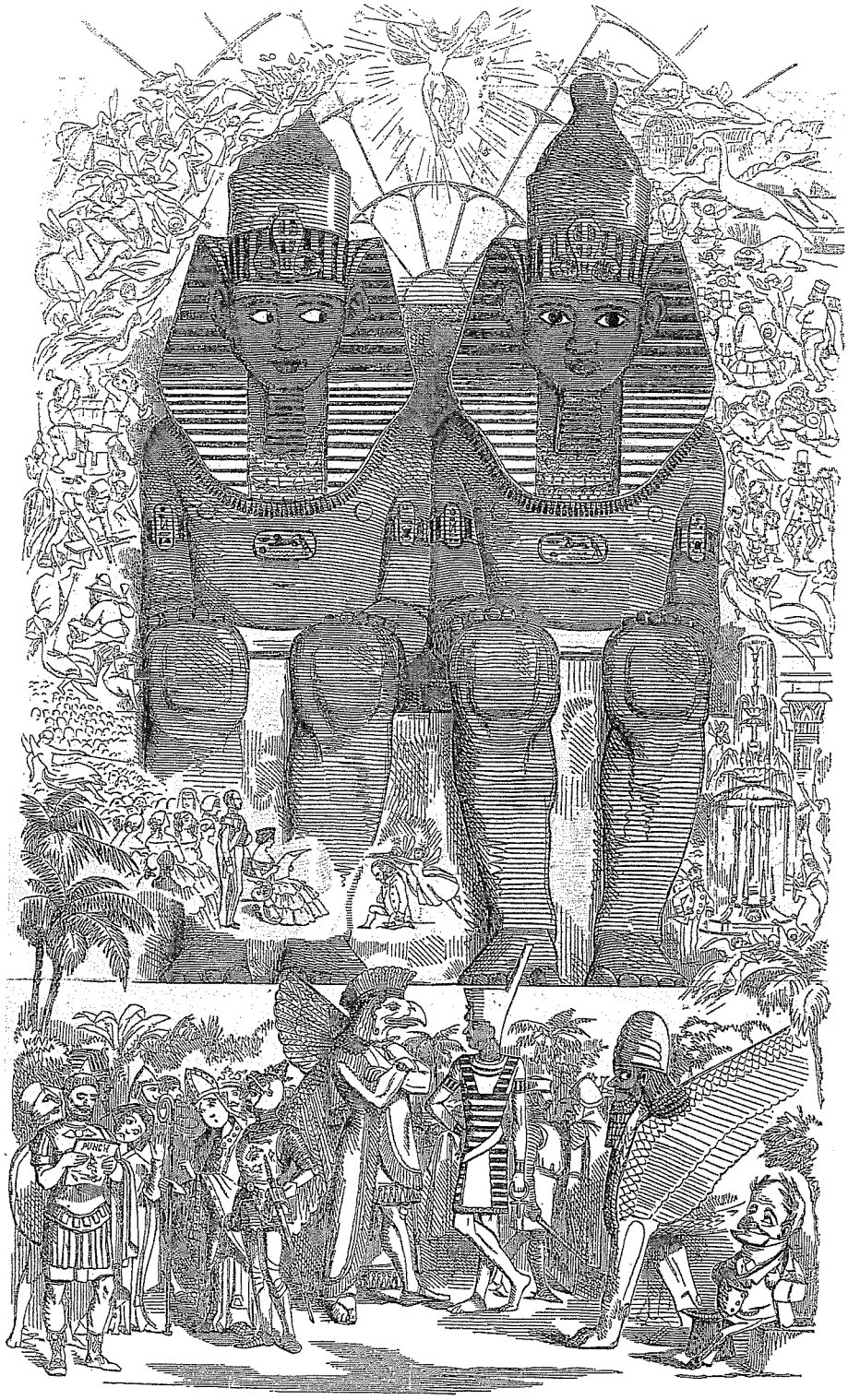


Figure 26 The Colossi of Abu Simbel



A REVERIE AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

Figure 27 Punch's Colossi

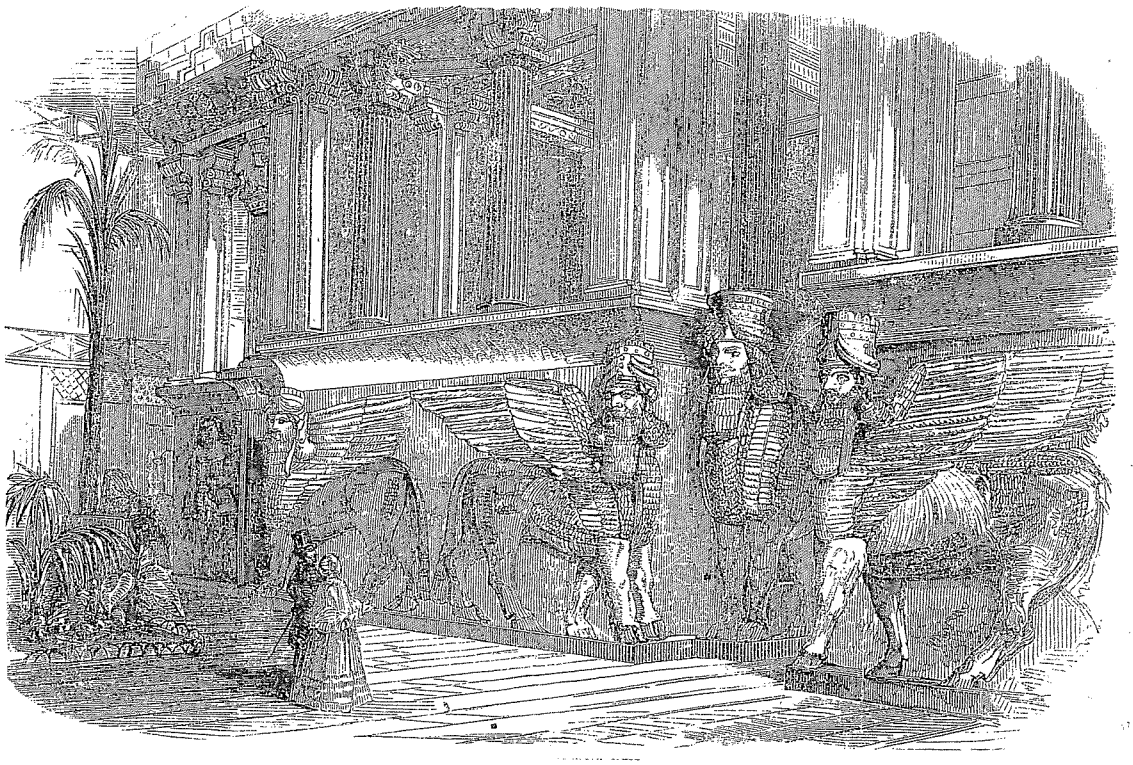


Figure 28 The Nineveh Court

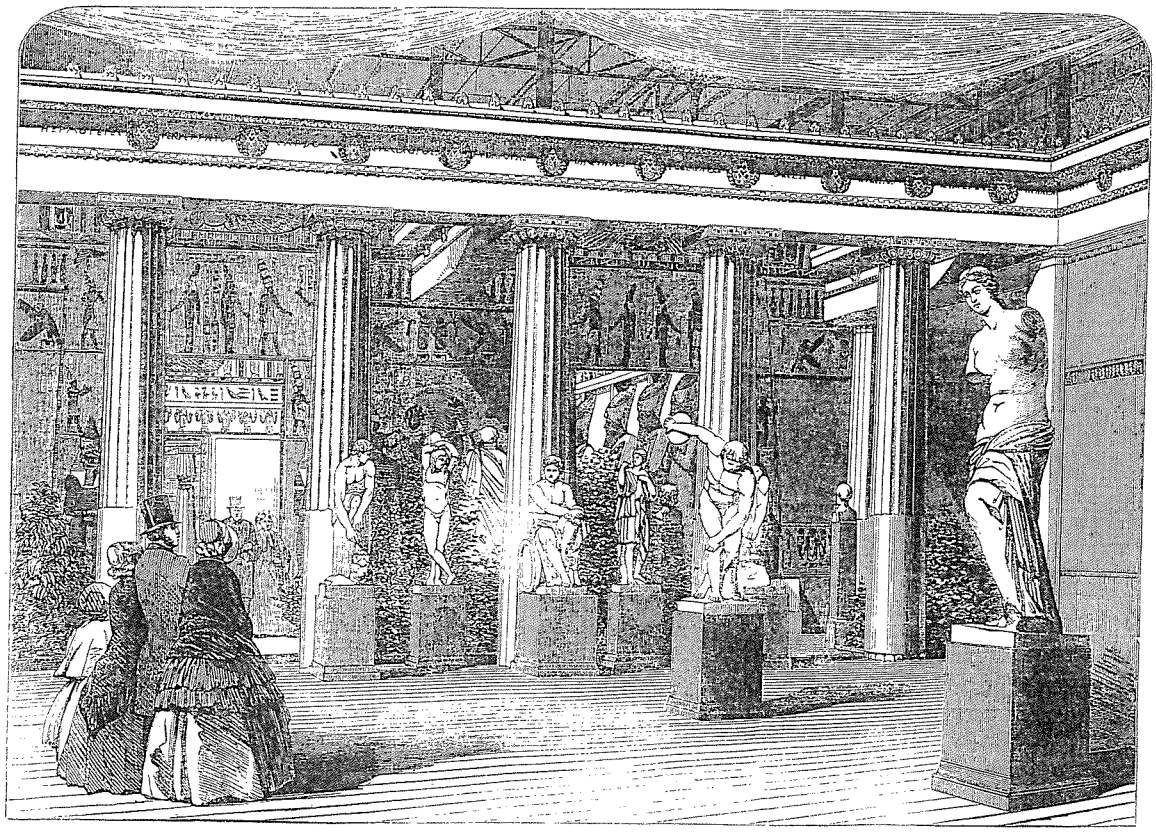


Figure 29 The Grecian Court

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

[1] The *London Journal*, Vol. 19 (1854), page 266.
[2] For a general account of the Great Exhibition of 1851 see Fay (1951); Sparling (1982); Auerbach (1999) and Hobhouse (2002). Greenhalgh (1988) gives a wider perspective on World's Fairs. The most comprehensive history of the Sydenham Crystal Palace is provided by Piggott (2004). See also Beaver (1970).
[3] *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, Vol. 1 (1854), page 54.
[4] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 96 (1855), pages 305-6.
[5] The *Art Journal*, Vol. 5 (1853), page 76.
[6] The *London Journal*, Vol. 19 (1854), page 181.
[7] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 96 (1855), pages 307-8.
[8] The *Art Journal*, Vol. 5 (1853), page 137.
[9] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), pages 536-7. The *Quarterly Review*, the *Art Journal* and the *Illustrated London News* provide similar comments.
[10] *Household Words*, Vol. 8 (1853), page 313.
[11] The *Illustrated London News*, (May 20 1854), page 467.
[12] The *London Journal*, Vol. 20 (1855), page 22.
[13] The *London Journal*, Vol. 20 (1855), page 22.
[14] The *London Journal*, Vol. 19 (1854), page 266.
[15] The *Leisure Hour*, No. 120 (1854), page 231.
[16] The construction of the exhibits was fully documented in a series of photographs by Philip Henry Delamotte (1854), and it is on these pictures that a number of the journalistic illustrations are based.
[17] *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, Vol. 1 (1854), page 254.
[18] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 543.
[19] *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, Vol. 1 (1854), page 254.
[20] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 544.
[21] The *Art Journal*, Vol. 5 (1853), page 76.
[22] *Reynolds's Miscellany*, Vol. 12 (1854), page 232.
[23] *Household Words*, Vol. 8 (1853), pages 314-5.
[24] *Chambers's Journal*, Vol. 22 (1854), page 323.
[25] *Hogg's Instructor*, Vol. 3 (1854), page 86.
[26] The *London Journal*, Vol. 19 (1854), page 266.
[27] The *London Journal*, Vol. 19 (1854), page 266.
[28] The *Illustrated London News*, (July 22, 1854), page 70.
[29] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 96 (1855), page 314.
[30] *Chambers's Journal*, Vol. 22 (1854), page 323.
[31] Jones & Bonomi (1854), pages 14-15.
[32] E.g. The *Art Journal*, Vol. 5 (1853), page 76.
[33] Jones & Bonomi (1854).
[34] Jones & Bonomi (1854), page 3.
[35] Jones & Bonomi (1854), page 3.
[36] Jones & Bonomi (1854), page 3.
[37] Jones & Bonomi (1854), page 3.
[38] The *London Journal*, Vol. 19 (1854), page 264.
[39] *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, Vol. 1 (1854), page 237.
[40] Bohrer (2003), pages 206-218, sets the Nineveh court into the wider context of the consumption of Assyria.
[41] Fergusson (1851).
[42] *Reynolds's Miscellany*, Vol.12 (1854), page 232.
[43] *Chambers's Journal*, Vol. 22 (1854), page 323.
[44] Layard (1854).
[45] *Reynolds's Miscellany*, Vol. 12 (1854), page 232.
[46] *Reynolds's Miscellany*, Vol. 17 (1854), page 9.
[47] The *Art Journal*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 303.
[48] *Chambers's Journal*, Vol. 22 (1854), page 323.
[49] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 549.
[50] *Punch*, Vol. 31 (1856), page 61.
[51] *Hogg's Instructor*, Vol. 3 (1854), page 86.
[52] The *Leisure Hour*, No. 121 (1854), page 248.
[53] *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*, Vol. 1 (1854), page 237.

[54] *Reynolds's Miscellany*, Vol. 12 (1854), page 232.
[55] The *Leisure Hour*, No. 121 (1854), page 249.
[56] The *Art Journal*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 303.
[57] *Reynolds's Miscellany*, Vol. 12 (1854), page 232.
[58] The *Leisure Hour*, No. 121 (1854), page 247.
[59] Jones (1854).
[60] The *Leisure Hour*, No. 121 (1854), pages 247-8.
[61] *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. 76 (1854), pages 34-5.
[62] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 96 (1855), pages 311-2.
[63] The *Art Journal*, Vol. 5 (1853), page 137.
[64] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 542.
[65] The *Quarterly Review*, Vol. 96 (1855), page 306.
[66] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 537.
[67] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), pages 537-8.
[68] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 540.
[69] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 545.
[70] The *Westminster Review*, Vol. 6 (1854), page 545-6.
[71] *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. 76 (1854), page 335.
[72] The actual figure was 15,266,882: Piggott (2004), page 166.

6

ARCHAEOLOGY FINDS ITS HOME

The popular coverage of Henry Layard's discoveries followed by the spectacular success of the Sydenham Crystal Palace had thrust archaeology into the public arena on a scale never before imagined. For the first time a genuine cross-section of the British reading public had access to information about the ancient world, with archaeology included in periodicals ranging from the most highbrow publications right down to the penny end of the market. But Sydenham was a high point that would not be reached again in the nineteenth century. Instead, the second half of the century is a period of consolidation rather than innovation in the reporting of archaeology to the public when many of the themes from earlier in the century were brought together for the first time. It is in the period after Sydenham when the popular presentation of archaeology came of age and began to adapt the format in which it would appear for the rest of the nineteenth century and beyond.

The presentation of archaeology to the British public in the second half of the nineteenth century is dominated by the *Illustrated London News*. The paper's coverage of Henry Layard discoveries in the East had demonstrated the potential for linking archaeology and the format of illustrated journalism, events which had begun to establish the *Illustrated London News* as the home of popular archaeology in Britain. This position was reinforced through the 1850s, with coverage of discoveries at Cumae and Canossa, the discovery and acquisition for the British Museum of the sculptures from the Mausoleum of Halicarnassos, located at modern day Bodrun in Turkey, and the excavation of Roman Wroxeter. Sydenham, and Layard before it, had reinforced the idea that the sort of archaeology that the public were interested in was the biggest, the oldest, and the best, which was a trend that became even more evident in the selection of the subject matter for the *Illustrated London News* as the century

progressed. In the late 1870s, two massive archaeological news stories would further highlight what it was that the public wanted to read about, as well what the target market for archaeology actually was. The most significant of these appeared between 1877 and 1878 and dealt with the discoveries of Heinrich Schliemann at Mycenae and Troy, and the arrival of Cleopatra's Needle in London. Both also received significant coverage in *The Times*, one of the most prestigious newspapers in the land, which demonstrates the growing importance of archaeology as a newsworthy topic.

Schliemann's Gold

If there is a single great archaeological news story of Victorian times it has to be the discoveries of Heinrich Schliemann (fig. 30).[1] Schliemann was German by birth, a successful entrepreneur and expert linguist, who had turned to archaeology after making his fortune in Russia and America. Having extensively studied the classics he set out to discover the cities mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*. History remembers Schliemann as the man who discovered and excavated Troy, but for the Victorian public it was his work at Mycenae that first captured the imagination of the popular press (fig. 31).

The story first appeared in *The Times* in September 1876 with a letter from Schliemann to the newspaper reporting his initial discoveries. As the story began to unfold several further contributions from Schliemann appeared, but it was with the publication of a series of short reports at the end of November, telegraphed from a correspondent at Argos, a short distance from Mycenae, that the importance of the treasures that were being uncovered became apparent. It was with a great sense of excitement that the correspondent reported to London news of Dr Schliemann's latest discoveries:

> "In the great circle of parallel slabs beneath the archaic sepulchral stones, considered by Pausanias, following tradition, as the tombs of Atreus, Agamemnon, Cassandra, Eurymedon, and their companions, Dr Schliemann has discovered immense tombs containing jewellery. He found, yesterday, in one portion of a tomb human bones, male and female, plate, jewellery of pure archaic gold weighing five kilogrammes, two sceptres with heads of crystal, and chased object in silver and bronze. It is impossible to describe the rich variety of the treasure."[2]

The Times continued to print updates of the latest treasure that Schliemann discovered in the tombs he was excavating. On November 30 the correspondent reported that:

> "Dr Schliemann, continuing his researches in the tombs already described, found, yesterday, the following articles of pure gold, splendidly ornamented: A helmet, two diadems, a woman's large comb, a large breastplate, three masks, six vases, two bracelets, two rings, three brooches, an immense mass of buttons, leaves, and other articles, three large girdles, a silver vase, a stag cast in lead, with a mass of swords, daggers, axes, and warriors' knives, all of bronze, with twenty-five flint headed arrows."[3]

Four days later, on December 4, *The Times* reported what would become Schliemann's most famous find of all; the golden mask, later claimed to be that of Agamemnon himself:

> "In the tomb previously referred to Dr Schliemann has discovered a large golden mask and an enormous breastplate of gold. He also found the body of a man, wonderfully preserved, especially the face. The head was round, the eyes large, and the mouth contained thirty-two fine teeth. There is, however, a difficulty in preserving the remains. There were also found fifteen bronze swords with great golden hilts – a mass of immense gold buttons, splendidly engraved, ornamented the sheaths of the swords; also two great golden goblets, and a great quantity of other objects in gold, articles in earthenware, a carved wooden box, several articles in chased crystal, ten large cooking utensils of bronze, but no traces of anything in iron or glass."[4]

This series of correspondence from *The Times* was reproduced in the *Illustrated London News* at the beginning of December 1876, then all was quiet for a couple of months.[5] When the Schliemann's discoveries next appeared in the *Illustrated London News* it was on the front page in the first week of February 1877.

It was through a series of fortuitous events the excavation at Mycenae appeared on the front page of the *Illustrated London News* (fig. 32). In early 1877 Melton Prior, one of the paper's most famous Special Artists who was best known for his series of illustrations from the front in the Crimean War, was in Turkey to cover the peace conference being held at Constantinople. Prior had travelled from Constantinople to Athens, then on to Mycenae, 'for the express purpose of making ... sketches, which will no doubt be interesting to many of

our readers.'[6] The cover illustration has unsurprisingly become one of the most famous images of Schliemann's researches. It shows Melton Prior, who often included himself in his illustrations, sitting sketching outside the famed Gate of the Lions leading into the acropolis at Mycenae, talking to a man who appears to be a local shepherd. Inside the issue was a double page spread featuring four further illustrations of the landscape around Mycenae, under the headline, 'Recent Antiquarian Discoveries in Greece.'[7] Accompanying the pictures was an article describing Mycenae and Schliemann's work there:

> Mycenae, as every student of classical history and literature is aware, was a powerful city-state of the Peloponnesus, now called the Morea, for ages preceding the rise of Athens. It seems to have enjoyed a sort of "hegemony," or political and military headship, among the Greek principalities before the era of republican governments. The siege of Troy, under whatever circumstances it really took place, and whatever may be thought of the veracity of Homer's "Iliad," is likely to have been conducted by the Greeks under the command of a King of Mycenae, whose name may possibly have been Agamemnon. It was, therefore, quite an appropriate task for Dr Schliemann, after his late exploration of the supposed site of Troy, on the coast of Asia Minor, near the entrance to the Dardanelles, to engage in similar operations at the site of Mycenae. That place is further associated with the tragedy of Agamemnon's murder by the wicked contrivance of his adulterous wife Clytemnestra and her paramour Aegisthus; a subject which employed the genius of each of the three Greek tragic poets, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, either in the principal action, or its consequences to the son and daughter of Agamemnon. This story was believed in later times; and it is mentioned by historians and topographers, writing after the Christian era, that the tombs of Agamemnon, of his father Atreus, and of his daughter Electra, were then to be seen at Mycenae; but that the bodies of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, who were slain by Orestes too avenge his father's death, had been excluded, and were buried outside the city walls.[8]

The links between Mycenae and the classical descriptions of the supposed burials of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra located there was one of the greatest attractions of the story, and in case readers were not familiar with all the details the *Illustrated London News* provided an outline. There is no doubt that the possibility of linking the story of Schliemann's discoveries to some of the most famous of classical tales made it all the more newsworthy, and over the years has become of the most commonly used devices to give colour to news of archaeological finds.

In the same article readers were presented with their first detailed account of the site itself, as featured in Prior's illustrations:

> [The] site is about seven miles from Argos, upon a raised recess between two high summits of the mountain range that bounds the east side of the Argolic plain. The Acropolis, the upper city of fortress, of which the entire circuit is yet to be seen, was built upon the top of a steep and rugged hill between two streams; its length is about 400 yards, and its breadth 200 yards. Within this enclosure the ground rises considerably; on the summit are the two opening to subterranean chambers, built of large irregular stones lined with plaster. There is a great gate at the north-west angle, and a postern gate to the north-east. In the great gate, which is called the "Gate of the Lions," the doorway is formed of two massive blocks of stone, with another laid across them, which upper stone is 15 ft. long, 4 ft. wide, and 6 ft. 7 in. high; and above this stands a triangular piece of green limestone, 12 ft. long, 10 ft. high, and 2 ft. thick, upon the face of which two lions are sculptured in bas-relief. The lions are represented standing on their hind legs, on at each side of a round pillar or altar, upon which their fore paws rest' the pillar, which broadens at the top, has a capital decorated with a row of circles between parallel fillets. Below the mound of the Acropolis, at some little distance towards the modern village of Mycenae, is a series of underground chambers, which has been called the Treasury of Atreus; they are cells of a conical form, the largest about 50 ft. in diameter at the floor, and their doorways have Tuscan or Doric half-columns. The Cyclopean architecture of the older ruins of Mycenae differs entirely from what is found in other ancient cities of Greece, and their antiquity is probably much greater.
>
> According to Dr Schliemann, the walls belong to three distinct periods, the oldest portion being the underlying part, which resembles the architecture of Tiryns. They surrounded the Acropolis, the lower city extending to the south-west, and being still market by traces of the Cyclopean walls and other remains. One of the most curious results of Dr Schliemann's excavations is the discovery that the city was reinhabited after its capture by the Argives in B.C. 458, although its very site had been so completely forgotten by Strabo's day that he declares no vestiges of it were in existence. The new Mycenae seems to have lasted about two centuries; at all events, the fluted vases found among its rubbish are of the Macedonian era, and come down to the second century B.C. Below the late city lie the ruins of the Mycenae of Homer, and these have already yielded an immense number of objects to Dr Schliemann's workmen.
>
> It is the opinion of Dr Schliemann that he has discovered the identical tombs of Atreus and Agamemnon, of Cassandra, another daughter of the last-named King, and of Eurymedon, his charioteer, according to the local tradition which Pausanias has preserved. He has opened five tombs cut in the rock, in which he found two gold

> cups, a gold diadem, some bronze and crystal vessels, a quantity of fine pottery, knives and lances, and, finally, the bones of a man and a woman, covered with ornaments of pure gold. In another double circular sepulchre, as we learn by a telegram this week, he has found four golden vases, richly ornamented, and two god signet-rings, one engraved with a palm-tree and seven figures of women. These and other treasures, belonging to the Greek Government, are to be deposited in a museum at Athens. We hope to give more Illustrations of the subject.[9]

Three weeks later the *Illustrated London News* provided its readers with the promised illustration of Schliemann's most celebrated discoveries (fig. 33). How the paper got the pictures is an interesting story. The discoveries, which were held in the Royal Bank of Greece and had not been publicly exhibited, had been showed in a private exhibition to Lord and Lady Salisbury and their party who were in Athens. Accompanying the party was Mr Marwood Taylor, who sent a sketch of the remains, drawn from memory (and remarkably accurate), to the *Illustrated London News*. Accompanying the sketch, which depicted the golden mask of Agamemnon, a silver cow's head, several gold cups and other ornaments in gold, was a description of the remains:

> They covered completely a large table on which they were laid out, the place of honour in the centre being given to the singular and really beautiful cow's head of silver, with golden horns. The object Markey No. 1 in our Illustration is one of the thin gold masks which had covered the faces of the skeletons in Agamemnon's tomb. These are extremely curious, but, alas! extremely ugly, the features being very coarsely fashioned, with sharp lines and angles, like the face a child might make out of wood with his pocket-knife. If Agamemnon is to be judged by the portrait of him, thus disinterred, he cannot certainly have represented the Greek traditional beauty; and if his brother was like him it is little to be wondered at that Helen should have preferred Paris.[10]

Over the course of the next six months the *Illustrated London News* printed a greater concentration of articles on Schliemann's discoveries than on any other archaeological story in the nineteenth century.[11] Henry Layard's researches in modern day Iraq in the late 1840s and early 1850s remained newsworthy for a longer period overall (seven years), but never attracted the almost weekly coverage that Schliemann did. Near the end of March 1877, to coincide with Dr Schliemann's arrival in London, the *Illustrated London News* printed one of the most detailed archaeological reports in its history.

> The arrival of Dr Schliemann in London, and his address to be delivered here to the Society of Antiquaries, must increase the amount of public interest already felt in his successful exploration of the sites of ancient classic history, or early traditions of romantic events in Greece, celebrated by the epic and tragic poets of that highly gifted nation. Our readers are fully aware of the direct efforts made by the proprietors of this Journal, in the employment successively of two Special Artists on the spot, as well as at Athens, to provide complete and accurate Illustrations of Dr Schliemann's remarkable discoveries. Views more especially of the ruins of Mycenae, in the Peloponnesus, and of the relics of antiquity found there, have been presented upon several occasions, with sufficient explanations of their general bearings; but an exact topographical view of the subject was not yet desired. This is now supplied by our well-known artist, Mr W. Simpson, from whose pencil we have obtained many effective Illustrations, and whose pen, guided by considerable archaeological and ethnological experience, has contributed some notes upon the significance of the recently unearthed memorials of a remote past age.[12]

Simpson provided the paper with a sketch plan of the acropolis of Mycenae, showing the area excavated by Schliemann with a detailed key to enable readers to identify all the features they had been reading about over the preceding months (fig. 34). Accompanying the plan was a lengthy account of Mycenae and Schliemann's work there written by Simpson, as well as a series of sketches depicting the site and its excavation. The following week more sketches and further descriptions appeared in a supplement to the *Illustrated London News*, along with a detailed account of Schliemann's lecture to the Society of Antiquaries (fig. 36).

The illustrations of the site of Mycenae, the surrounding area, the principal finds, the sketch plans of the excavation, and the detailed reports that accompanied the illustrations gave the public a level of information not equalled by any other archaeological story in the nineteenth century. The reason so much space was devoted to the story was due to a number of different factors, including the links that could be made between the discoveries and the classics, the possibility of following the latest discoveries as they happened, as well as the spectacular nature of the finds themselves and Schliemann's interesting personal story. As with Layard, and before him Belzoni, the coverage came prior to any official publication of the results of the excavation; readers would have needed to look no further than the pages of the *Illustrated London News* to find out all they wanted to about every aspect of the work that Schliemann had carried out at Mycenae.[13] The fact that the discovery and excavation of

Mycenae was covered by no less than three of the paper's most celebrated Special Artists is a testament to just how newsworthy the story was considered to be. Significant time and money was expended on the coverage, which resulted in the most comprehensive popular presentation of an archaeological discovery in the nineteenth century.

Interestingly, the story of the excavation of Troy, for which Schliemann has become most famous, was not covered by the paper in any more detail than passing references until 1877, two years after the publication of *Troy and its Remains* (1875), with further details added when some of the treasures from that excavation were put on display in the South Kensington Museum in 1877.[14] As with Layard's discoveries a quarter of a century before, readers still appear to value highly the possibility of seeing the original artefacts for themselves. To accompany the account of the display the paper included a series of illustrations of some of the contents for its readers (fig. 35). However, Schliemann's lecture to the Society of Antiquaries, the publication of his book, and the exhibition at South Kensington stimulated the interest of the *Illustrated London News* in Troy. In December of 1877 and January of the following year a series of reports and illustrations, again by W. Simpson, appeared in the paper. The coverage is in an almost identical format to that of Mycenae, blending scenery shots, accounts of the archaeology, and details of Schliemann's adventures; the paper had found a winning formula to report archaeological discoveries and was not about to change it.

It was not until the reporting of Schliemann's work at Mycenae that the possibilities for reporting archaeology, hinted at by the coverage of Belzoni's discoveries over half a century before, began to be realised. A comparison of the coverage of Layard and Schliemann's discoveries in the *Illustrated London News* provides an interesting insight into the different way that archaeology was covered by the paper. The Assyrian story focussed on the arrival of treasures in London, rather than their excavation and where they had originated. In contrast the coverage of Schliemann's work is much more 'archaeological' in its focus, with most attention being on the site of the excavation. Schliemann was also a much more complete news item, as readers were able to follow updates from the site of the excavations, read of Schliemann's background and latest work, and see pictures of the most significant discoveries. Here was the ideal opportunity to follow a story from the time that first discoveries were made, right up to the point when the most

important finds were displayed in London, which they almost invariably were. All these components combined were combined by the *Illustrated London News* in its coverage of Schliemann, and have been some of the key ingredients to the successful presentation of archaeology to the public that have been employed ever since.

The same year that Schliemann's work first received the attentions of the press another very different archaeological story was unfolding; Cleopatra's Needle was finally coming to England. The story that followed was very different to Schliemann. It brought together many of the themes of the successful reporting of archaeology from throughout the century, but at the same time was a truly Victorian news story that shows how archaeology had the power to capture the imagination of the British public.

Pharaohs in London

The fifty years from the explosion in coverage of ancient Egypt in the first quarter of the century to the late-1870s, with the exception of Sydenham, had been a quiet one for popular coverage of Egyptian discoveries. But its time for public acclaim had arrived once again. In the late 1870s archaeology again hit the news, but in a way unlike anything that had been seen since the arrival of the Nineveh Bulls at the British Museum in the early 1850s. There had been talk of transporting Cleopatra's Needle, the ancient Egyptian Obelisk, from the muddy banks of the river Nile at Alexandria since the British Victory in Egypt in the early years of the century, but to no avail. All this was about to change.

In a similar way to the spectacular discoveries of Belzoni and Layard, a rather unimpressive ancient Egyptian obelisk captured the imagination of the British public.[15] Despite the fact that the Needle itself was far from the most impressive ancient artefact to be transported to London, the story of its acquisition, transportation and erection on the Thames Embankment, which in many ways bears a strong resemblance to Belzoni's transportation of the head of Memnon, was covered in detail by *The Times*, and the *Illustrated London News*. In 1875, the *Illustrated London News* reported to its readers that a new attempt was to be made to transport Cleopatra's Needle to London:

> The removal of the Egyptian obelisk the twin of "Cleopatra's Needle" from the shore at Alexandria, where it lies prostrate, to England, has been during the last thirty years an intermittent subject of public attention, both in and out of Parliament. It

> was given to the English nation by Mahomet Ali; but our government have been deterred by the supposed heavy cost from bringing it home, and actually went so far as to intimate to the Egyptian Government that we should reject the present. Major-General James Alexander, who is taking an active interest in the subject, has ascertained that the Khedive is not only still willing to give it to us, but would be pleased to facilitate its removal to London. It is well known that when the Roman legions had conquered the East they brought more than a dozen of these characteristic relics of ancient Egypt to decorate their Imperial city. France also, under Napoleon I, following in the Roman footsteps, transported the obelisk of Luxor to Paris, where now, on its pedestal in the Place de la Concorde, it forms the finest monument of the French capital. The inscription on the pedestal there records the details of its transit, and states the cost at £80,000. Of course, the amount of cost is that which alone influences our decision about the one in Alexandria.[16]

Fortunately John Dixon, a London iron merchant, had a much cheaper scheme that made use of the latest technology of the day. The Needle was to be cased in as iron cylinder and rolled to the water's edge, before being towed to London. Costs were estimated at this stage to be £5,000 for transportation, and a further £5,000 for its erection in London. Concerns had been raised that the obelisk was in too poor a state to be worthy of transportation but a report on its condition from Dixon's brother, an engineer based in Egypt, who had uncovered part of the buried obelisk, asserted that the hieroglyphic inscriptions were in an excellent condition. The article in the *Illustrated London News* finished with a plea from Dixon:

> "A Conservative Government is even more careful of the national funds that a Liberal one; and I think, if this splendid monolith is ever to assume its position as a national monument, it must be done by private enterprise. Have we no gentlemen whose public spirit and munificence will prompt them to this undertaking? If they would come forward, this obelisk might soon be brought to England and presented to the nation."[17]

The man who stepped forward with financial assistance was the eminent London surgeon Dr Erasmus Wilson, who agreed to pay the £10,000 costs if Dixon would bring the obelisk to London. Dixon was to pay the initial costs out of his own pocket, and be reimbursed by Wilson upon the safe arrival of Cleopatra's Needle. Payment was conditional upon the safe arrival of the obelisk in London, and any costs over and above £10,000 were to be footed by Dixon. Attempts to bring the Needle to England began in earnest in 1877, and

between 1877 and 1878 Dixon was a regular correspondent to *The Times* to report the progress of his attempt to bring the obelisk to England to the British public.

The first problem lay in actually taking possession of the obelisk as, although Cleopatra's Needle was British property, it lay on privately owned land. The owner of the land, a Greek merchant by the name of Demetrio, was not prepared to co-operate at first with a British attempt to remove the Needle. When Dixon first arrived he was reported to have met a hostile reception and found the obelisk fenced off. There was also reports that Demetrio was planning to blow up the obelisk, and the fear that it would be used as rubble in the Alexandrian road expansion scheme was also reported.[18] In the end Demetrio relented and granted permission for the obelisk to be removed, putting all hostilities down to a misunderstanding. A letter from John Dixon to the editor of *The Times* reported the story to British readers:

> Sir, – I hope you will not think me obtrusive if I ask you to spare me a few lines of your valuable space simply to say that the temporary interruption of my plans for the removal of Cleopatra's Needle, which occurred a month ago, has happily ended, and the work now proceeds with renewed vigour. You are aware that objections had been raised by the proprietor of the ground on which the obelisk lay to its removal, and he erected a fence round it to establish his possession. For a moment the position of affairs looked rather embarrassing, and delay at the least appeared inevitable pending judicial enquiry and decision. I need not trouble you with minute details of the difficult and delicate negotiations which have terminated so happily and speedily. Suffice it to say that so soon as the difficulty appeared I despatched a prudent and trustworthy member of my own staff to Alexandria armed with full powers to meet the exigencies of the case. He carried also with him most friendly letters from Professor Owen, Dr Birch, myself, and others to M. Demetrio, upon whose ground the monument lies, and who considered himself its owner; and who, I may also be permitted to say is an opulent Hellene and an archaeological amateur of no mean repute.
>
> M. Demetrio had been irritated by a lawsuit with the Egyptian Government, in which he had not established the position he assumed in connexion with this very obelisk, which prevented him from building on the site, and when this splendid gift was presented by His Highness the Khedive to the English nation M. Demetrio's *amour propre* was offended that no acquiescence on his part had been either sought or obtained, and that, in fact, he was wholly and absolutely ignored.

> My agent, through Mr Vivian, duly represented the state of affairs to the Khedive, and immediately measures were taken to redress M. Demetrio's susceptibilities. This being done, he at once ... surrendered the coveted monolith to my representative.[19]

The preparations for the transportation of the Needle could now begin.

The design of the ship and the methods for moving the obelisk proved to be a subject of particular fascination for the *Illustrated London News* (fig. 37). An article from March 1877 detailed the plan:

> The removal of the obelisk will be accompanied in the following manner:- A wrought iron cylindrical pontoon, 92 ft long and 15 ft in diameter, tapered at each end to a vertical edge ... will be its only support in the water.... At the top of the pontoon, and near its centre, will be placed a small deck-house, with steering-wheel in the fore part, with accommodation for three men. There is a long, narrow hurricane-deck above the steering room, and a short mast with two sails surmounts whole. This pontoon boat will be hermetically sealed, the only means of access being manhole in the floor of the deck house. This will be securely fastened previous to the voyage, and only opened in case of emergency. The boat will be towed by steamer to London, the sails being merely used for steadying purposes.[20]

The cylinder was built around the obelisk where it lay, with Cleopatra's Needle held in place with wood and metal supports; not Arab rags or old Wellington boots as some had suggested![21] The whole was then rolled to the Mediterranean, where it was successfully floated, proving many detractors wrong. Ballast was added to the craft and it was prepared for the journey north. Accompanying the article in the *Illustrated London News* was a series of illustrations detailing the construction and floating of the obelisk. Somewhat prophetically one of the illustrations included showed an imaginary scene of the Cleopatra in high seas in the Bay of Biscay, something that would become all too real the following October.

The story of the transportation of the obelisk in the iron hull of the cylinder ship Cleopatra is a story of bravery, tragedy, humour and triumph. The journey north of Cleopatra's Needle, pulled by the steamship Olga, began badly. No-sooner had the ship left Alexandria then it had to be put about due to the illness of the first mate of the Cleopatra. When the journey finally recommenced the troubles appeared to have been left behind in Egypt. Daily updates in *The Times* kept the British public informed of the progress north of the Cleopatra. The journey proved to be uneventful, until the obelisk entered the Bay of Biscay in October 1877. After several days of storms, and no contact

with the Olga, the steamer was spotted off the coast of Falmouth. *The Times* carried the following report from its Falmouth correspondent:

> "The Olga, steamer, arrived at Falmouth late on Wednesday evening. Much consternation was caused by the news that she was passing the Lizard without the Cleopatra, and on boarding the steamer it was learnt that the obelisk was abandoned in the Bay of Biscay on Monday morning in a gale."[22]

The Olga had arrived safely, but of the Cleopatra there was no sign. The *Illustrated London News* provided its readers with rather more detail the following Saturday:

> Last Sunday night there sprang up a gale, which was not only felt in London and throughout the United Kingdom, but which also raged around the coast and in the Bay of Biscay. So high did the seas run off Cape Finisterre on Sunday night (as reported by the captain of the steam-ship Olga, which reached Falmouth on Wednesday evening) that the Cleopatra cylinder-ship had to be cast off by the Olga, which had towed it from Alexandria. We learn that the voyage was of the most uneventful nature until the Olga arrived off Cape Finisterre at five last Saturday evening. Next morning a violent squall arose, increasing to a furious gale. The sea rose with great rapidity; but the Cleopatra, which contained the obelisk, behaved admirably, shipping no heavy water. On Sunday evening, with falling barometer, the wind veered to westward, the sea becoming so turbulent and dangerous that the Cleopatra was hove to. At six in the evening a tremendous sea threw the Cleopatra on her beam ends. The mast was then cut away, and every effort made to right her, but without success. Signals of distress were made by the Cleopatra, and at ten o'clock, the wind having abated, six men from the Olga pluckily went to the rescue. They succeeded in reaching the Cleopatra, but before they could render any assistance their boat was swept away and seen no more. The Olga went on an unsuccessful search for the men, and then returned to where the Cleopatra had been cut adrift, the Maltese crew of the Cleopatra having been previously saved by a boat being hauled to her from the Olga by means of a rope. The search for the valuable treasure (vainer, one would think, that the proverbially vain search for a needle in a bundle of hay) was continued for some time; but after several hours of profitless drifting about, further hope was abandoned.[23]

Six members of the Olga's crew drowned in the attempt to save the seamen on the Cleopatra, who all arrived home safely. Back in England letters were published in *The Times*, including one from the Queen, lamenting the loss of

the sailors, although no one appeared to question the wisdom of bringing the Needle to London.

Upon hearing of the loss of the Needle Dixon appeared unperturbed, and reportedly telegraphed the Khedive with a request for a replacement! This event was reported with some humour in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as one of the interesting topics of 'table talk' of the week:

> The prettiest thing about the Obelisk (wherever they put it) will still be the telegram reported to have been sent to the Khedive of Egypt by the contractor, when he thought the needle and case had gone to the bottom of the sea: "Send another Obelisk."[24]

The story was also reported in a slightly less jocular manner in *The Times*:

> The contractor himself, before learning late on Thursday of the recovery of his castaway ship, telegraphed in the early part of the same day to the Khedive direct, to ask for another obelisk, either the standing one at Alexandria or that still erect at Luxor, the fellow of the one which adorns the Place de la Concorde at Paris.[25]

In the end none of this proved necessary. As the *Illustrated London News* reported:

> The loss of Cleopatra's Needle was, however, but temporary: We are glad to learn that the Fitzmaurice steamer, from Middlesburg for Valencia, fell in with an recovered the cylinder vessel ninety miles north of Ferrol.[26]

The Cleopatra was picked up and secured by the Scottish vessel until a new steamer could arrive. The captain of the Cleopatra, Carter, went with the steamer determined to see his ship safely home. Perhaps, as a correspondent to *The Times* noted, he was anxious not to lose another ship under his command; the Cleopatra would have been the fourth![27] As the Needle had been abandoned at sea, the captain of the steamer that picked it up made a salvage claim for the obelisk's value. Later in court the value of Cleopatra's Needle was deemed to be £25,000, a much greater sum than the £2,500 that Egyptologists had estimated.[28] The adventures of the Cleopatra in the Bay of Biscay was brought to the readers of the *Illustrated London News* in a series of imaginative reconstructions in a supplement to the paper, based on reports from the captain of the Cleopatra. The story even made the front page on October 27 1877, with a full-page picture depicting the abandoning of the Cleopatra in high

seas (fig. 38).[29] Around a week after Cleopatra's Needle had been recovered it was safely moored at the East India Company dock in London (fig. 39). At the same time as the drama in the Bay of Biscay was taking place a very different debate was raging in London; where to put the Needle.

The 'battle of the sites,' as it came to be known, was a subject of great debate in the letters page of *The Times*. The early favourite for the position of the obelisk was at the centre of Parliament Square, alongside Westminster Abbey, the houses of parliament and statues of 'great Englishmen of the past.' Considerable support was expressed for this site in letters to *The Times*, and it was the site favoured by both Erasmus Wilson and John Dixon, as being a suitable resting place for the 'illustrious stranger.' In one letter Wilson stated that the spirits of the pharaohs would be happy with the noble associations of the site.[30] Lord Harrowby considered the Westminster site to have particular 'moral fitness' as a home for Cleopatra's Needle:

> Now its moral fitness who can doubt? The record of the most memorable deeds, associated with the names of Nelson and Abercrombie and, the object is brought into relation with all that we are proudest of in our in our national history - our houses of Parliament, our famous Hill, and the great Abbey, which holds within its bosom our most venerated memories; and it stands surrounded by the statues of statesmen whom we have rejoiced to commemorate. The place would lend honour to the obelisk, the obelisk would lend honour to the place. Anywhere else, in all the other positions which have been suggested, it would be a mere tall stone, a mere monolith, only remarkable for its dimensions, and for imperfectly seen configurations on its surface, but having no significance, telling no story, awakening no associations. So much for the moral fitness of the site.[31]

A full sized wooden replica was placed in Parliament Square to test its suitability (fig. 40). As *The Times* reported:

> An unfamiliar, but striking object presents itself at this moment before the eye of a visitor to Westminster, and seems to challenge his attention from whatever side he arrives. In full view from the whole of Victoria -street, clearly seen from the foot of Westminster-bridge, visible from a great part of Parliament-street and from the end of Great George-street, the form of an Egyptian obelisk, roughly but effectively represented in wood, and of the full size and actual colour of Cleopatra's Needle asserts itself. After carefully examining the effect of the obelisk from all points of view, we have formed the opinion that that the spot chosen is well adapted to be the permanent position of monument, - nay that it would be very difficult to find a

better. The site in Westminster partakes of the advantages of most of those in Rome.[32]

The Westminster site did have a number of detractors from an aesthetic point of view, notably architect Charles Barry. In particular it was felt that the juxtaposition of the obelisk with other tall buildings would disadvantage Cleopatra's Needle:

> Sir, - I sincerely hope that another and more fitting site will be found in London for the obelisk than the centre of Parliament-square, which really seems to me to fail in every essential requisite for the purpose, as fully demonstrated by the full-sized model there erected.
>
> 1 - Its own dimensions are dwarfed by the important and lofty buildings around.
> 2 - It interferes with the facades of those buildings, bisecting them unequally from all available points of view.
> 3 - It forms the centre of no street vista at present existing or likely to be formed.[33]

Only one correspondent questioned the suitability of linking an ancient Egyptian monument with the 'noblest' buildings in the land.[34] In the end, however, the Westminster site proved to be impossible as the planned location was situated directly over an underground railway tunnel. The Metropolitan District Underground Railway demanded 'a perpetual guarantee against accident' that might be brought about by the obelisk, which the Commissioner of Works, Gerard Noel, was unable to consent to.[35]

With the favoured site being impossible a number of other locations were proposed around London, including the British Museum, Regents Park, Horse Guard's parade, Primrose Hill and the Thames Embankment. *Punch* was quick to pick up on this controversy and included a series of sketches on the possible locations of the Needle, which nicely capture the farcical situation that was emerging. The wooden obelisk was moved to a number of sites before the Thames Embankment was finally chosen as the most suitable permanent home for Cleopatra's Needle.

During this time the Cleopatra had remained moored at the East India Company dock. The cylinder had been opened to reveal the obelisk, and it was open to the general public before two o'clock each day, and to pass holders after that hour. Cleopatra's Needle proved to be a popular attraction, receiving a number of visitors each day, including the Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Visitors were permitted to walk on the exposed side of the Needle to examine it

more closely, which caused concern among Egyptologists. Henry Tompkins wrote to *The Times* in February 1878 to complain about the damage being caused to the obelisk:

> Sir, - As an Egyptologist, will you allow me to call the attention of Mr. Erasmus Wilson to the fact that great damage will probably be caused to the Cleopatra's Needle by allowing hundreds of persons to jump down upon the exposed portion of its surface, thus defacing the already damaged hieroglyphics? Every person who goes to see it is permitted to jump down and walk upon its surface. Hoping that this needless damage may not be allowed to continue... [36]

The practice was soon stopped. On May 18 the Cleopatra was moved from the East India dock to Westminster, and preparations for raising Cleopatra's Needle could begin.

It was decided that a cast of the Needle should be made by the South Kensington Museum before lifting, in case any damage should be caused to the obelisk in the process. This idea received backing from Dr Samuel Birch of the British Museum.[37] The casting process appears, however, to have been entirely unsuccessful. According to one correspondent to *The Times*, the finished result was 'a huge oblong mass of plaster devoid of any one quality which can redeem its ugliness.'[38]

As with its illustrations of Layard's findings from Assyria in the late 1840s to early 1850s, the *Illustrated London News* provided one of the earliest published depictions of the hieroglyphic inscriptions on the faces of the obelisk. These illustrations predate the translations of the texts, and the clear aim of the engravings was to provide scholars of ancient Egypt with a copy on which they could begin their work.

In preparation for the lifting the site was fenced off, although it continued to attract a number of visitors. The obelisk was to be placed on an inscribed pedestal, with permission being granted by the Metropolitan Board of Works for a number of items to be placed in the base. *The Times* included 'an authentic list of objects deposited in the two large earthenware jars enclosed in the core of the obelisks pedestal and supports, and now at length covered by the monoliths base.'[39]

> Standard foot and pound, presented by the Standard Department of the Board of Trade; bronze model of the obelisk; 1/2in. scale to the foot, cast and presented by Mr. Joseph Whitley, of Leeds; copies of "Engineering" printed on vellum, with plans

> of the various arrangements and details employed in erecting and transporting the obelisk, together with its complete history, presented by the suppliers of the publication; jars of Doulton ware, presented by Doulton & Co.; a piece of the obelisk stone; complete set of British coinage, including an Empress of India rupee; parchment copy of Dr. Birch's translation of the obelisk's hieroglyphics; standard gauge to 1,000th part of an inch as an example of accurate workmanship, presented by J. Holscapffel; portrait of Her Majesty the Queen; Bibles in various languages, presented by the British and Foreign Bible Society; Bradshaw's railway guide; Mappin's shilling razor; case of cigars; pipes; box of hairpins and sundry articles of female adornment; Alexandra feeding bottle and children's toys, presented by a lady; a Tangye's hydraulic jack as used in raising the obelisk, presented by Tangye Brothers; wire ropes and specimens of submarine cables, presented by Mr. R. S. Newall; map of London; copies of the daily and illustrated papers; photographs of a dozen pretty Englishwomen, presented by Captain Henry Carter; a 2ft. rule; a London directory; "Whitaker's Almanac," the last copy of the impression for the year presented by the publishers.[40]

The items selected provide a revealing glimpse into the way that Victorian Britain wanted to be remembered. Most items are of an industrial nature reflecting Britain's position as the leader of world manufacturing; Captain Henry Carter's donation of photographs of a dozen pretty Englishwomen is perhaps the most unusual contribution with which to commemorate the times! In the selection of goods placed in the base there is a hint as to what it was about Cleopatra's Needle that made it so newsworthy. Many of the goods not only had an association with industry, but would have also played a part in the eventful journey of the obelisk from the sands of Alexandria to the Thames Embankment. While no one forgot that it was an ancient Egyptian obelisk, the focus of the news story is a very modern one: a triumph of Victorian engineering and daring against the odds.

The final lifting took place on Sept 12, 1878 in front of a large crowd, who were kept outside the enclosure, and a number of friends of Wilson and Dixon, who watched from a barge in the Thames (fig. 41). The lifting with hydraulic jacks was a success and the flags of Britain and Egypt were raised over the newly erected obelisk. The eventful journey of Cleopatra's Needle was finally over.

The Needle fever that swept the capital at the end of the 1870s brought Egyptian antiquities into the public eye one a scale not seen since the days of Belzoni's exhibition at the Egyptian Hall. After 1882, the year the British

established a protectorate in Egypt, there was a huge increase in the number of reports detailing ancient Egyptian discoveries in the pages of the *Illustrated London News*. This was especially apparent after the Egypt Exploration Fund was established in 1883 with annual reports detailing the year's discoveries, written by the Society's founder Amelia B. Edwards, appearing in the paper. Later the paper would turn its attention to Flinders Petrie, an archaeological character almost on the scale of Belzoni, Layard, and Schliemann, who the paper at one point attributed the mystical powers of a Tibetan deity for his ability to find pottery! All these stories played out in a similar way to Schliemann, although for the first time a number of the reports were written by archaeologists; a trend that would continue into the twentieth century. For the rest of the century the reporting of archaeology remained much as it was in the late 1870s.

Moving Forward, Looking Back

Although Schliemann's discoveries and the arrival of Cleopatra's Needle were not reported in such a wide range of periodicals as Sydenham, the coverage that was provided by the *Illustrated London News* in particular set the scene for the presentation of archaeology to the public for the rest of the century and beyond. The archaeological subject matter was suitably spectacular and therefore suitable for illustration, details of the story of the excavation, the transportation (if it was suitably interesting) and the display of some of the artefacts in London were included, there was also a good story associated with the discoveries, and strong characters, often with a story of their own. The latter ingredient has consistently been one of the most important factors in the public presentation of archaeology, and looking back to Belzoni, Layard, and Schliemann it is easy to see why their personal biographies became so closely intertwined with the reporting of their discoveries. Individually, all of these elements of the archaeological story had been pioneered and explored through the course of the nineteenth century, but for the first time they were all brought together to present a new standard in the public presentation of archaeology. Each story was also entirely self-contained; therefore even if a reader had no knowledge of archaeology prior to reading the articles by the end they could be well versed on the subject matter discussed. If you look at just

about any good presentation of archaeology to appear since the 1870s very little in terms of the basic elements of the story will have changed.

Near the end of the century the main archaeological story in the *Illustrated London News* was the excavation of Roman Silchester, often referred to in the popular press as the British Pompeii. The archaeological societies at a regional and national level continued with their work on British sites and architecture, which was noted every so often in the wider press, but, for the most part, it was now only the most visually spectacular discoveries that received widespread public attention. In 1900 Bruce Ingram, the great-grandson of the founder had become editor of the *Illustrated London News*, and the quantity of archaeology in the paper reached new heights. In the early twentieth century the paper added another dimension to its coverage of archaeological discoveries with the frequent use of imaginative reconstructions of life in the ancient past.[41] But already the new technologies of the twentieth century were changing the way that archaeology was reported to the public. In particular the arrival of cinematic newsreels set a new standard for the presentation of archaeology, enabling people to see the discovery of the past unravelling before their eyes for the very first time. Film was a medium that was particularly well suited to the presentation of archaeology, in that it captured the visual dimension of the subject so perfectly. The arrival of television broadcasting took this to new levels, both in terms of audience numbers and the range of programmes available. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the arrival of digital broadcasting bringing an increase in the number of specialist channels that include archaeology programming, the popularity of the subject is showing no signs of diminishing. Over the years the medium may have changed, but many of the themes of popular presentation of archaeology altered very little since the nineteenth century. Reading some of the great archaeological news stories today it is easy to see how they captured the imagination of thousands of people over a century ago and have retained the ability to fascinate us across the generations.

Figure 30 Heinrich Schliemann

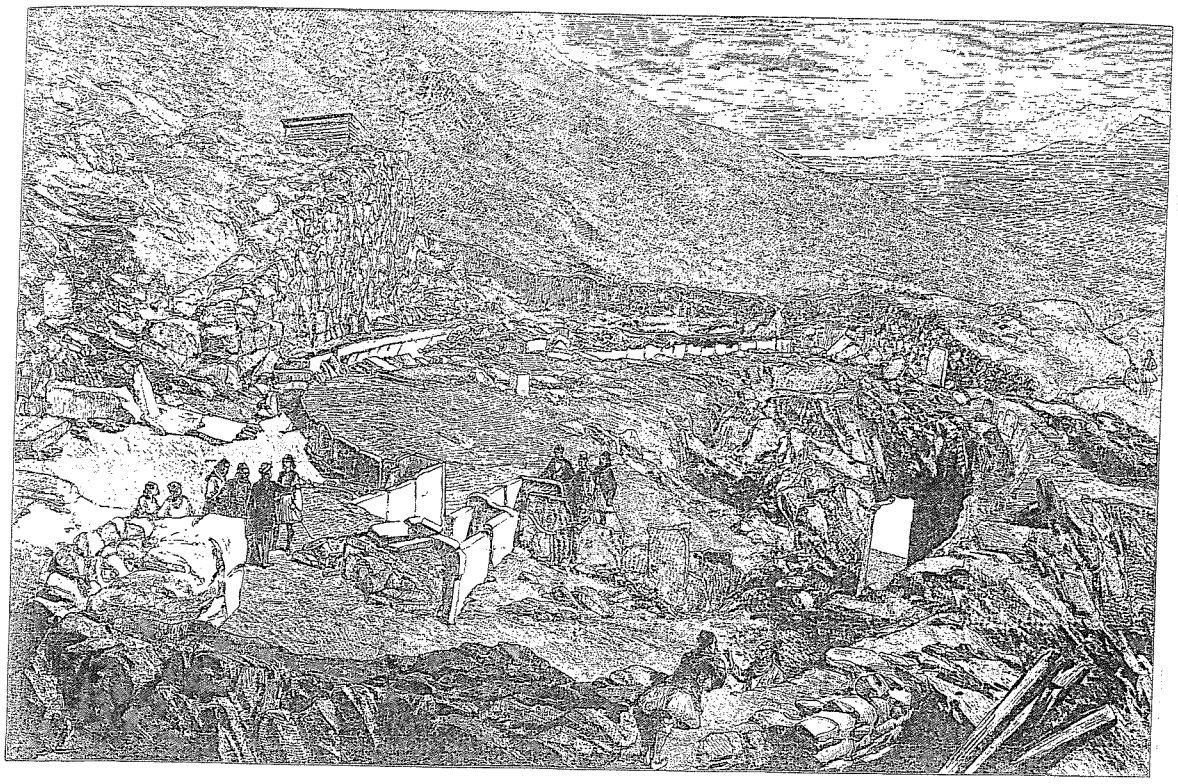


Figure 31 The Acropolis of Mycenae

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.

No. 1960.—VOL. LXX. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1877. WITH TWO SUPPLEMENTS SIXPENCE. By Post, 6½d.

ANTIQUARIAN DISCOVERIES IN GREECE: ENTRANCE GATE TO THE ACROPOLIS AT MYCENÆ.
FROM A SKETCH BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST.

Figure 32 Melton Prior at the Lion Gate

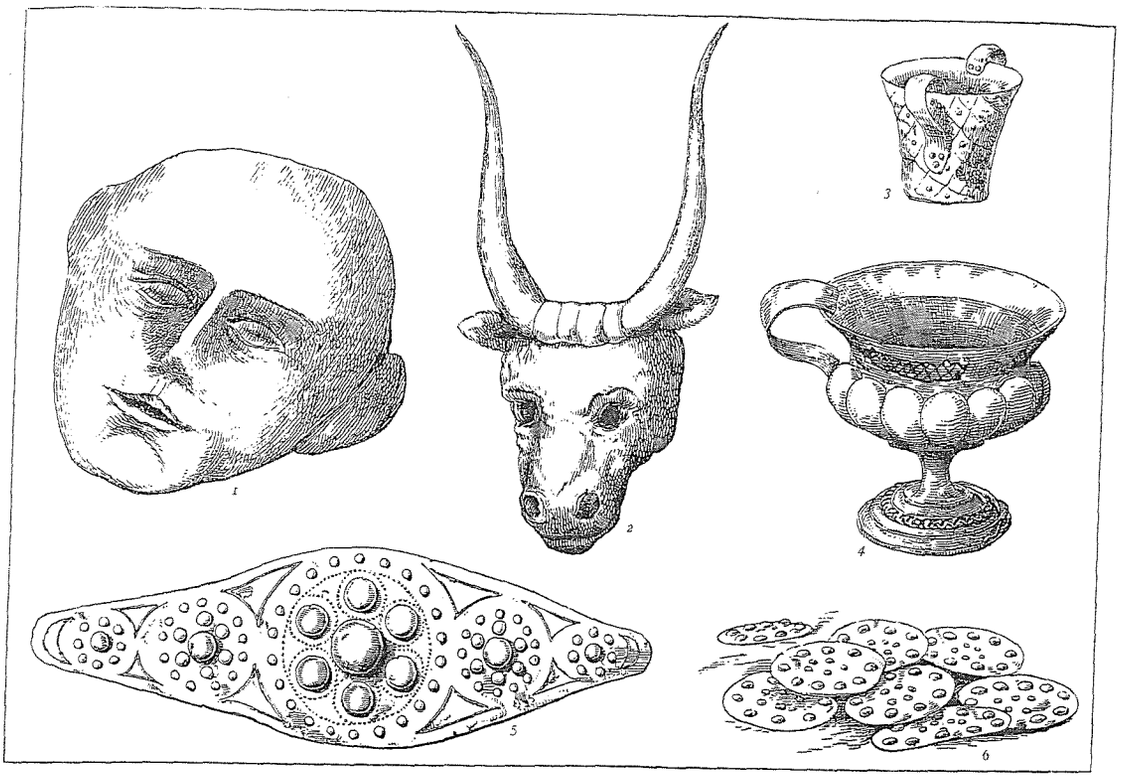


Figure 33 Sketch of Schliemann's discoveries

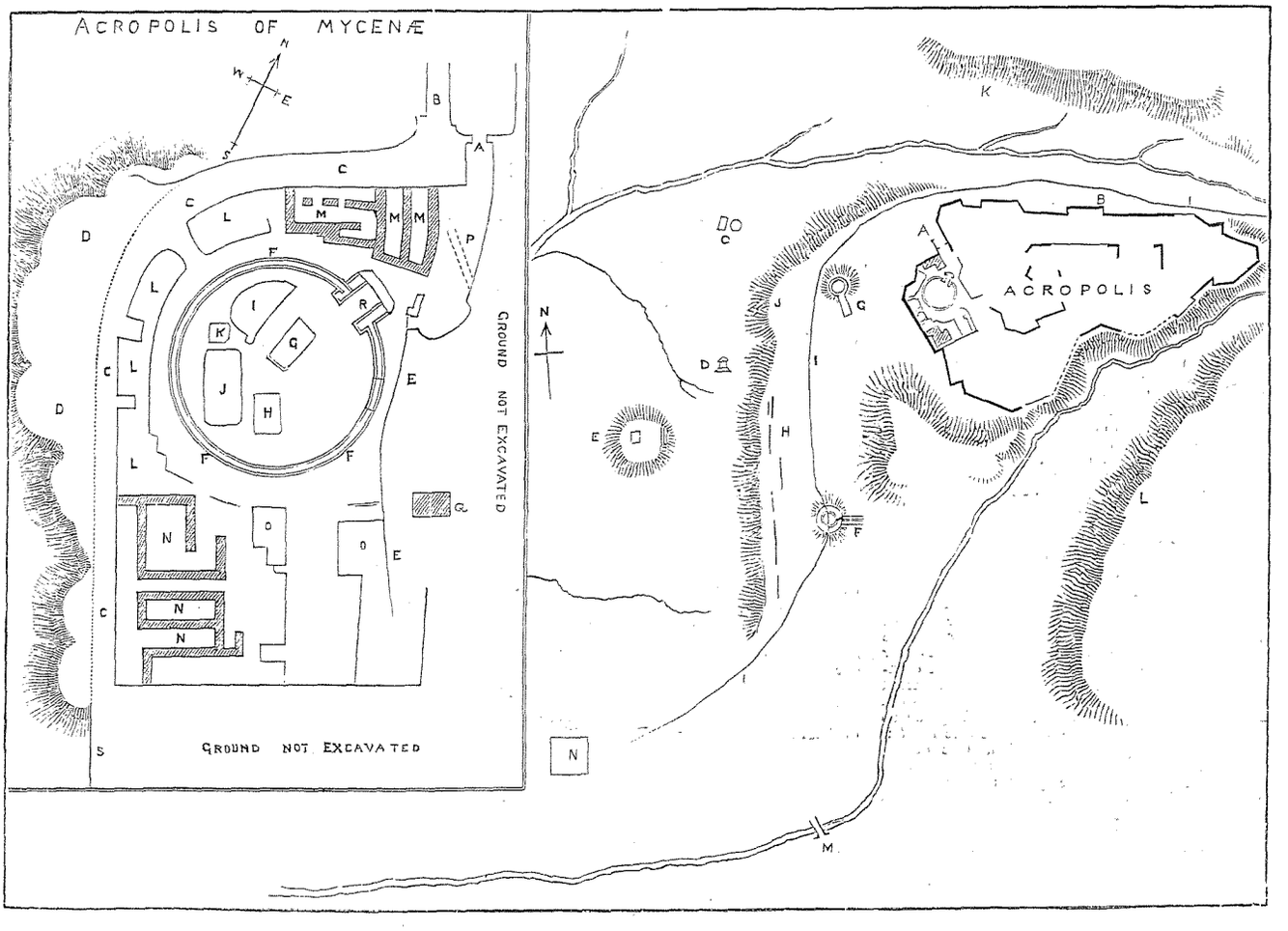


Figure 34 Plan of the Mycenae excavations

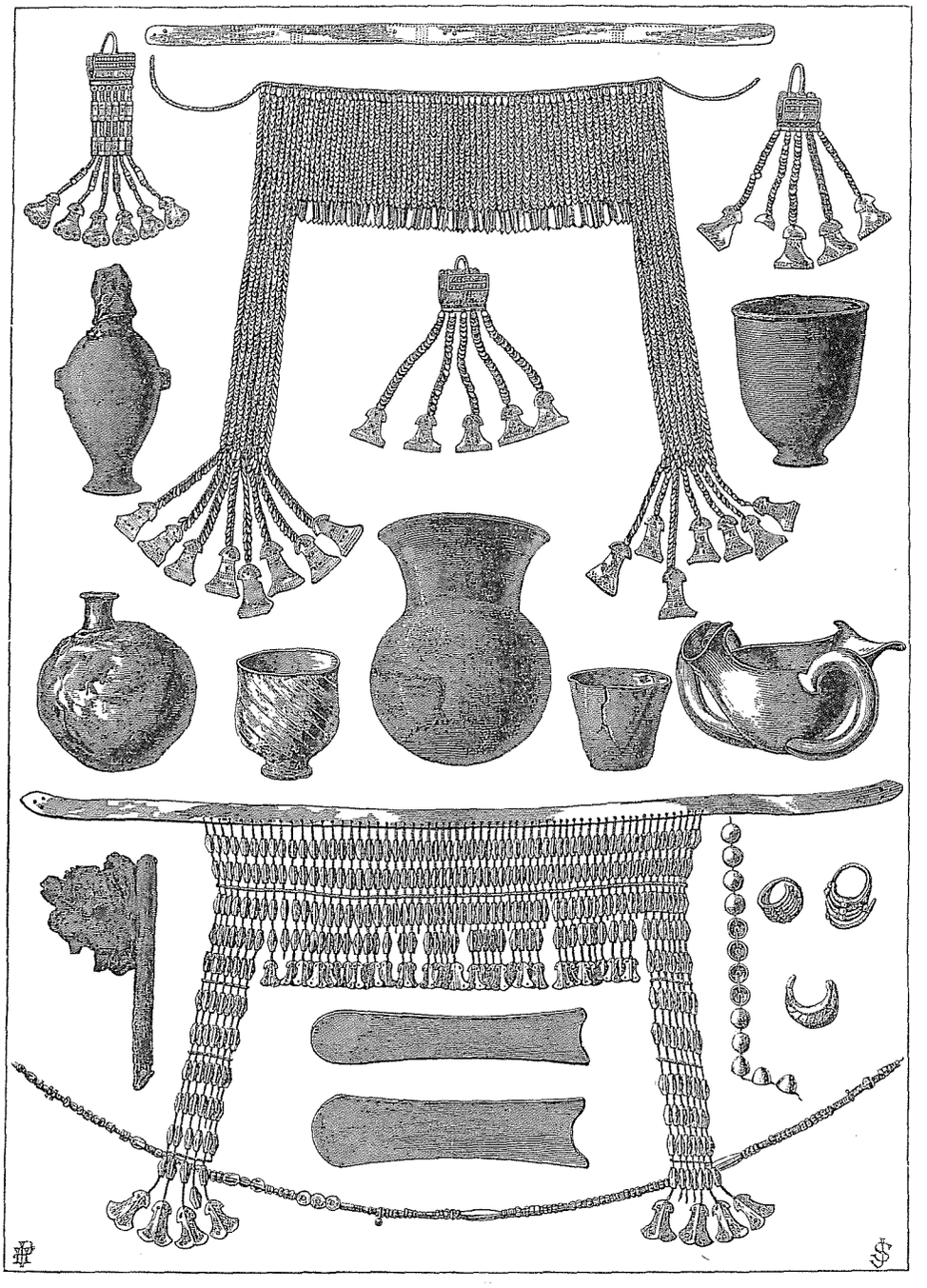


Figure 35 Trojan finds on display at South Kensington

Figure 36 Schliemann addressing the Society of Antiquaries

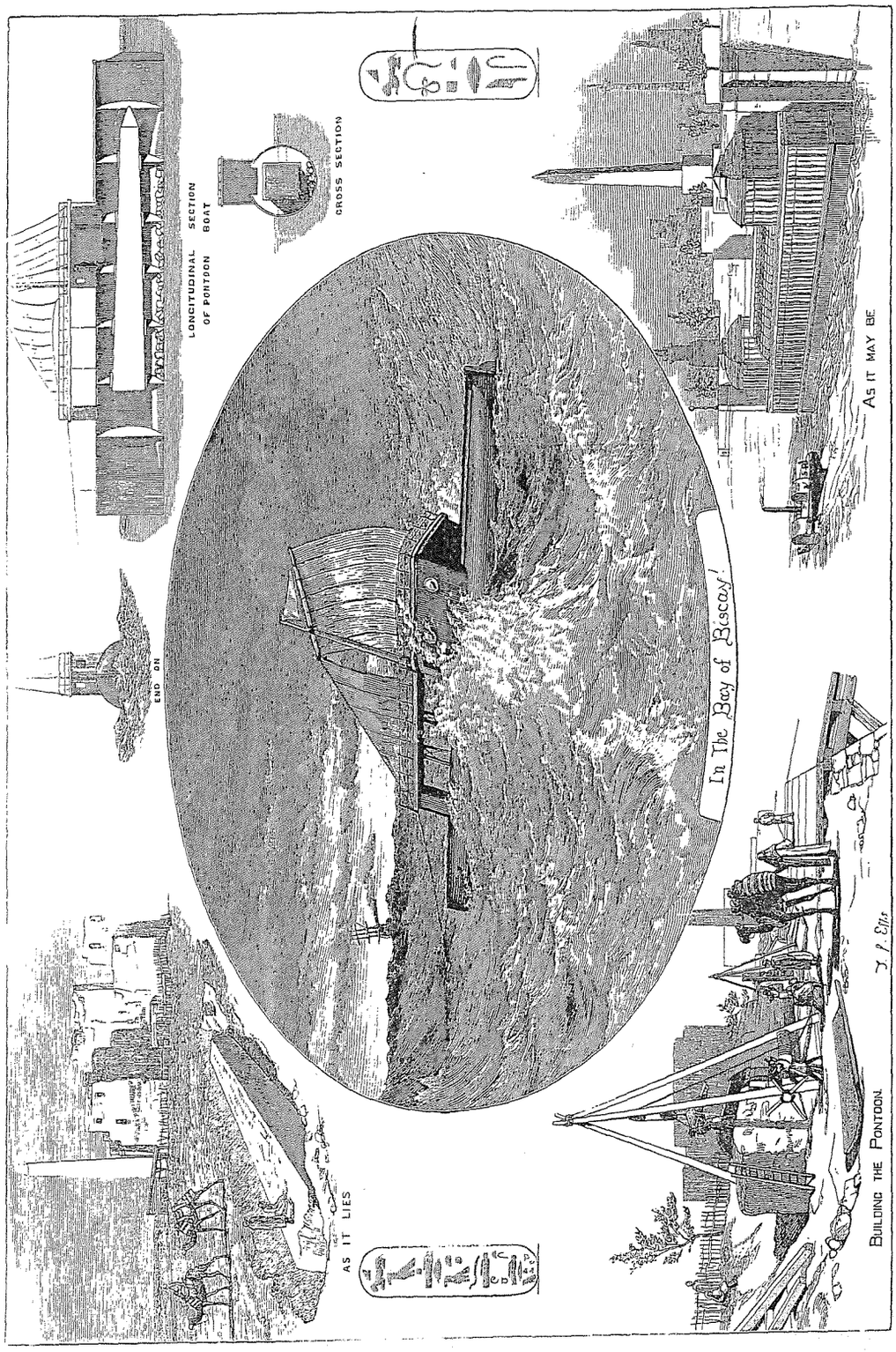
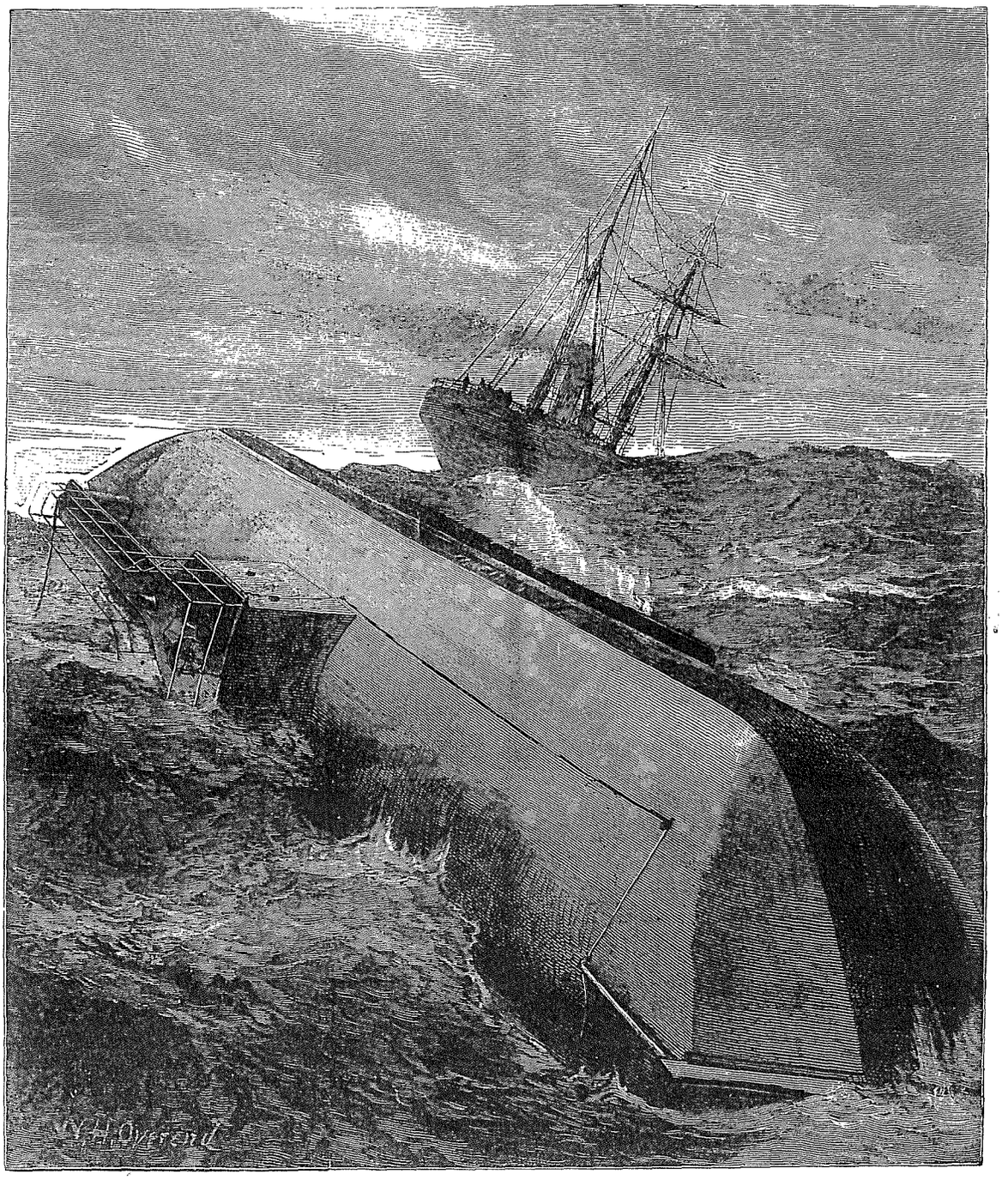


Figure 37 Cleopatra's Needle

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.

No. 1998.—VOL. LXXI. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1877. WITH TWO SUPPLEMENTS SIXPENCE. By Post, 6½d.



ABANDONMENT OF CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE IN THE BAY OF BISCAY, AT DAYBREAK, OCT. 15.
FROM INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY CAPTAIN CARTER, OF THE CLEOPATRA.

Figure 38 Abandoning Cleopatra's Needle

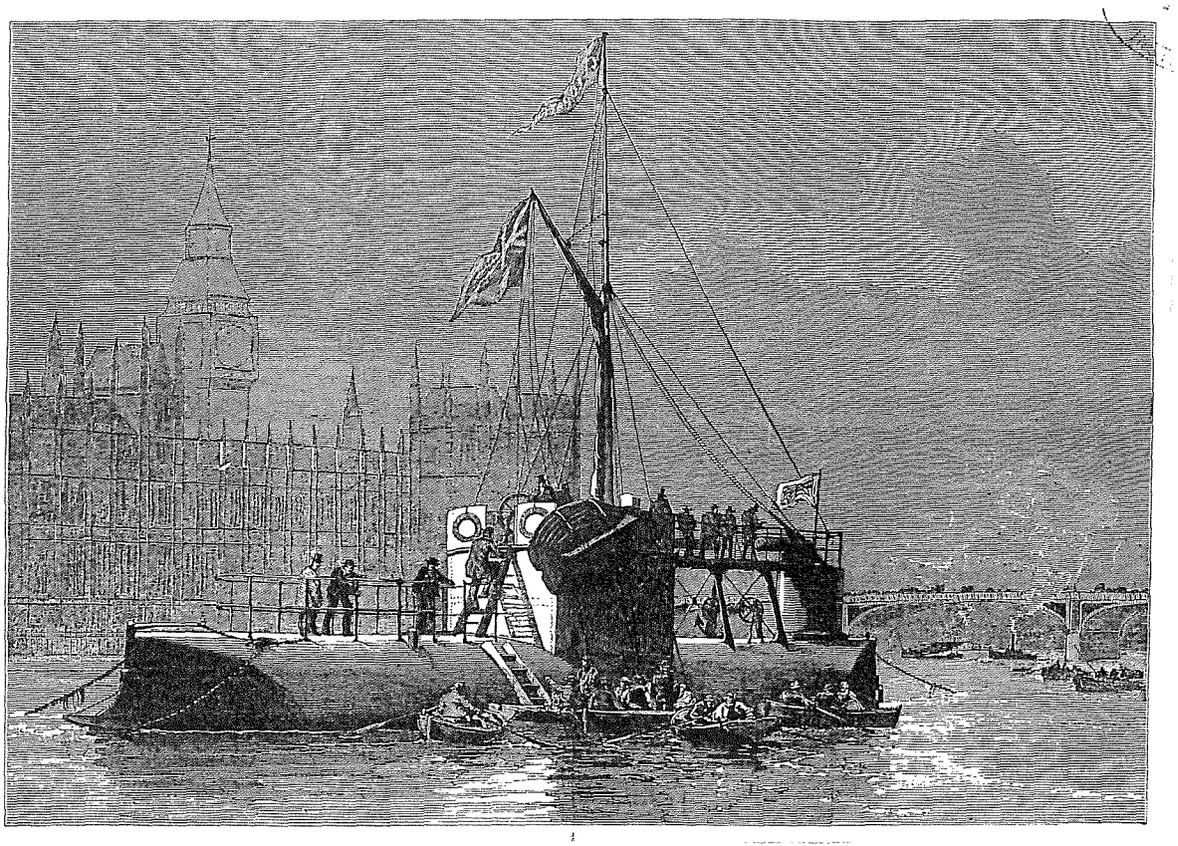


Figure 39 Cleopatra's Needle reaches the Thames

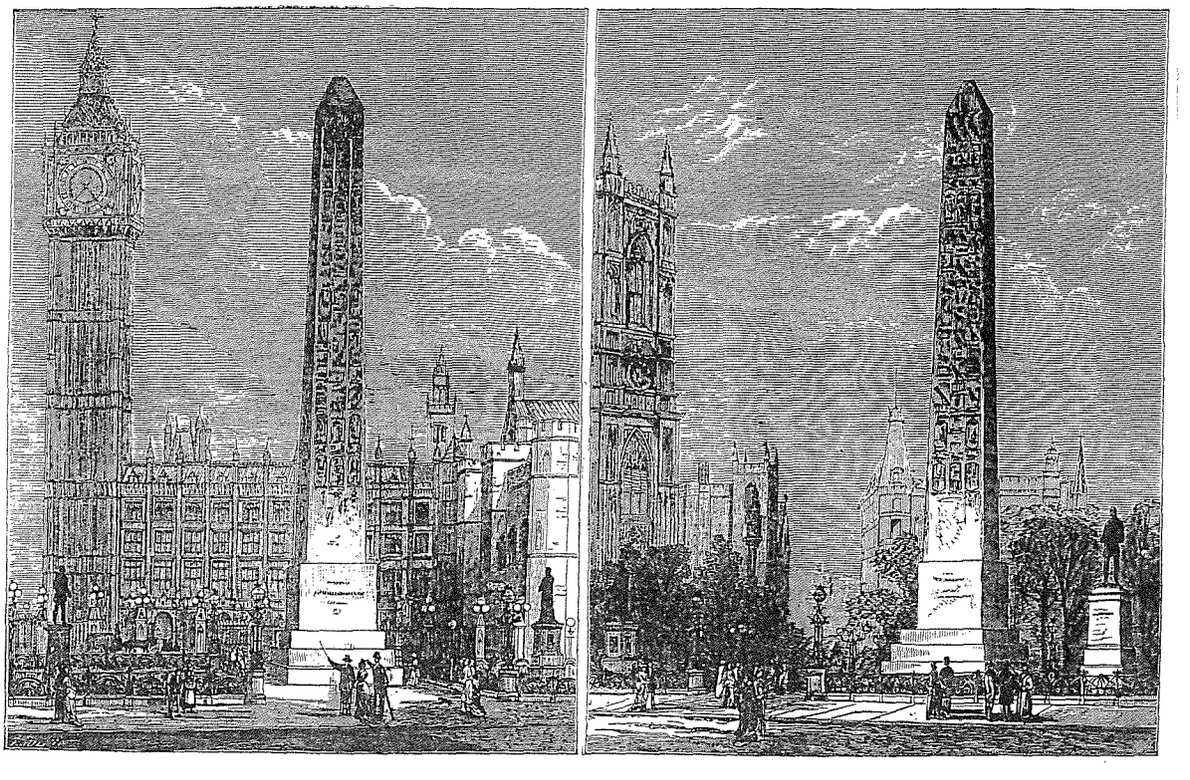
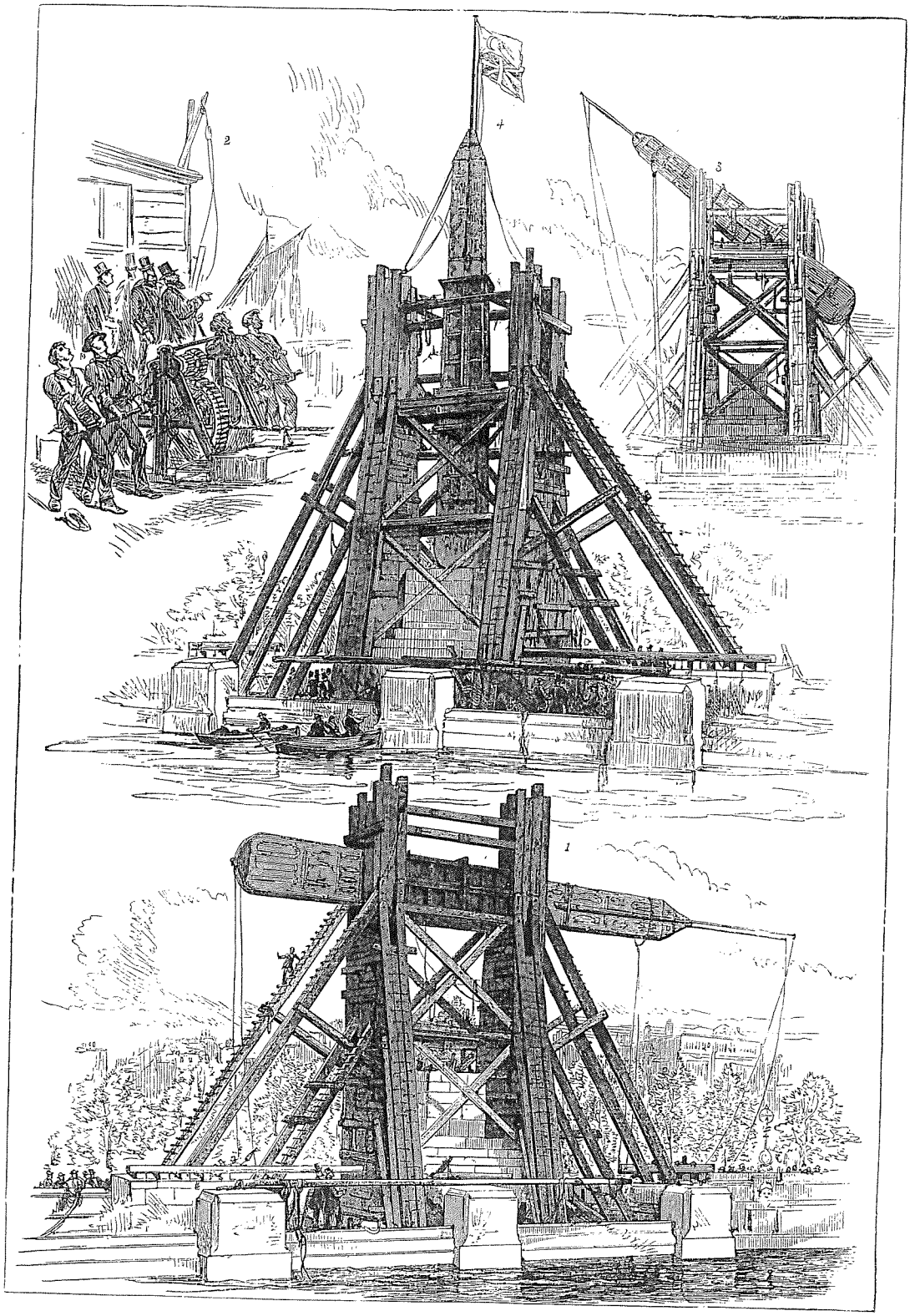


Figure 40 Model of the Needle on display in London



1. The Obelisk on Sept. 11.
2. Windlass to lower the bottom end of Obelisk.
3. Obelisk descending to vertical position, Sept. 12.
4. Obelisk erect on its pedestal.

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE, ON THE VICTORIA THAMES EMBANKMENT.

Figure 41 Raising Cleopatra's Needle

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

[1] Since Glyn Daniel's work on the history of archaeology most practitioners consider the key development of the late nineteenth century to be the invention of human prehistory. But quite simply, this was not a major theme of interest in any of the most popular magazines of the day such as the *Illustrated London News*. Archaeologists have become so indoctrinated into the accepted history of archaeology that they appear to find it very hard to believe that what they consider to be such major milestones were not covered in huge detail at the time. Van Riper (1993) provides an excellent account of the coverage that was available at the time, effectively demonstrating (albeit unintentionally) that debates of human prehistory took place in specialist journals aimed at the learned end of the publishing market. Similarly such detailed debates over the religious implications of such discoveries were not a part of popular archaeology at the time.
[2] Traill (1995) provides a detailed biography of Schliemann. See also Schliemann (1880), pages 1-66, for his autobiography.
[3] *The Times*, (Nov 25, 1876), page 5.
[4] *The Times*, (Nov 30, 1876), page 5.
[5] *The Times*, (Dec 4, 1876), page 5.
[6] The *Illustrated London News*, (Dec 9, 1876), page 563.
[7] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 3, 1877), page 109.
[8] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 3, 1877), pages 104-5.
[9] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 3, 1877), page 109.
[10] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 3, 1877), page 109-10.
[11] The *Illustrated London News*, (Feb 24, 1877), page 185.
[12] More than ten separate articles on Schliemann's researches of more than a page in length appeared in the *Illustrated London News* between 1877 and 1878.
[13] The *Illustrated London News*, (Mar 24, 1877), page 281.
[14] Schliemann's account was not published in England until 1878.
[15] Schliemann (1875).
[16] For more on Cleopatra's Needle see Noakes (1962); Hayward (1978).
[17] The *Illustrated London News*, (June 19, 1875), page 590.
[18] The *Illustrated London News*, (June 19, 1875), page 590.
[19] *The Times*, (October 8, 1878), page 3.
[20] *The Times*, (May 24, 1877), page 12.
[21] The *Illustrated London News*, (March 10, 1877), page 222.
[22] *The Times*, (September 15, 1877), page 10.
[23] *The Times*, (October 19, 1877), page 9.
[24] The *Illustrated London News*, (October 20, 1877), page 371.
[25] The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 141 (1877), page 756.
[26] *The Times*, (October 20, 1877), page 6.
[27] The *Illustrated London News*, (October 20, 1877), page 371.
[28] *The Times*, (May 31, 1878), page 10.
[29] *The Times*, (March 12, 1878), page 4.
[30] The *Illustrated London News*, (October 27, 1877), page 395.
[31] *The Times*, (October 5, 1877), page 9.
[32] *The Times*, (October 3, 1877), page 5.
[33] *The Times*, (August 18, 1877), page 7.
[34] *The Times*, (September 7, 1877), page 6.
[35] *The Times*, (October 6, 1877), page 11.
[36] *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 237, (1878), pages 723-4.
[37] *The Times*, (February 11, 1878), page 8.
[38] *The Times*, (March 12, 1878), page 4.
[39] *The Times*, (September 20, 1878), page 6.
[40] *The Times*, (September 14, 1878), page 10.
[41] *The Times*, (September 14, 1878), page 10.
[42] See Phillips (2005) for more on archaeological reconstructions in the *Illustrated London News* early in the twentieth century.

CONCLUSION

Through a detailed study of archaeology in the nineteenth century periodical press a different side to the history of archaeology begins to emerge. It is a story that centres on the public consumption of the past, and the way that the recipe for a good archaeology story was pioneered and became established: information that can only be discovered in the periodicals of the time. Over the course of the nineteenth century, a wholesale change in the relationship between archaeology and the British reading public had taken place.

In the early years of the century, access to archaeology was restricted to small-scale niche markets of readers, who were interested in antiquarian matters or just generally well educated people. It was not until the 1830s that any attempt was made to communicate information about the ancient world to the wider British public. With the arrival of cheap penny periodicals, archaeology became accessible to the lower middle class readers of publications such as the *Penny Magazine* for the first time. This marks a radical increase in the numbers of people who could include information about the ancient world as a part of their reading material, with the *Penny Magazine* attracting up to a million readers. The penny periodicals introduced archaeology to people who had previously has no real possibility of reading about the subject before, and provided them with simple accounts of some of the most significant sites and monuments of the ancient world. This established a base of readers for whom the ancient world was a subject that held some interest, which would be built on in the years to come.

The *Penny Magazine*, as well as laying the foundations for the mass communication of archaeology, also demonstrated the potential of illustrated journalism in bringing archaeology to a general audience. With the foundation of the *Illustrated London News* in 1842 archaeology was included as a news item alongside other items of current affairs such as war reports and society events. The illustrated format of the paper provided a platform for communicating archaeology to the public that was perfectly suited to the subject matter involved. When this format was combined with Layard's spectacular new discoveries, archaeology was catapulted to the centre of public attention. The Sydenham Crystal Palace of 1854 built on this widespread

attention surrounding Layard's discoveries and archaeology's new visual reporting to create one of the most spectacular presentations of the ancient world ever devised. When the Sydenham Crystal Palace opened its doors in the late spring of 1854 for the first time potentially anyone in Britain could have access to a rich source of information on the ancient world. Sydenham was a high point in the communication of archaeology to the mass public, which made the past available to potentially the whole nation. No single archaeological subject ever reached such a wide cross section of the British public for the rest of the nineteenth century. By the 1870s archaeology had settled into a market somewhere between the two extremes of the small niche markets from early in the century and the heights of Sydenham. In the pages of the *Illustrated London News* archaeology found a home and a market position near to what it has had ever since.

What is especially significant about this story is that well before there was any serious professional study of archaeology, the British public had the potential to read about and see a good cross section of what was then known about the ancient world. Today we tend to consider the public presentation of the past as a process of filtering down from the world of archaeology to the masses, but in the nineteenth century this was not the case. The public could often read about archaeology in popular publications well before any archaeological account appeared. Popular and professional archaeology have always been related, but at the same time work to a different set of rules. This is as true today as it was in the nineteenth century.

In studying the way that the consumption of archaeology changed through the course of the century one can begin to see just why the subject was of such widespread interest then, and remains so today. The way archaeology was presented has all the elements of a great read. You have adventure, tales of toil and danger, fascinating characters, spectacular treasures – all key ingredients that make for an exciting story. It took the best part of three quarters of a century to bring all the elements together, but once they were in place the formula proved so successful that there has been little need to alter it since. Reading the stories of Belzoni, Layard and Schliemann today the appeal and interest of the stories is undiminished by the generations that have passed; they remain a powerful testament to the success of the nineteenth century writers who created them.

APPENDIX

Periodicals included in the initial survey:

Ainsworth's Magazine 1842-52
All The Year Round 1859-85
Annual Register 1800-97
Anti-Jacobin Magazine 1800-21
Art Journal 1839-1900
Atlantis 1858-60; 1862-3; 1870
Belgravia 1867-89
Bentley's Miscellany 1837-59
Bentley's Quarterly Review 1859-60
Black & White 1891-2
Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine 1817-96
Bow Bells 1863-86
British Controversialist 1854-8
British Critic 1827-41
British & Foreign Review 1835-44
Cassell's Family Magazine 1875-97
Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper 1853-67
Cassell's Magazine 1866-74
Century Magazine 1881-1900
Chambers's Edinburgh Journal 1832-1900
Chambers's Miscellany 1844-5
Chambers's Papers for the People 1850-1
Contemporary Review 1866-1900
Cornhill Magazine 1860-1900
Day of Rest 1878-82
Dublin Review 1836-1900
Edinburgh Review 1802-1900
Eliza Cook's Journal 1849-54
Emmet 1824
English Illustrated Magazine 1883-97
Family Economist 1848-59
Family Friend 1849-52
Family Herald 1844-1900
Family Tutor 1851-3
Fireside Journal 1843-4
Foreign Quarterly Review 1827-46
Fortnightly Review 1865-1900
Fraser's Magazine 1830-82
Gentleman's Journal 1870-1
Gentleman's Magazine 1800-1900
Good Words 1860-99
Graphic 1869-86

Great Thoughts 1884-5
Harper's Monthly 1881-1900
Hogg's Instructor 1853-6
Holt's Magazine 1837
Home & Foreign Review 1862-4
Home Friend 1852-5
Home Words 1875-99
Household Words 1850-9; 1888-92
Howitt's Journal 1847-8
Idler 1892-7
Illuminated Magazine 1843-5
Illustrated London Magazine 1853-4
Illustrated London News 1842-1900
Illustrated Times 1856-71
Iris 1826
Knight's Penny Magazine 1846
Leisure Hour 1853-98
Literary World 1839-40
London Journal 1845-84
London Reader 1863-77
London Review 1829
London Society 1863-89
Longman's Magazine 1882-1900
Macmillan's Magazine 1859-1900
Magazine of Domestic Economy 1836-44
Mirror 1823-45
Modern Review 1880-4
Monthly Chronicle 1838-41
Monthly Packet 1867-98
National Magazine 1857-9
National Review 1855-64; 1883-1900
New Century Magazine 1897-8
New Review 1889-97
Nineteenth Century 1877-1900
North British Review 1844-70
Once A Week 1859-67
Our Own Fireside 1867-74
Oxford & Cambridge Magazine 1856
Pall Mall 1893-1900
Pearson's Magazine 1832-45
Penny Magazine 1832-45
Penny Post 1852-96
People's Journal 1846-50
People's Magazine 1868-77
People's Periodical 1846-7
Pictorial Mirror 1838
Picture Magazine 1893-4
Prospective Review 1845-55
Punch 1841-1900
Quarterly Review 1809-1900

Quiver 1866-1900
Rambler 1848-62
Recreation 1842
Retrospective Review 1820-6
Reynolds's Miscellany 1848-61
Saturday Magazine 1832-44
Scottish Review 1882-1900
Scribner's Magazine 1882-99
Sharpe's London Magazine 1845-52
Something To Read 1881-6
St Paul's 1867-74
Strand Magazine 1891-1900
Sunday At Home 1854-98
Sunday Magazine 1832-44
Tait's Edinburgh Magazine 1832-44
Tegg's Magazine 1844
Temple Bar 1860-1900
Theological Review 1864-79
Time 1879-80
Train 1856-88
Visitor 1836-51
Weekly Visitor 1833-5
Weekly Welcome 1876-81
Welcome Guest 1858-61
Welcome Hour 1882-5
Westminster Review 1824-1900
Wide World Magazine 1895-1900
Willis's Current Notes 1852
Windsor Magazine 1895-1900

RESEARCHING ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PERIODICAL PRESS

Research into nineteenth century periodicals is unfamiliar material to the majority of archaeologists. This appendix will provide a brief introduction to the major research materials that are available to anyone encountering the field for the first time.

REFERENCE MATERIALS ON PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

Without doubt the most significant project to be undertaken in periodicals research is the Waterloo Directory of nineteenth century periodicals.[i] The aim of the project is to catalogue all the periodical publications that appeared between 1800 and 1900, based on surviving library collections, as well as references made to publications in literature, memoirs and journalism of the period. In its current full format, comprised of ten volumes, details are provided of around 250,000 publications. Entries vary from just the title and dates of publication, to more detailed essays on some publications, including details of reader numbers, editors, publishers and sale price. The Directory is also available in an abridged format, listing just basic information about each publication, as well as in CD format. The Waterloo Directory is the first point of reference when encountering a periodical for the first time, as well as being a useful tool for identifying publications worthy of study.

The *British Union Catalogue of Periodicals* is the first port of call in identifying the location of a periodical, particularly one whose survival is uncertain.[ii] The drawback is that this work is now somewhat outdated as numerous periodicals have been moved, lost or destroyed since its compilation in the 1960s.

Indexed Works on Periodical Contents

As a growing research field a number of important bibliographic works have been compiled over the course of the last half-century. The classic index work in the field of periodicals research is Poole's.[iii] This index, compiled in the nineteenth century, lists thematically the articles that appeared in a number of prominent British and American periodicals. The list was compiled by assigning a single theme to an article i.e. 'Greek sculpture', and listing references to articles on the subject, with assignation relying entirely on the article title as it appeared in the journal contents. Herein lies the problem with the index, as Mr Poole's listing is notoriously eccentric. It is just about impossible to understand the theme of an article from the title alone; there was the same fashion for esoteric titles in the nineteenth century as there is today. This is especially noticeable in the Reviews that use titles from the books they are reviewing, despite this very rarely reflecting the major focus of the story. However, important additions have been made to Poole's in recent years, most noticeably in the field of author attribution. The index remains, despite its inaccuracies, a useful first point of reference to obtain a broad overview of the coverage of a particular theme of interest, or as a useful reference if further details are required on a known theme.

Specialist archaeology publications in the nineteenth century also have their own index compiled by George Laurence Gomme, editor of the journals *Foldlore* and *Folklore*.[iv] Gomme's index lists articles by author, and includes article title and full bibliographical reference. The problem is that none of the publications are dated, which seriously limits the usefulness of the index for general historical research. A subject index was commenced in the early twentieth century by William Martin but was never completed. It survives in manuscript form only, and in the proposed format would have been largely unworkable, as well as being enormous. Fortunately Gomme's index is now online in searchable format on the Council for British Archaeology's website, sadly there are still no dates. As dating would essentially involve re-doing most of Gomme's research, which took him twenty-five years, this should perhaps come as no surprise.

Anonymous Journalism and Author Attribution

Through the course of the nineteenth century the majority of journalism was anonymous.[v] The main way that author attributions are assigned is through the use of marked copies; copies of journals, usually held by the publisher or editor, where the authors are listed next to the article they wrote. Another important resource is publishers work books that list the fees paid to authors for their work, where article themes and dates are often quoted. A final resource is memoirs of publishers and writers that sometimes identify the authors of particular articles. This field of research into author attribution is one that has taken up the majority of work on nineteenth century periodicals, and provided a valuable starting point for a number of the more literary studies that have taken place. Work on attributions is a field of research in its own right, and not one that I am in any way qualified to work in. Therefore I will note author attributions where they are available, but will not be adding any of my own. For my research the author is an interesting piece of information, however it is not vital in a study that is concerned with the coverage of a theme, rather than being a study on a body of journalistic work by an author.

The seminal work of author attribution is the *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals*, which was commenced in the 1960s, and published in four volumes over the following twenty years.[vi] It focuses on a number of the most important of the monthly and quarterly publications that appeared between 1823 and 1900, listing the contents and providing details of the authorship of many of the entries. It is a valuable resource as it provides an easy method to study publications where the contents pages no longer survive in the original, as well as giving useful information on the authorship of articles that were published anonymously. A brief historical essay is also printed before each of the publications that provides background details on the publisher, editors and style of coverage. The Wellesley Index is again one of the first places to consult when encountering a publication for the first time. Sadly it does not deal with weeklies, but that does not detract from its importance to the study of nineteenth century periodicals.

Archaeological Reprint Collections

Several valuable compilation works that republish original source material from the nineteenth century are also available. The earliest is George Laurence Gomme's work on collating the archaeological stories from the *Gentleman's Magazine* published as the *Gentleman's Magazine Library*.[vii] The works appear in the form of themed volumes, either on a period of the past or a region of Britain. As so many copies of the *Gentleman's Magazine* are now in a poor state of preservation, with deterioration of the paper and foxing of the images increasingly common, Gomme's volumes provide a valuable reference resource. More recently published is Bacon's *The Great Archaeologists*, a collection of the major archaeological articles that appeared in *The Illustrated London News*.[viii] Nicholas Warner's collection of articles on Egypt from the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic*, is another recent work.[ix] As a source of reference it is limited by its small size, but provides an interesting contrast between views of ancient and contemporary Egypt. All these compilations provide useful starting points to research, however none are complete as their focus is firmly set on the most 'interesting' articles in the eyes of the compiler. Many less obviously significant themes are not present.

Studying Archaeological Articles in the Periodical Press

There is no established methodology for studying nineteenth century periodicals, largely because as a research area it includes individuals with such a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds. Each study follows its own set of criteria, something that varies with the theme studied – for example if the focus is on the editorial character of a publication the main focus would be the editorials and biographical information about the person in question. There are a few general points that cross-cut research areas though. These can be summarised as:

- A concern to understand the individual character of a publication
- Work on readership – generally categorised by a fairly coarse grouping of readers into middle class, upper class, etc. Such labels should be

considered to be a rough indication of the status of the majority of readers, and have a particular influence on the price of publications and the language used to reflect the perceived educational level of the target readership. Obviously though there was a degree of flexibility, with those with aspiration reading 'above' their station, and a number of highly educate people no doubt checking out the 'lower' end of the publishing market either out of curiosity of for a few cheap laughs at the common man.

- Studies of authorship/individual authors – probably the most common area
- Theme based studies – i.e. serial fiction

Each approach assembles a database in a different fashion, with the main criteria for large studies appearing to be a combination of available resources and relative influence of publications. I have broadly followed this approach, with the added variable of archaeological content. The following sections will look at the basic steps that were undertaken in the collection and analysis of the articles that form the core of this work.

Selecting the Study Period

The period of study selected was the hundred year spell from 1800 to 1900. This period covers the most important time in the history of the development of an area of study into archaeology, and is an important period in the history of publishing. A hundred year period was also a period of time that allows a number of trends to be identified, something that it especially important as the relationship between archaeology and the general reader is a new theme to the history of archaeology. More concentrated studies are not terribly useful if there is no wider context in place to look at them in conjunction with. A hundred year study period strikes a balance between detailed and more general study, enabling archaeological and publishing themes to be examined in detail, but also to be understood in relation to the wider context of the study period.

Making an Initial Selection of Publications

The primary criteria for selecting which periodicals were studied were:

- Those works that are recognised as being the most influential in each period based on the work of the major researchers in the field of periodicals research
- Works that are well known as having archaeology as one of their themes – the *Gentleman's* is a prime example
- The length of their print run – useful for studying change in coverage style through time
- Their availability for study – as just about no digital sources exist, free access to the originals is necessary. Similarly closed collections such as the British Library are not ideal as study time is increased tenfold.

In addition to the major works a number of lesser publications were studied in order to provide a more detailed picture of the contents of the periodical press at the time. It is important to note here that survival today in no way reflects sales figures in the nineteenth century.

Finding where collections survive

The *Waterloo Directory*, used in combination with the *Union Catalogue* provides a useful starting place for locating which periodicals survive. This method is not 100% accurate though as *Union* is now somewhat out of date, with a number of periodicals that survived in the 1960s not doing so today. Others have been dispersed by library re-organisation and collections being transferred to other locations. As a general rule if a periodical is quoted as being in a major research library it is likely to be there (as well as being easy to check); if a regional library is quoted it is best to make further enquiries. We are fortunate at Southampton to have one of the best collections of nineteenth century periodicals anywhere in the country, which includes complete collections of several influential publications including the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh* reviews.

Leicester University also has a major collection of nineteenth century periodicals in its Victorian studies collections that were assembled during the 1950s and 1960s when Leicester was the British base of the Research Society for Victorian Periodicals. A combination of these two libraries enabled access to most of the periodicals needed in the study, with the British Library being useful for more specific enquiries.

Initial Article Survey

To collect archaeological stories a broad definition of what constitutes 'archaeology' was followed. Essentially any mention of the material remains of the past, whether in the field, the museum, or any other of the wide variety of contexts that appeared, was included. Further refinement of articles could be carried out at a later stage of research, what was necessary in this early stage was a general overview of the coverage. This was also an important preliminary step as when the study began, despite coverage in the *Illustrated London News* and the *Gentleman's Magazine* being well known, it was not known whether the coverage went much wider, and if it did, just how far. The beginning was a step into the dark.

At this stage full use of the *Wellesley Index* was made, wherever possible in conjunction with the originals. As we looked at above the *Wellesley Index* lists only titles, with very rarely any details of the content being made, unless the theme is totally unfathomably from the title quoted. When initial study was made using the *Wellesley Index* alone further research was necessary into the more detailed content of the articles to see whether they were really on an archaeological theme, or if it was just an interesting title to grab the attention of the viewer. Where a combination study was carried out it was possible to check article themes when they were first noted, thereby saving unnecessary work at a later stage.

Wherever possible contents pages were made use of to aid identification of articles. Where they do not survive or were never printed indexes were used for identification, a less desirable method as repetitions of individual articles

frequently occur and identification is more difficult from single word entries. The accuracy of index entries is also somewhat variable, ranging from excellent to almost useless. Where neither contents nor useable index was present the only method remaining was to look at every page to identify articles with an archaeological theme. This was the by far the most time consuming method and was generally reserved for highly important publications only. The *Illustrated London News* and *Punch* are the two major publications that were studied in this fashion.

Identification of Themes

After the initial survey was complete it was obvious that a complete study that covered every theme of interest was impossible due the enormous quantity of articles on archaeological themes that were published. After the identification stage was completed it was necessary to assess the content of the articles, especially to differentiate between those that had archaeology as their main focus, and those in which archaeology was mentioned but was a subordinate theme. The first type being of more immediate use for study, with the others generally providing only background material.

It was essential to find a method of presentation that captured the diversity of coverage of archaeology, but at the same time maintained the individual identity of the most influential publications. The criteria for final selection was dictated by a combination of publishing trends, e.g. the *Illustrated London News* had a strong commitment to archaeology and reached a wide audience, and concentrations of articles on a particular archaeological theme, e.g. Layard's discoveries at Nineveh. To include a complete survey of all the articles collected would necessitate a work of many volumes. What this thesis focussed on is the major changes in the coverage of archaeology that was made available to a general reader at different points in the century.

Final Chapter Content

Chapter 1: Looks at the early years of the nineteenth century, focussing on one of the most influential publications with Britain's antiquarian community, the

Gentleman's Magazine. The publication gives a good example of the type of debates that were taking place at the time among those with a specialist interest in the past, as well as providing a link between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Chapter 2: Instead of focussing on what was available to specialist readers, this chapter looks at what a general reader of a quality literary periodical could find out about archaeology in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. By looking at the differing coverage of ancient Egypt provided by the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review* an idea of the way that archaeology began to be reported to the public as a self contained news item begins to emerge.

Chapter 3: In the 1830s a number of new cheap publications with an educational content appeared on the British publishing scene. This chapter will focus on one of the most influential publications, the *Penny Magazine*, and the way that it began to introduce archaeology to a new range of readers who had previously had no possibility of reading about archaeology.

Chapter 4: Looks at the *Illustrated London News* and the way that the publication established itself as the home of popular archaeology in Britain. By looking in detail at the way that Henry Layard's discoveries were reported this chapter provides a glimpse into the way that the essential components of a successful archaeological news story came together, elements which would be drawn upon for the rest of the nineteenth century and beyond.

Chapter 5: The Sydenham Crystal Palace was one of the greatest presentations of the ancient world ever created. This chapter looks at the way that the exhibition was reported in a range of periodicals, in particular the way that publications aimed at different audiences provided coverage designed to suit the educational background of their readers.

Chapter 6: The final chapter looks at the *Illustrated London News* and the way that the paper brought together all the elements that go to make up a successful archaeological news story that have been with us ever since.

NOTES TO APPENDIX

[1] North 1997.
[2] Stewart 1968.
[3] Poole 1963.
[4] Gomme 1891-1903.
[5] See Houghton 1966.
[6] Houghton (ed.) 1966-1988.
[7] Gomme 1886-1905.
[8] Bacon 1976.
[9] Warner 1995.

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