

IX. Research projects in the history of archaeology

Canon Greenwell (1820–1918) and His Contribution to Archaeological Research

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From January 2004, a three year Leverhulme research project, based at the Department of Archaeology, University of Durham, England, will investigate the archaeological research of Canon William Greenwell (1820–1918). Greenwell was a prominent antiquarian and archaeologist from northern England whose collecting and excavating activities spanned diverse periods and places. His interests stretched beyond Britain to Europe and the Middle East, and his varied publications cover topics ranging from the prehistoric to the historic era. These include *British Barrows* (1877), *Votive Armour and Arms* (1881), and *The Electrum Coinage of Cyzicus* (1887). The project at the University of Durham will investigate the character of his research: his collecting activities, excavation techniques and the way in which he adapted his methodology to such diverse areas of interest. We will also explore the range of contacts acquired by Greenwell in the course of his work and assess his position within a dynamic social network of antiquarians and archaeologists, both within northern England and across Britain as a whole. A conference will be held at the University in 2005 to encourage discussion about Greenwell and some of his more immediate contemporaries.

Greenwell was born into a landed family in County Durham and he maintained a loyalty to the north of England for the rest of his life. One of the earliest graduates of Durham University, he went on to take a Masters degree in Theology and was ordained within the Church of England in 1844. Greenwell took up the office of minor canon at Durham Cathedral a decade later and in 1862 he was appointed to the post of librarian and archivist to the Cathedral Library at Durham. He now started to catalogue and edit a vast collection of historical Cathedral documents, liturgical works and codices. Greenwell had already begun to build up a series of immense and internationally famous archaeological collections: of manuscripts, sculpture and coins, and stone, flint and bronze artefacts.

This project will examine the many aspects of Greenwell's collecting activities (social, intellectual, financial), and see how these compare with the work of contemporary collectors such as Augustus Pitt-Rivers (1827–1900) (Chapman 1985; Bowden 1991; Gosden 1999). Greenwell gathered together a group of early medieval carved stone crosses and grave covers which now forms the basis of the internationally important *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture* series, published by the British Academy (Cramp 1984; Bailey and Cramp 1988, etc.). He also accumulated the artefacts which became the Greenwell Collection in the British Museum, one of the foundation collections of British prehistory (Longworth in Kinnes and Longworth 1985, 7). Greenwell's correspondence reveals the growth of friendly rivalries with contemporary collectors like John Evans, the renowned palaeolithic archaeologist and prehistorian.

However, Greenwell was more than a notable collector; he was also an active and prolific excavator from the 1860s onward, and Pitt-Rivers was one of his more famous proteges. His fieldwork provides a counterbalance to his collecting interests, both socially and intellectually. Greenwell probed into 295 prehistoric burial mounds across eight counties

during a series of extensive and energetic excavations, which he published in his renowned and weighty book *British Barrows* (Greenwell 1877). This led to some animated correspondence with contemporaries, such as J.R. Mortimer, over issues such as excavation technique, recording and the interpretation of archaeological remains.

Greenwell was one of the few fieldworkers of the time to take a stand against ‘mere curiosity hunting’ (Greenwell 1865, 241; 1877, v); he considered the context of finds and had the imagination to consider broader questions of regional and chronological patterning. For example, Greenwell promoted the use of the Three Age System, contributing to the shift in the perception of the past and the increase in prehistoric research that was associated with the expanding use of this chronological device amongst later prehistorians (Rowley-Conwy pers. comm. 2003). An examination of Greenwell’s excavation techniques, using archive sources, geophysical surveys and recent re-excavations of sites examined by Greenwell (such as Blawearie, Northumberland; or Copt Hill, County Durham) will provide an insight into the development of archaeological fieldwork techniques and his methodology as well as his interpretations of the past.

Greenwell was active for over seventy years at a pivotal time in British archaeology which saw the transformation of archaeology from locally based antiquarian activities to a discrete and systematic discipline carried out by professionals. This shift from antiquarianism (collecting and reliance on text-based sources) to professional archaeology (excavating and expansion of interest into prehistoric periods) has been well analysed, most notably by Levine (1986). However, Greenwell was unusual amongst the majority of his contemporaries – he encompassed both antiquarian and archaeological approaches to the past (Levine 1986, 31).

Greenwell’s correspondence provides an important reminder that his antiquarian and archaeological researches were carried out within a vast and complicated social network of alliances and rivalries. Greenwell was an active and respected member of several major local archaeological societies such as the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne and the Durham and Northumberland Architectural and Archaeological Society, and he also attended meetings of the larger learned London societies. In addition to research into his collections, excavations, and archaeological interpretations, the project will explore how the character of Greenwell’s work was influenced by the arguments and beliefs of the moment, and how his efforts, in turn, inspired the thinking and activities of his contemporaries.

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A Century of Values Reflected in the Evolving Concept of Heritage: United States Federal Archaeology Law from 1906 to the Present

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The objective of my research is to examine the evolving concept of heritage as reflected in the first century of the United States federal archaeology law. Since law, its effects, and its applications represent a vector of changing social, political, and ethical values, federal archaeology law, as a distinct body of material, will offer a window to the changes in the United States that have led up to the scope and character of today's concept of heritage.

A diachronic analysis of the entire body of archaeology law is imperative to determine the law's impact on archaeological heritage over time, as well as the impact of the changing concept of heritage on subsequent archaeology law and practice. Federal statutes that have significantly affected the concept of archaeological heritage in the United States will be examined chronologically, commencing with the first statute of archaeological importance, the 1906 *Antiquities Act*. Since the enactment of the *Antiquities Act*, the United States Congress has passed a multitude of laws aimed at preserving, protecting, and conserving both natural and cultural resources. Other key statutes include the 1935 *Historic Sites, Buildings, Objects, and Antiquities Act*, the 1966 *National Historic Preservation Act*, the 1979 *Archaeological Resources Protection Act*, and the 1990 *Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*. Supplemental use will be made of other relevant statutes. Executive orders will also be examined in context. The concept of heritage embodied in each law will be assessed and described in an examination of any changes and the effects on archaeological practice in the past century and the implications for the future.

The historiography of a century of archaeology law will be supplemented with case studies to illustrate the implementation and practical application of legislation and other laws and regulations, and accordingly, how the concept of heritage has changed over the course of the last century. While geographically diverse, each case study will provide an instructive insight into the implementation and application of federal law and also into the historical, social, political, and ethical context of the era from which the legislation originated.

Resources utilized thus far toward a compilation of a legal history include the proceedings, debates, and notations in the Congressional Record and in House and Senate reports. Corresponding hearings, committee papers, minutes, bill files, correspondence, and memoranda from each relevant Congress, published and unpublished, provide critical information integral to contextualizing the legislation as a preliminary step in analyzing the status of heritage in the federal setting.

Comments, suggestions, or questions may be sent to:

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