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To all in teams 1 and 2, 2006

Greetings!

I know we Brits always talk about the weather, but the contrast between the conditions experienced by the two teams this year could hardly have been greater. A cold day with horizontal rain kept team 1 away from the site, while team 2 had an early start and a siesta one day to avoid being overcome by the heat!

Despite these varied conditions, we managed to push the work on this year to reveal some important and ground-breaking archaeology (as ground-breaking as Marvin and Victor in Team 1, and Clay in Team 2!). On the one hand we have late 3<sup>rd</sup>/early 4<sup>th</sup> century AD pottery from the garden plot excavated by team 1, and on the other we have evidence for an early settlement phase uncovered by team 2. We'll need to wait until next year to find out exactly how early the settlement may have started, when we open up the lightly-backfilled areas and pull back the plastic sheeting to continue the investigation – but don't worry, there will still be de-turfing to be done to open up some new trenches!

This is the first time that such a large landscape area has been investigated so intensively in these Pennine hills. Ours is also one of the very few projects to have been recorded to modern standards, and in many respects we are developing techniques and philosophies as we go along. A significant challenge for the future is to broaden the scope of the investigation to collect data on vegetation changes in the area. This will enable us to look at the complex interaction between human exploitation and climate change over a long time period, adding important chronological depth to our project.

It was really good to welcome so many friends back to Kettlewell this year, and we look forward to seeing friends old and new in 2007. If you want to keep in touch in the meantime, sign up to the project group message board at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dalesarchaeology> from where you can get a Yahoo account that will allow you to see all the messages and photographs from this year.

To simply subscribe without using the web interface, send an email to: [dalesarchaeology-subscribe@groups.yahoo.com](mailto:dalesarchaeology-subscribe@groups.yahoo.com) and place the word "subscribe" (without quotes) in the body of the email.

Any problems contact the group moderator Chris at: [dalesarchaeology-owner@groups.yahoo.com](mailto:dalesarchaeology-owner@groups.yahoo.com)

Thanks again for all your hard work in 2006.

With very best wishes,

Roger

# EARTHWATCH INSTITUTE FIELD REPORT

**Project Title:** England's Hidden Kingdom

**Principal Investigator:** Dr Roger Martlew

**Position/Affiliations:** Education and Research Consultant to the Yorkshire Dales  
Landscape Research Trust

**Research Site(s) (geographic location, include coordinates if known, e.g.**

**Lat/Long):**

Chapel House Wood, Conistone-with-Kilnsey, North Yorkshire UK;

National Grid Reference SD 975653; lat. 54 deg. 5 min. north, long. 2 deg. 3 min. west.

**Local Management Status of the Research Site(s) (e.g. National Park, RAMSAR Site, World Heritage Site, IBA etc.):** National Park; Scheduled Ancient Monument

**Key Research Objectives:**

- To collate, check and extend as necessary the survey work from previous seasons
- Further recording of earthworks in the field system to the north of the excavation area
- Excavation of a walled enclosure adjacent to previously excavated structures
- Excavation of previously surveyed building platforms to identify function and chronology

**Data Collection and Results**

a) Give a concise account of the data you have collected during the past field season.

Accurate scaled plans of the field system were collated from previous seasons and extended over an area totalling approximately 1 sq km. Fully documented excavation of the walled area adjacent to Structure 4 in Site DD recovered animal bone, Romano-British pottery, and a schist whetstone. Excavation of building platforms in the southern part of the settlement complex recovered a large quantity of animal bone, charcoal and a range of pottery of Romano-British and locally made types. A fragment of decorated glass bangle was found, which may match up with a piece found last year approximately 200 metres to the north. In all around 130 square metres of ground were de-turfed, hand-excavated to a depth of around 0.3 metre, recorded and back-filled.

b) What progress have you made towards achieving your original objectives?

The survey work is almost complete in the immediate area of the settlement, and we have made excellent progress in adding newly-discovered features. Excavation has

revealed the function of the walled enclosure, and has begun to uncover stratigraphical sequences suggesting earlier occupation: the most important areas were lightly back-filled over polythene for further investigation next year. It is likely that this will bring us close to meeting our ultimate objectives of identifying the chronological range and cultural associations of the landscape evidence in this area.

c) Please provide a summary of your results (even if they are preliminary).

The survey work has continued to add new detail to the overall plan of the field system, and is successfully placing the excavation areas in their wider landscape setting. It is clear from the results obtained this year that the sequence of landscape development is more complex than was originally recognised, but we are confident that we are now mapping the outer fringes of the area exploited from the farmstead site.

The walled enclosure appears to have been deliberately created to retain soil in a garden plot, and the finds confirm the view that pottery fragments were scattered around the area through manuring, along with organic waste which has not survived.

Excavation of two building platforms and part of the track way between them produced evidence of domestic occupation, including charcoal fragments, pottery and animal bones (some of which show butchery marks). Part of a ring-groove was identified on one of the platforms, suggesting the presence of a timber structure in the first phase of the site, replaced (at least once) by a stone building. This interpretation remains extremely tentative, as the groove has so far only been identified in one small part of the platform. A large quantity of animal bone was concentrated around a setting of stones at the southern edge of the excavation area: this may relate to activity on the adjacent platform, and will be investigated next year.

### **Significance/Benefits of Research**

a) What is/are the significance/benefits of your research at the following levels?

- local (in the area of the research site)

This is the first time that such an extensive investigation has been carried out in the region, and it is likely to lead to a complete re-assessment of how the landscape has been exploited and modified over a period of at least two thousand years.

- national

Archaeological research in the upland areas of Britain is always challenging, and rarely possible with current development-related funding. The opportunity to investigate a complex upland landscape on this scale is therefore unique in England.

- international

The historic landscapes of the Yorkshire Dales are among some of the best preserved in Europe, but due to the lack of recent research they are poorly understood, inaccessible and inadequately presented to wider audiences. Our work is significantly improving levels of understanding, and contributing to the

development of management strategies for limestone uplands where archaeological remains provide an important environmental asset.

b) How do your findings contribute to issues of sustainability?

Issues of sustainability have risen to the top of the agenda following the Foot and Mouth outbreak a few years ago. Hill farming has been the main industry in the area, but tourism is now taking the lead as agriculture comes under increasing economic pressure. In order to achieve sustainability, a balance has to be reached between conflicting development strategies. Our research project is collaborating with the Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust to inform the debate surrounding this issue, and to promote sustainable diversification.

### **Dissemination of Results**

Results are being disseminated through interim reports to bodies such as the Council for British Archaeology (primarily through its regional newsletter *Forum*), the Yorkshire Archaeological Society and local interest groups. I have been invited to give talks to local archaeological societies, and will be collaborating closely with the Craven Museum in developing further work related to the project. Plans are under way to establish a study centre to support dissemination of results and further work in the long term, while in the medium term preparations are being made to publish the project results as a research monograph.

For the first time this year we staged an exhibition about the project and related work as part of National Archaeology Week. The aim was to inform local people and visitors about our work over the last few years, and the significant contribution that Earthwatch has made to support the research. A local community group, the Upper Wharfedale Heritage Group, were enthusiastically involved in setting up the exhibition, and Team 2 contributed to a highly successful event that featured activities and displays of artefacts and reconstructions in Kettlewell Village Hall. Around 100 people visited the exhibition during the afternoon, and we have created a subsidiary travelling display that will be taken to further venues in the region. I am very pleased to report that the responses from visitors were highly complimentary on the quality of both the work and its presentation; in particular, the chairman of the local parish council expressed his delight that such high quality feedback was being provided locally.

### **Volunteer Tasks and Accomplishments**

a) How did the volunteers contribute ideas, skills, expertise and motivations beyond that which you anticipated?

Volunteers contributed specific skills in photography, computing and drawing – in addition to the de-turfing and stone-cleaning skills that everyone learnt on site. This year we had the added benefit of half a dozen volunteers who had been on the project at least once before. After a brief refresher they were able to use planning and recording skills remarkably quickly.

b) How have volunteers helped you to achieve your research or educational objectives? Please give specific and quantitative measures of the volunteers' contribution to your data collection.

Without the help of the volunteers the project would not have been possible – their contribution is 100 per cent.

### **Project Development**

- a) What logistical or scientific challenges have you encountered in the past season and how will you address them during the next field season?

Pressure of work meant that Miles Johnson had to drop out at the last minute, and his assistance with running team II was sorely missed. I will attempt to recruit assistance on a more reliable basis next year, but this could prove a challenge to the budget!

- b) Have you used any additional methods/strategies to meet your research objectives? If so, please describe them.

All methods and strategies were as originally planned.

- c) How will you develop your research in the coming field season?

We will broaden the scope of the project to include the collection of palaeoenvironmental data, using a new technique that allows the processing to be carried out without the need for laboratory facilities.

### **Educational Opportunities**

- a) Does your project directly or indirectly involve the following groups in your research topic?

- Local communities – through talks to local groups
- Students – through placement and fieldwork opportunities (both accredited and informal)
- Early career scientists – through opportunities for ‘first rung’ experience and spin-off projects
- Other groups – I shall be building links with a recently-formed local branch of the Young Archaeologists’ Club

- b) Please tell us the ways your research helps these groups better understand the conservation of a sustainable environment (see the UNESCO definition above).

The project is developing knowledge and understanding of an environmental asset that has significant economic potential. Data from the research reveals the impact of unsustainable strategies that have altered the landscape in the past, as well as encouraging a more sophisticated understanding of what is actually meant by ‘sustainable’. Those involved in the project are specifically introduced to the conflict between exploitation (even if only for research purposes) and conservation in an environmentally sensitive area.

- c) Has your project helped lead to the completion of Masters’ theses, or other educational research findings?

Not this year.

### **Partnerships**

- a) List partnerships or collaborations with other organisations that you have developed or maintained in the past season.

The project has been carried out in collaboration with the University of Leeds, the Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

- b) How have these organisations contributed to your project objectives?

The University of Leeds has provided financial and administrative support; the Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust has provided financial support. The Archaeological Conservation Officer of the National Park Authority briefed the teams on the local significance of their work.

- c) How do you anticipate these organisations will use the results generated by the project, and in what timeframes?

The Yorkshire Dales Landscape Research Trust is developing plans for a major heritage interpretation centre in the area, which will feature the results of the project. The National Park Authority uses the work of the project to inform and support its conservation strategies, and to highlight the importance of the historic environment in the park.

### **Acknowledgements**

I should like to thank the landowner and the tenant for allowing access to the research area, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority for their support. Permission to work on a Scheduled Ancient Monument has been granted by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.