

Editorial

The tragic death of Martin Frederiksen in July following an Oxford street accident has deprived our Society of one of its most distinguished members and active contributors. A full appreciation will appear in the *Journal of Roman Studies*, which he edited from 1969–74. His scholarly interests lay in Pre-Roman and Roman Italy yet he found time to support and sustain this journal, notably in recent years as Chairman of the Society's Editorial Committee. He will be greatly missed, both as a colleague and as a scholar.

This year *Britannia* contains almost 500 pages; not that there is a 'standard' size for the journal, as the variation in the size of recent numbers shows. Excavation reports are on average longer than even a few years ago and space must be found to ensure that longer articles or reports do not have to be divided between two volumes of the journal. There has to be a limit to the length of any single contribution to a volume of *Britannia*, enabling each issue to reflect as faithfully as possible the range of interest among the readership. There are occasions when one wonders whether lengthy reports are really to the advantage of the authors or to the profit of the reader. This is not to yearn for a time when what was accepted as the total excavation of a villa could be described in little more than a dozen pages of printed text. But there is a danger that if the record or work on Roman Britain grossly exceeds the reading capacity of the amateur, who contributes so much to it, a damaging fragmentation and even alienation will be the result.

After the above remarks it may seem contrary to announce a new publishing venture by our Society. Nevertheless the Council has responded to the need for an outlet for those reports and papers of importance to Romano-British studies which are too long for comfortable accommodation in the pages of this journal. Following the example of other societies it has sanctioned the inauguration of a *Britannia* Monograph Series. It will be edited by Professor S. S. Frere, who writes as follows: 'The first three volumes will be (1) *Romano-British Mosaics: an introduction to their schemes and a catalogue of paintings*, by David S. Neal; (2) the excavation report on *Skeleton Green* by Clive Partridge; and (3) *Romano-British Painted Wall-plaster*, by Norman Davey and Roger Ling. The first contains a fully-illustrated catalogue and discussion of measured and painted records of mosaics undertaken during the last twenty-five years by the author, mainly for the Department of the Environment. The second describes an important late Iron Age and Roman site in Hertfordshire which has yielded a well-dated type-series of imported and native pottery and other objects which will form an essential supplement to Hawkes and Hull's *Camulodunum*. The third is a corpus of wall-paintings restored by Dr Davey for the Department of the Environment, in which the first author describes his methods and his analysis of the techniques observed and Dr Ling discusses the art-historical aspects of the paintings.'

Details of the first two monographs, including special subscription prices in

advance of publication appear on a leaflet accompanying this volume. Orders for the third volume will be invited in the spring.

The *Britannia* monographs will be edited and published, in the format of A4, on behalf of the Society. The success of this venture will depend on the rapid sale of the volumes leading to the recouping of printing and publication costs. The Monograph fund set up by the Society has to be self-supporting and cannot claim on the normal publication funds set apart for the *Journal of Roman Studies* and *Britannia*. Further volumes are under consideration but their publication will depend on quick sales of the first volumes and to achieve this the price of each volume has been kept to a minimum.

Britannia enters its second decade with a new editor. That it has become the accepted journal of record and debate for Roman Britain is but part of the achievement of its founding editor Sheppard Frere. Professor Frere's new role as editor of the Monograph Series has been announced above and this is not the occasion to reflect upon his huge contribution to the Society. Some indication of this may be inferred from Council's decision to approve an Editorial Assistant for *Britannia*. Mrs Sarah Geddes took up this post on the 1st January 1980 and she will assist the editor in the same manner as the editorial assistant for the *Journal of Roman Studies*.