

Museum Report

The present writer was appointed Curator of the Society's museum in March, 1947. The office had been vacant since the destruction of the museum by enemy action in November, 1940, although valuable work had been done in the meantime by several individual members.

Early in 1947 a start was made at reassembling in Bristol the objects which had been salvaged from the ruins of the museum during the winter 1940-41 (see these *Proceedings*, Vol. V, No. 2, p. 138). The Society was still without proper accommodation for specimens, but by kind permission of Professor W. F. Whittard, some material was housed in the Geology store from March until November, 1947. By May, 1947, all the material which had been stored by Dr. and Mrs. Crook at their house was once more in the University. The Society is greatly indebted to the Crooks for their work in this connection, and for the identifications and repairs carried out while the objects were under their charge. Salvaged specimens have also been received from Dr. H. Taylor, to whom the Society's thanks are likewise due, and further material is still in his care.

Meanwhile the need for further accommodation became pressing. Owing to the extreme shortage of space after the war, the University authorities are unable, for the time being, to make available a room suitable for a museum. Attention was therefore directed to the cellar beneath what used to be the museum. This was not damaged in the air-raids, but had suffered from flooding and had fallen into disrepair during the war, so that when first explored it presented a discouraging appearance. Although the most important specimens had been removed after the destruction of the museum, much material remained, together with a good deal of rubbish. The work of clearance was started on March 31, 1947, and completed by June, 1948. The whole of the archaeological material found in the cellar was sorted through, as many of the containers needed to be replaced.

The objects in the possession of the Society having been reassembled, it was next necessary to clean, repair, and relabel them, and to place them in permanent storage. This work is now in progress. The existing racks in the cellar, made of old crates, were in a very unsatisfactory condition and had to be discarded, but the shelving fitted against the wall was serviceable. To augment this, five bays of steel racking have been bought and installed, and shelf space is now adequate. A quantity of cardboard boxes, of several standard sizes, and of glass tubes, has been bought to replace containers which have become damaged.

Finally, the physical condition of the cellar was very poor, and unsuitable for the storage and study of archæological material. The walls are of soft sandstone, which produces a considerable amount of dust, and the ceiling was in bad condition. The University was therefore approached, and has kindly agreed to have the walls and ceiling plastered and painted, and adequate lighting and other necessary fittings installed. The work was begun on October 6, 1948. The Society's thanks are due to the Vice-Chancellor and the Bursar, for their co-operation in making this possible, and to Mr. Jones and Mr. Richards for organizing its execution as rapidly as possible under difficult conditions.

As work on the collections has had to be suspended until the cellar is ready to receive them, it has not been possible to compile an up-to-date list of material now in the Society's possession. This will be published in the next issue of these *Proceedings*.

Facilities for exhibition of specimens are at present limited to one wall-case and one table-case in the Society's Committee Room and Library. Exhibits are being set out in these, and efforts will be made to increase the amount of material exhibited, and to make it available to a wider public.

In conclusion I wish to thank heartily all those members who have helped during this first period of the rehabilitation of the museum.

D. T. DONOVAN
Hon. Curator.
