Finally, we can see how this culture could have collapsed. During the sixteenth century the selling of iron bars to West Africa gained considerable importance in European trade. The value of iron must have fallen, and even more important is the fact that the sources of raw material were scattered all round the coast, and not concentrated in certain spots. The people whose living had depended upon the localisation of exposures of the laterite ore, itself of poor quality, would not be able to compete and maintain their previous prosperity. The labour force expended upon the quarrying of ore, and on the building of the monuments, would have to be diverted to obtaining the supplies of food, which could no longer be brought from elsewhere.

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EXCAVATIONS AT BUI: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

The existence of an early settlement on the south bank of the Black Volta at 2.16 W, 8.17 N, the point where the track from Banda Nkwanta crosses the river to Bui, has been known of for some time. Because of the threat of flooding by the proposed Bui Dam, the Volta Basin Research Project under the auspices of the Department of Archaeology in the University of Ghana, conducted excavations there between 20:xi:64 and 15:iv:65, which were directed by the author. The team was accommodated at Bui Camp by the Ministry of Fuel and Power, to whose authority we owe grateful thanks for generous hospitality and much practical assistance.

On a preliminary survey, traces of occupation (low mounds, pottery, beads and fragments of glass bracelets) were observed to extend over 600 yds from the south edge of the existing village to within 100 yds of the river bank, across an area about 500 yds wide. Air photographs revealed a rectangular formation 450 x 300 yds within this area running north/south, the western edge of which just overlapped the path. It was decided to investigate half of this rectangle, and a strip 450 x 150 yds was cleared of vegetation, exposing to view ten prominent and several smaller mounds, concentrated mostly in the upper centre of the rectangle.

These smaller mounds were quickly seen to be the result of sweeping, and consisted of accumulations of gravel and sand and a few sherds; but a find pebble-chopper (Sangoan, unrolled) was recovered from the laterite that underlay one of them. Attention was then concentrated on the more prominent mounds, which proved to fall into three categories. The first, of which there were four examples, comprised those containing material not earlier, on the present assessment, than the late 18th Century and characterised by the remains of floors of beaten laterite from 2" - 4" thick whose original dimensions were in some cases recoverable; always rectangular, they varied between 15 x 20 ft. and 8 x 8 ft. Material both imported (tobacco-pipes including some fine rings - iron knives, beads and tobacco-pipes) was stratified both above and below these floors; the pottery was characterised by bands of impressed dog-tooth pattern, usually on a grey-black gritty ware.

The second category of mounds, usually slightly bigger, of which there were five, contained similar material in the upper levels, except that the floor was mostly lacking but below it there was in all cases a destruction level, between 6" and 2' 6" thick, of ash and charcoal; in one case it was possible to distinguish two separate layers superimposed the shape of the lower larger one being in plan rectangular and that of the upper ovoid. Some traces of collapsed daub walls round the edge of the lower one were observed. In another case the ash covered a skeleton lying in a crumpled attitude with the neck broken and the ribs severely crushed; it had not been formally interred. The pottery of these levels (which have tentatively been divided into two periods) was usually red or buff, and the dog-tooth pattern was also in evidence here. Among the artifacts stratified both in and below the ash were local tobacco-pipes, celts and spindle-whorls.

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Formal burials were discovered below three of these mounds; one type was deep in the laterite; the shaft being very narrow but long enough to accommodate a fully supine adult skeleton; and in one instance a slight shelf ran along one side of the shaft 8" above the bottom. A shallower type was apparently dug through the floor or whatever structure first stood on the site, and was also full length; while two child-burials, well below one of the laterite floors referred to above, but probably dug from that level, were doubled up in crescent-shaped shafts; the bones were almost completely reduced.

All the mounds so far discussed were in the uphill area of the site. Just below the centre the ground falls away sharply and this line, which was caused by the destruction through earlier river action of the laterite substructure (bedrock was here 13ft down), coincided with the edge of the proved habitation area. Below it, one group of small mounds round a depression were sterile and of natural origin, but microliths were recovered from below them. The final, largest mound, only 110 yds from the river was the sole example of the final category. It was composed of silt clays and contained a filled pit 4ft deep at its centre, dug before the deposition of humus and filled with mixed clay, ash and humus at the bottom of which lay a few very badly deteriorated sherds.

All over the site were found quartz microliths, both eroded out to the surface and stratified down into pits in the laterite substructure. They fall into two broad types; of 6 arrow-heads of Type 1, varying between 4.5 and 2.8 cms, in length, No. 1 - 3 have a bi-faced butt, the facets adjacent at angles from 60 to 150 deg. In these cases one surface of the blade is that created by the original detachment of the flake from the core, and the bulb of percussion has been utilised to thicken the butt. A small triangular face on the other side of the blade is all that remains of the surface left by the detachment of the previous flake; this has been diminished by two downward flakes which have left a ridge at their juncture down the centre of the blade, and created two cutting edges on the outside which needed only sporadic retouching. No.4 is an arrowhead tip which although broken, is almost certainly to be placed in this category. Nos. 5 - 6 are single examples of two more types; No.5 a short, shield-shaped head with a single-faced butt, one side being flat and the other formed by the removal of three parallel flakes to create a longitudinally convex surface; and Nos.6 a small almond-shaped blade with a continuous cutting edge to which gyro-retouching has imparted an S-twist. The original surface of the pebble is visible on the side of the semi-circular butt.

The cruder pieces, belonging to Type II, all have in common the single-faced butt and parallel flaking of No.5 above, but are larger and more clumsily executed, some bing 8 cms. in length, and range over a wide variety of forms, only some being arrowheads. They represent, it would seem from their appearance in the upper levels, a later degeneration rather than an earlier stage of development. This, it should be stressed is a provisional theory. To this later period may also be assigned a large number of grooved sandstone grinders used probably for smoothing beads and arrows.

The site of Bui can therefore be said, on present evidence, to have known, since during Gamblian times visits or occupation by men at at least five and possibly six different or overlapping periods:-

	1.	Palaeolithic	(Gamblian)	Pebble-chopper
	2.	Neolithic	(Microlith I)	Retouched microliths.
2a/	3.		(Pit period)	Filled pit in Cat.III
3/	4.	Early Iron	(Microlith II)	Lower ash level
4/	5.	Middle Iron	(Destruction)	Upper ash level
5/	6.	Late Iron	(Reoccupation)	Boaten laterite floors.

The date of the foundation of the Iron Age town may be ascertained if reliable evidence can be wrung out of the artifacts of the Early levels; its destruction can be placed after the middle of the 18th Cent., and its reoccupation, of which the present village is probably the continuation, not long afterwards.

S.N. York.

TWO TERMS IN THE INSTITUTE

I offered two seminars in the Institute during the Trinity Term. One of these was concerned with an examination of urbanization processes in Africa generally and using Ghana as a case study. Mrs. Marion Kilson who is carrying out researches on Ga Social Organization was associated with me in conducting the seminar.

I plan to remain in Ghana until October to do research on voluntary associations and Churches as mechanisms of social cohesion and cultural integration in the port of Tema, under the sponsorship of the Institute of African Studies. My wife, Dr. Elizabeth Drake,