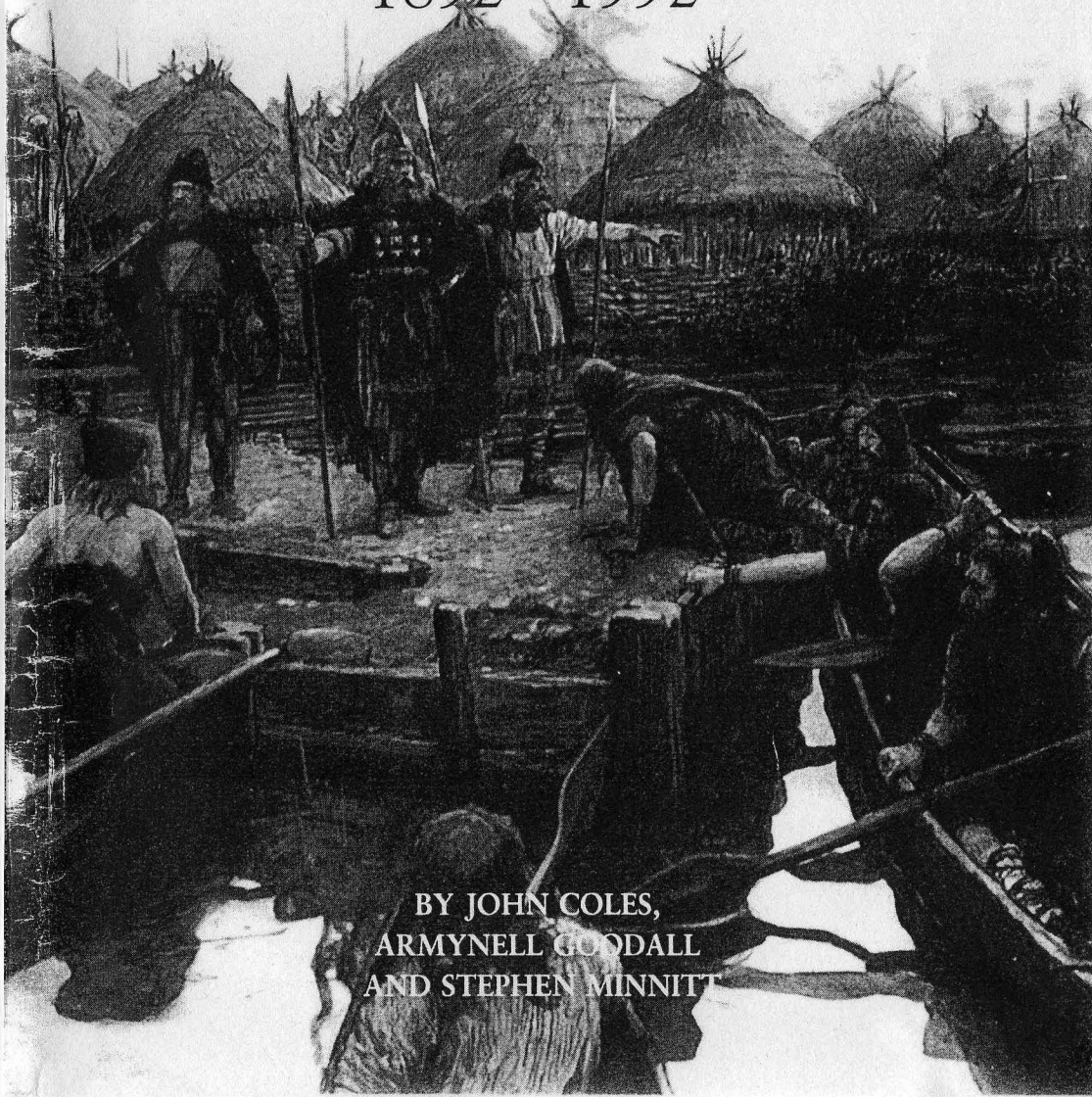


# ARTHUR BULLEID AND THE GLASTONBURY LAKE VILLAGE 1892 - 1992



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Front cover: *reconstruction of Glastonbury Lake Village  
by M Forestier in 1910*

Back cover: *drawing of the Green Man by Arthur Bulleid.*

## Preface

In 1892, Arthur Bulleid discovered the Glastonbury Lake Village, now one of Europe's most famous archaeological sites. To commemorate the centenary of this event, we have compiled an account of the discovery and subsequent excavation of the Lake Village. Its story is inextricably linked with the life and work of Arthur Bulleid, who devoted 60 years to Lake Village and Somerset studies. We have also tried to incorporate aspects of the family life of Arthur Bulleid, of his long association with Harold St George Gray, and of his other interests and accomplishments.

The text has been written by John Coles (co-director of the Somerset Levels Project), Arminell Goodall (daughter of Arthur Bulleid) and Stephen Minnitt (Assistant County Museums Officer, Somerset County Museums Service). Certain personal passages of family history are written by Arminell Goodall and are generally designated by (AG) in the text. As Bulleid recorded measurements in the Imperial system this has been retained throughout the text.

We acknowledge the great assistance of the Somerset Record Office, the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society, the Somerset Local History Library, the Somerset County Museums Service and other sources of written and illustrative material. The book was designed by Crispin Goodall (Arthur Bulleid's grandson). We also thank Stephen Morland, John Loveridge, David Dawson, Carole Price, Susan Clements, Lawrence Bostock, Bob Croft, Bryony Coles, Hugh Chapman, Bruce Watkin, David Bromwich, Winifred Hutton, Charles Browne, Roy Minnitt, Adam Green and Peter Collings for encouragement and/or practical assistance.

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1. Bulleid brothers  
Lawrence, Howard  
and Arthur

## Early Days

Arthur Bulleid was born in Glastonbury in 1862, the youngest child of J G L Bulleid and his wife Christiana (née Wooff). J G L Bulleid was a solicitor and a prominent citizen of Glastonbury, where he was mayor no less than seven times. He had a strong interest in antiquarian matters, and was founder (1886) and first President of the Glastonbury Antiquarian Society. Arthur and his two brothers Howard and Lawrence were educated at St John's College, Hurstpierpoint, commonly known as 'Hurst'. Founded by Nathaniel Woodard, an Anglican clergyman with High Church leanings, the school catered for 'middle class boys' with a wide curriculum; this was in contrast to many public schools where Classics predominated. The fees at Hurst were £20 a year.

'My father was not happy at school; he said the boys were half starved during Lent and during the winter they were cold. He won a prize for drawing, he was a prefect in his last year (1879), played football for the First XI and obtained his Swimming Certificate, and finally he was the Chamberlain in a production of Henry IV part I'. (AG)

Perhaps Bulleid had been conditioned to the cold of school by his adventures as a very small boy. When he was 4, he was found one cold winter's day walking purposefully along Magdalene Street in Glastonbury; an elderly gentleman said to him, 'Well young Bulleid where are you going?' He replied 'I am going to test the ice'.

After leaving Hurst, Bulleid went to the Potteries to learn the trade as an apprentice, returning to Glastonbury to work with patterns and glazes in a local company. He found little to encourage him in his efforts to experiment and develop the craft, and he abandoned the work and turned to medicine. He entered the Bristol Medical School from where he could visit his parents in Glastonbury whenever possible. Bulleid had a slight hesitation in his speech which worried him all through his life and he found oral examinations difficult. Nonetheless his career as a doctor seemed assured and he pursued his studies vigorously. Yet there was always another interest, instilled by his father, in antiquarian matters, and in his spare time he read of the excavations and discoveries then being made in Britain and abroad.

soon once again overran the meeting-place. The clay spreads were washed by water, and required renewing and reshaping each year. For several centuries, from about 150 B.C. to about 100 A.D., Meare functioned as the social centre for Iron Age societies, but with the onset of more serious flooding, water-laid clays began to be laid down and the site was abandoned forever. This scenario is not one that Bulleid and Gray proposed, but Bulleid had provided hints of seasonality in those thoughts that he put into paper, and he had identified the unusual environmental circumstances of the Meare occupations.

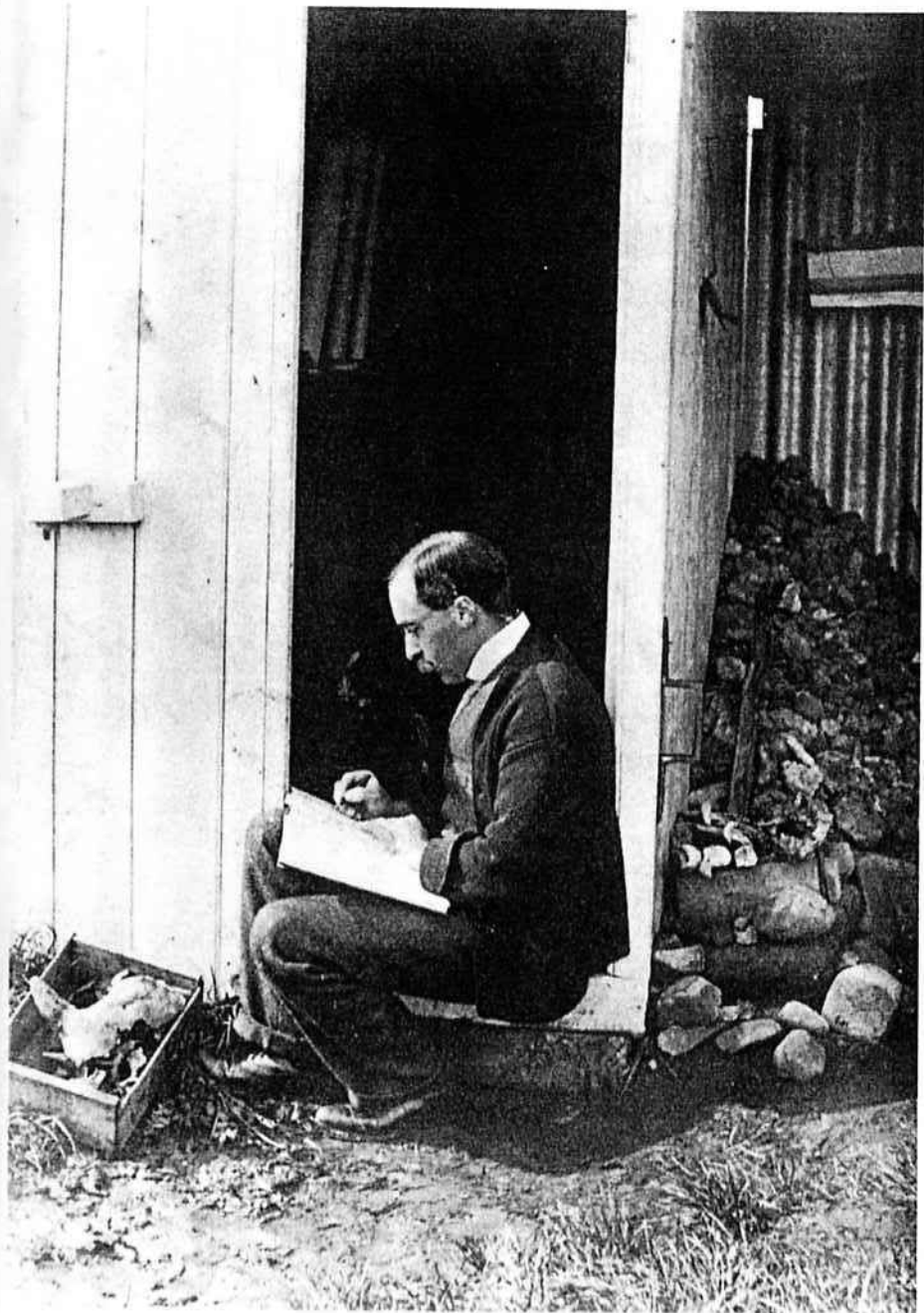
### Final Words

Arthur Bulleid died at his home, Dymboro, Midsomer Norton on December 27 1951; he was 89. Although there had been various earlier archaeological excavations in the Somerset Levels, on the Abbot's Way for example, Bulleid was the pioneer *par excellence*, discovering, identifying, exploring and then publishing the report on the total examination of an Iron Age settlement - the Glastonbury Lake Village. This site, found in 1892, remains the basis upon which all other British Iron Age settlements are compared and judged. A number of research dissertations have been founded on the site and its material remains, numerous articles have appeared in both the learned and popular press, as well as various books, reconstruction models, drawings and full size copies, and the life of 'the Celtic Warrior in his watery fortress' is never far from writings on life in the past. Bulleid would certainly appreciate the profound interest inspired by his work, and would chuckle if he could read some of the fanciful rubbish created over the years.

In view of all that had gone before, the final words should be Harold St. George Gray's, in his obituary notice of Arthur Bulleid:

'he was a most careful, accurate and painstaking observer, and exceedingly pleasant to work with... Bulleid was never happier than when working at the Lake Villages where he made many friends who appreciated his archaeological enthusiasm... The writer of these notes, who spent many weeks of his life... under Dr. Bulleid's roof, always found him kind and friendly, and of a decidedly hospitable nature'.

37. Bulleid at  
Glastonbury Lake  
Village



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