old world archaeologist

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old world archaeology study unit
George Holland, Editor
P. O. Box 1585
Florence, Oregon 97439
Telephone: (541) 997-5870
E-mail: gwhstamp@presys.com

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SIFTING THE DIRT

A new editor grabs an opportunity

Well . . . this is the very last thing being written for this edition — my first. All 20 pages have been filled, every dot on the computer screen has been memorized, and now I'm ready to turn the printer loose. Except for this final word or two.

I think the first remarks should be directed to your former editor, David Detrich. I understand he has been the editor since the study unit's beginning. What a career that has been and what a person it takes to hang in there year-after-year and at the end still producing a very great newsletter.

I will not even try to fill David's shoes, nor should I. Editing a newsletter such as this is a very personal, unique experience. People, like Eileen Meier and George Rohrer, write great stories for you, but at the end of the quarter, when the time is up, it's the editor alone facing the empty pages on the computer. But it is a good thing, too, and many of us get real enjoyment from being in that position.

My dad was always the editor of any group he was associated with, including the denomination he preached for. So I have a little background there, and I have been associated with printing from the time at age twelve I worked as a printer's devil until I retired as the composing room foreman of a metropolitan daily.

Therefore, my efforts will probably show a good taste for typography (sometimes I feel that's a lost art). My drawbacks will probably be in grammar. I'll probably split every infinitive that's splittable and dangle every participle dangleable. So you'll probably read some things that will make you shake your head. I try to use James Kilpatrick's advice to read it over — and over — and if it sounds lumpy, change it.

And I'll probably skip in and out of person every now and then. I know I should stay in third person except for this column . . . when I should be in the editorial "we", but this isn't a big city paper, and we're not going to submit it for a Pulitzer, so I guess I'll just move along, like I'm used to (dangling?). The point I want to get across is that this newsletter will be an enjoyable read (at least I fervently hope so).

On the scholarly level, I'll probably be a little lighter than you are familiar with. Archaeology can be a tremendous bore . . . or it can be fun. Philately can be made tremendously boring by pedantry . . . or it can be made light, entertaining and enjoyable. I'll strive to combine them both with lightness, humor, and interest. Read the story by George Rohrer on Page One. You feel like you are actually walking down the cool passageways in that cavern. That's what I'll try to provide.

I've asked you to fill out a survey on the last two pages. I need to know you and know what your likes and dislikes are (dangling?). I'll try to share with you the same information about myself that I am asking from you.

This newsletter is going to 46 members presently. I'd like to think that between us we can increase that by a good percent. I'll sure try to do my part . . . incidentally, this is the most fun I've ever had as an editor and the one providing the most excitement planning the next edition . . . so let's carry on (is that a dangler, too?).