

PRESS RELEASE: 9 October 2012

## **Pitt Rivers Museum wins Arts Council England funding for 'Excavating Pitt-Rivers' Project**

The Victorian archaeologist General Pitt-Rivers is world-famous for his development of modern scientific archaeology, but the earliest archaeological collections that he made have never been studied. The Pitt Rivers Museum, where these artefacts are held, has been awarded £76,654 by Arts Council England's Designation Development Fund to document this important early material.

The collections come from more than 50 prehistoric, Roman and medieval sites across the UK: from excavations at a medieval castle in Kent, from Bronze Age barrows in Yorkshire, from Iron Age hill-forts in Sussex, and even from early 'rescue' archaeology at Roman sites in central London. As well as documenting the collections, the 'Excavating Pitt-Rivers' project's public archaeology programme will collaborate with local archaeologists in the regions from which the collections were excavated.

Dan Hicks, who will lead the project, said:

"General Pitt-Rivers created the first archaeological collection of national scope to be made through scientific excavation. By documenting this iconic collection, and exchanging knowledge with local archaeologists, the project explores how these artefacts connect the Pitt Rivers Museum with sites, landscapes and communities across the country."

The project will also draw upon the recent gift from the Pitt-Rivers family to the Museum of important unpublished manuscripts. Jeremy Coote, joint head of collections at the Museum, said:

"We are immensely grateful to the Designation Development Fund, successive awards from which have transformed public engagement with the Museum's collections over the past decade".

**END**

Image available on request

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Supported by  
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## Notes for editors:

**Pitt Rivers Museum** was founded in 1884 when General Pitt-Rivers, an influential figure in the development of archaeology and evolutionary anthropology, gave his collection to the University of Oxford. The General's founding gift contained more than 18,000 objects but there are now over half a million, including extensive photographic and sound archives. Early anthropologists and explorers donated many objects to the Museum and collecting continues through donations, bequests, special purchases and staff and student fieldwork. [www.prm.ox.ac.uk](http://www.prm.ox.ac.uk)

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