

SHORTER CONTRIBUTIONS

EGYPTIAN ‘FUNERARY CONES’ FROM EL-MOGHRAQA, GAZA

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In 1996 the Palestinian Department of Antiquities, Gaza, identified a previously unknown site dating to the second millennium BC, in the area of el-Moghraqa, some 700m north of the Wadi Gaza. The cultural remains recovered from the surface included a series of terracotta cones stamped with the cartouches of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut. These artefacts are unique amongst the cultural assemblages of the Levant and are most closely paralleled by Egyptian funerary cones of the Eighteenth Dynasty from Thebes. Fieldwork conducted by the Gaza Research Project (GRP) in 1999 and 2000 examined the archaeological context of the cones, with the purpose of identifying their function and assessing the symbolic significance of this Egyptianizing material within a Levantine context.

The Middle to Late Bronze Age (MB–LB) site of el-Moghraqa (figs 1 and 2) lies in an area of farmland and sand dune some 700m north of the Wadi Gaza and within the catchment area of the major second-millennium BC urban centre of Tell el-‘Ajjul. The site was discovered in 1996 by Dr Moain Sadeq, following the removal of sand dunes for cultivation.¹ Preliminary surface collection brought to light small quantities of Late Bronze Age (LB I) pottery and initial reports suggest that mud brick was visible on the surface when the site was first uncovered.² The most significant cultural remains, however, were several pieces of terracotta cones (figs 3 and 4) stamped with the prenomen of the Eighteenth-Dynasty Egyptian king, Thutmose III (c 1479–1425 BC).³

EL-MOGHRAQA AND THE GAZA REGION DURING THE SECOND MILLENNIUM BC

El-Moghraqa is one of a number of MB–LB sites that have been identified around the mouth of the Wadi Gaza.⁴ This is a region that was of prime importance during the second

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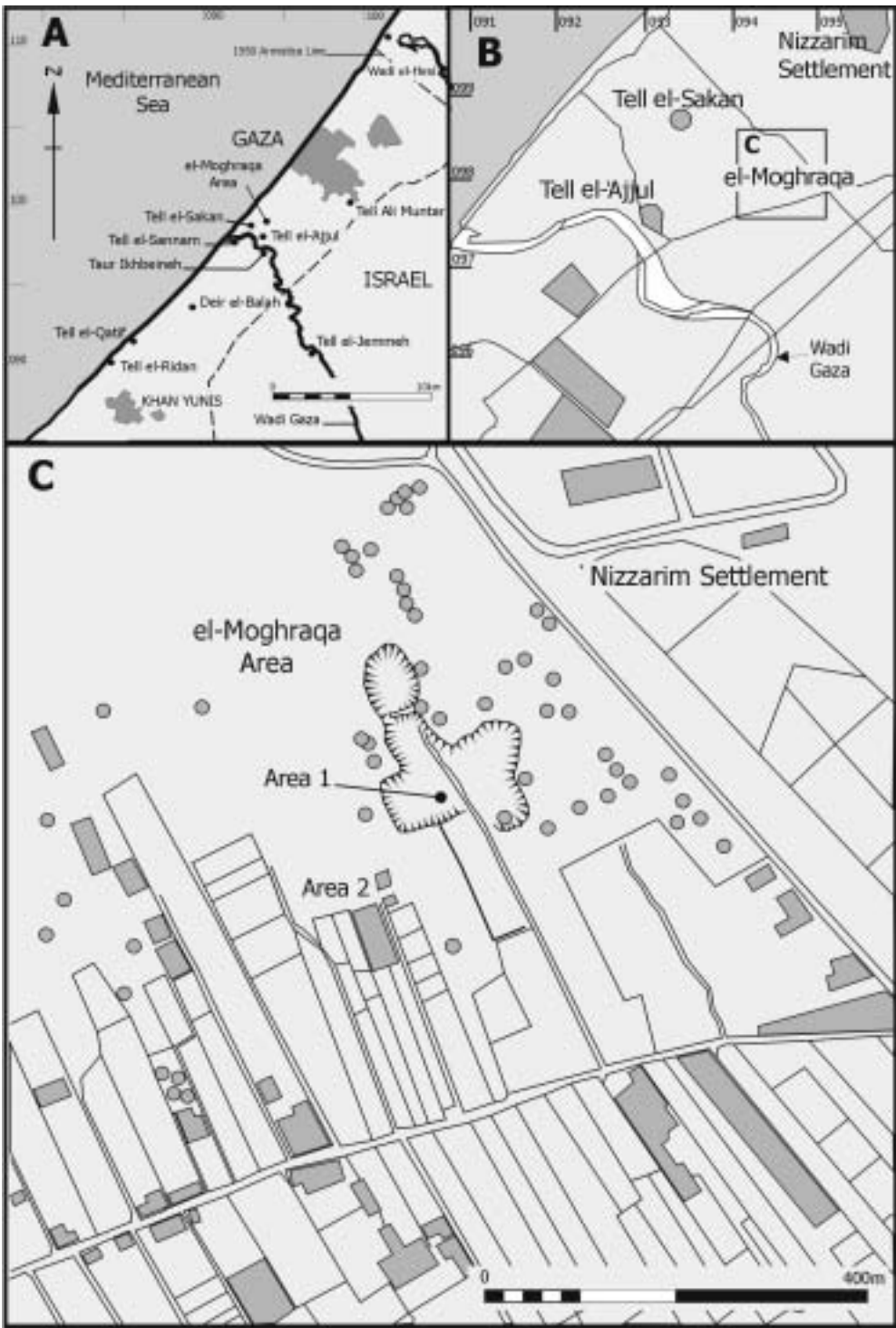


Fig 1. Map of the Gaza region, showing the location of el-Moghraqa. *Drawing: Mark Roughley*



Fig 2. View of el-Moghraqa to the south (1998). *Photograph:* Louise Steel

millennium BC as a major nexus of communication between Egypt and the Levant, lying as it does at the Palestinian terminus of the 'Ways of Horus'.⁵ A number of militarily important towns in the Gaza region, including Sharuhen and another 'whose Syrian name is Gaza', are known from Egyptian texts of the MB–LB transition, most significantly in the tomb biography of the commander of marines, Ahmose, son of Ibana, at el-Kab,⁶ and in the Karnak 'Annals' of Thutmose III.⁷ Clearly the Gaza region was of prime strategic military importance to the Egyptian New Kingdom empire in Syria and Palestine, and would have been crucial for the movement – by land certainly and presumably also by sea – of traded commodities and military and administrative personnel between Egypt and Palestine. The pre-eminent site in the region during the MB–LB I period was 'Ajjul'.⁸ A series of monumental structures (a palace, a mansion and three fortresses) dominated the north-eastern corner of the tell⁹ and a large town stretched over its southern half.¹⁰ The economic prominence and international connections of 'Ajjul are demonstrated by the range of Middle Kingdom Egyptian scarabs,¹¹ unparalleled quantities of goldwork,¹² and large quantities of Cypriot imported pottery.¹³ By the fourteenth century, however, 'Ajjul was seemingly eclipsed by the establishment of an Egyptian administrative centre (with an Amarna-style residence, possibly for the Egyptian governor) at Deir el-Balah.¹⁴

The main period of occupation at el-Moghraqa dates to the MB IIb–c period¹⁵ and thus is contemporary with nearby 'Ajjul. The close proximity of the two sites suggests that el-Moghraqa was in fact a small satellite settlement of 'Ajjul, the two belonging to a single polity. There is limited evidence for activity into the LB I period at both locales and at el-Moghraqa this is largely residual, represented by a surface scatter of MB–LB pottery recovered during survey rather than from securely stratified contexts. The pottery recovered from stratified

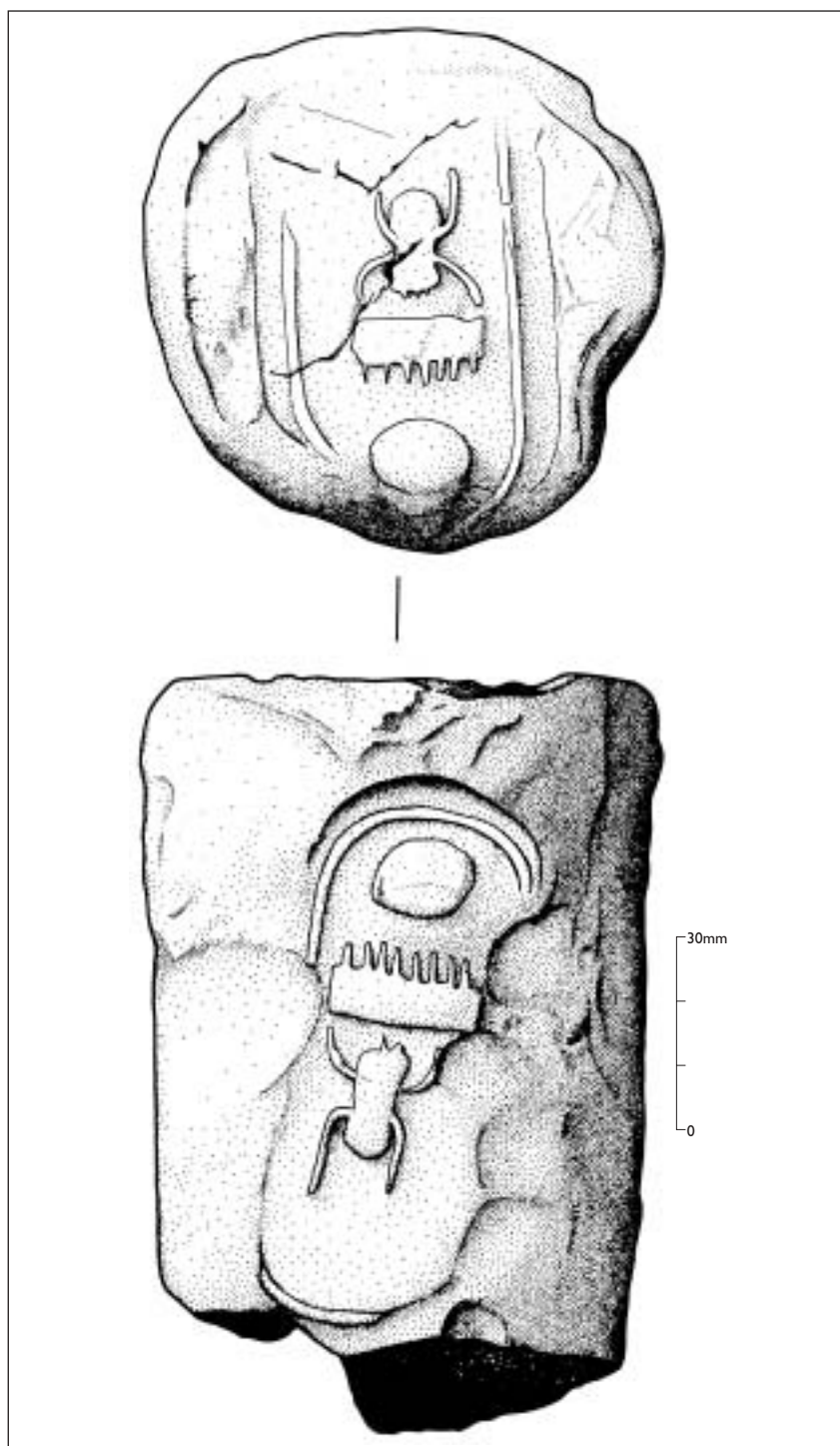


Fig 3. Cone fragments from el-Moghraqa stamped with the prenomen of Thutmose III.
Drawing: Mark Roughley



Fig 4. Cone fragments from el-Moghraqa stamped with the prenomen of Thutmose III.

Photographs: Joanne Clarke

contexts in excavation was MB II in date (figs 5.1–2). At present it appears that the site was abandoned at the end of the MB period, possibly as a result of flooding – certainly the MB levels throughout much of the site were sealed by thick silt deposits. In some areas this silt layer was overlain by ancient compacted sand dunes.

The cultural remains recovered at el-Moghraqa illustrate the economic importance of the site. It appears to have played a significant role in the procurement of luxury raw materials such as carnelian and mother-of-pearl, and apparently also in the production, storage and distribution of high-status prestige goods, such as an Egyptian alabaster kohl bottle (fig 6.1), a green jasper scarab bead and small trinkets of faience.¹⁶ A small number of economic documents – clay sealings (figs 6.2–3)¹⁷ and an Old Assyrian-style steatite cylinder seal (fig 7)¹⁸ – were also recovered, throwing some light on elite control of the activities at el-Moghraqa. Possibly these activities were controlled from ‘Ajjul, given the proximity of the two sites. Similar workshops for the production of luxury objects were identified at Deir el-Balah, although these are later than the so-called residence building.¹⁹

THE CONES FROM EL-MOGHRAQA

We have catalogued seventeen large cone fragments from el-Moghraqa, fifteen of which were recovered during the initial survey in 1996, from within a discrete area of approximately 6–8sqm.²⁰ Numerous small cone fragments, many stamped with Egyptian hieroglyphs, were



Fig 5. Middle to Late Bronze Age pottery from el-Moghraqa. 1: jug and krater; 2: storage jar. *Photographs:* Louise Steel

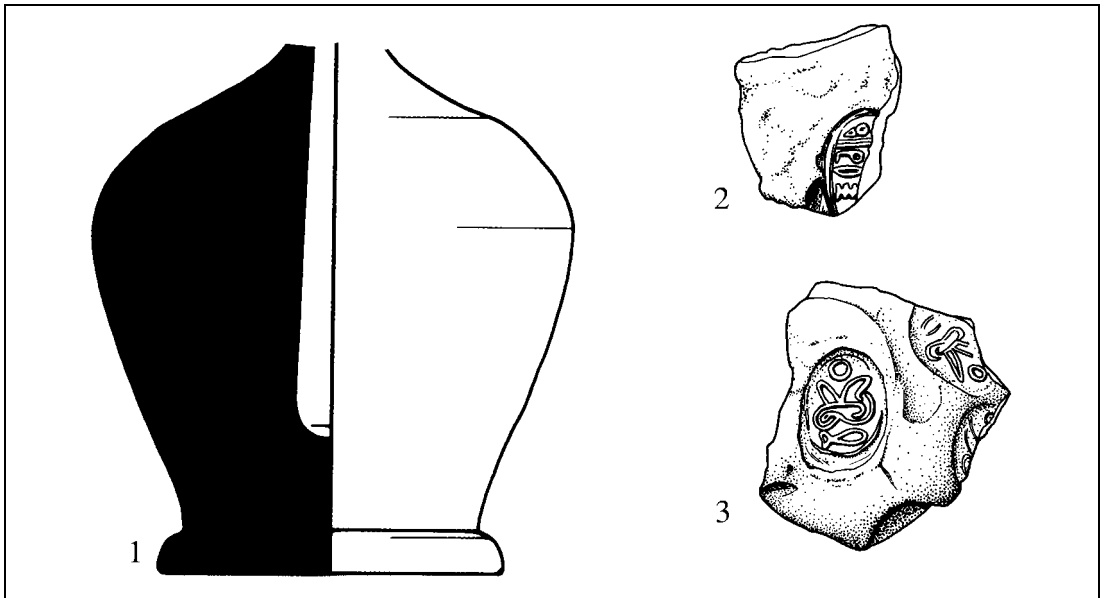


Fig 6. Small finds from el-Moghraqa. 1: alabaster kohl bottle; 2–3: clay sealing impression (reproduced at actual size). *Drawing: Mark Roughley*



Fig 7. Old Assyrian cylinder seal. *Photograph: Louise Steel*



Fig 8. Section of cone showing organic temper, including a lentil. *Photograph: Noël Siver*

recovered in this area during the 2000 excavation season. The cones were found in a matrix of compacted sand, comprising the remains of an ancient dune.²¹ The associated pottery was mixed, ranging from MB–LB to Byzantine in date. Excavation established that the cones were indeed restricted to a small area of the site; however, it failed to identify any associated structural remains and instead it appears that the cones had been dumped at this location in antiquity, later to be covered by wind-blown sand. The date of the dumping episode and the initial formation of the sand dune is still unclear.

No cones have survived intact and their original length is unclear. The cones had been broken in antiquity but also have one or more fresh breaks, probably due to recent bulldozing or ploughing activity. Although several cones had survived in relatively large pieces they were all very friable and accreted and needed careful conservation treatment.

The cones are made of a reddish-yellow clay with a thick dark grey core. They all have a similar matrix, with very dense organic temper (chaff, small pieces of wood and, in one instance, a lentil: fig 8) and small inclusions of quartz, some shell and occasional pieces of grog. The cones were badly fired and are frequently vitrified on one side to a pale white/green/mauve colour. This vitrification was also observed in the numerous tiny cone fragments recovered during excavation. Very patchy traces of a red slip survive on some cones, although most had worn off. Generally, the cones have a flat base and are roughly circular in section, tapering gradually towards the pointed tip (fig 9). The cones were stamped on the round face and upper side with a single cartouche before firing, while the clay was still moist. The upper side was slightly flattened for the stamp. Finger impressions where the cone had been held during this process are visible on several examples.

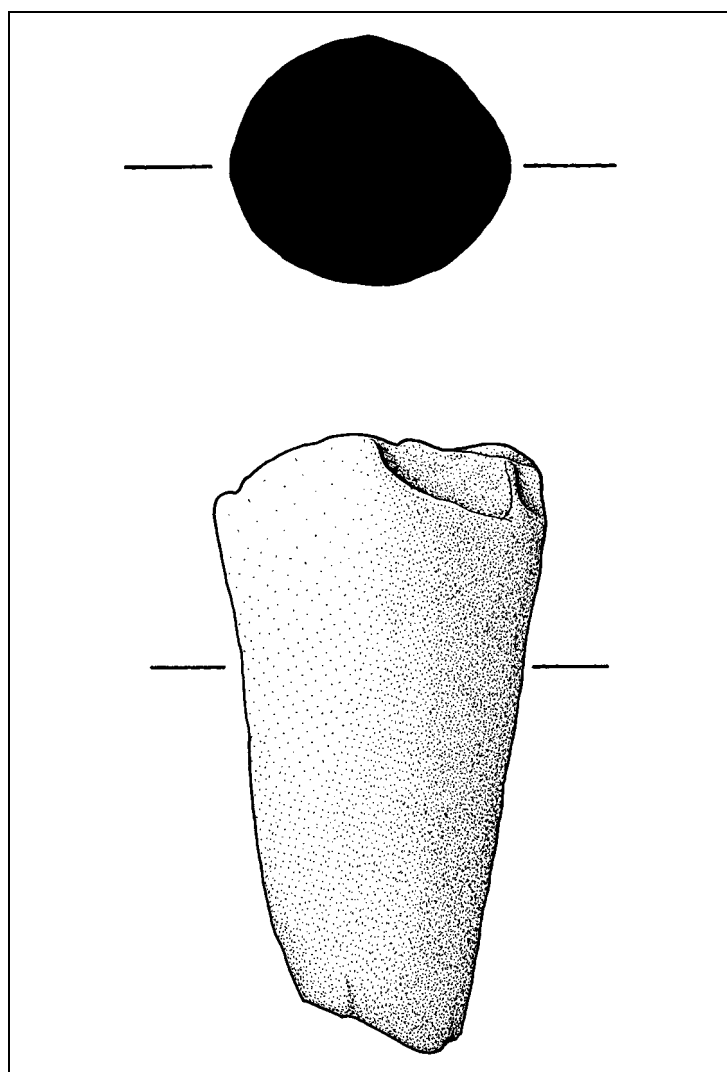


Fig 9. Cone tip (reproduced at actual size). *Drawing:* Mark Roughley

DATING

Where the inscriptions survive more or less complete the cartouches measure between 72mm and 79mm in length and between 33mm and 38mm in width. The depth of impression is usually around 1.5mm. In most cases the cartouches give the prenomen (or ‘throne-name’) of Thutmose III (*Menkheperre*; see figs 3 and 4), whose accession *c* 1479 BC therefore provides the *terminus post quem*. However, other artefacts, such as scarabs, were manufactured with this prenomen and distributed widely across the Mediterranean for many centuries after his reign.²² On the other hand, two fragments undoubtedly give the prenomen of Hatshepsut (*Maatkara*; fig 10), who was co-regent with Thutmose III:²³ the occurrence of her name is

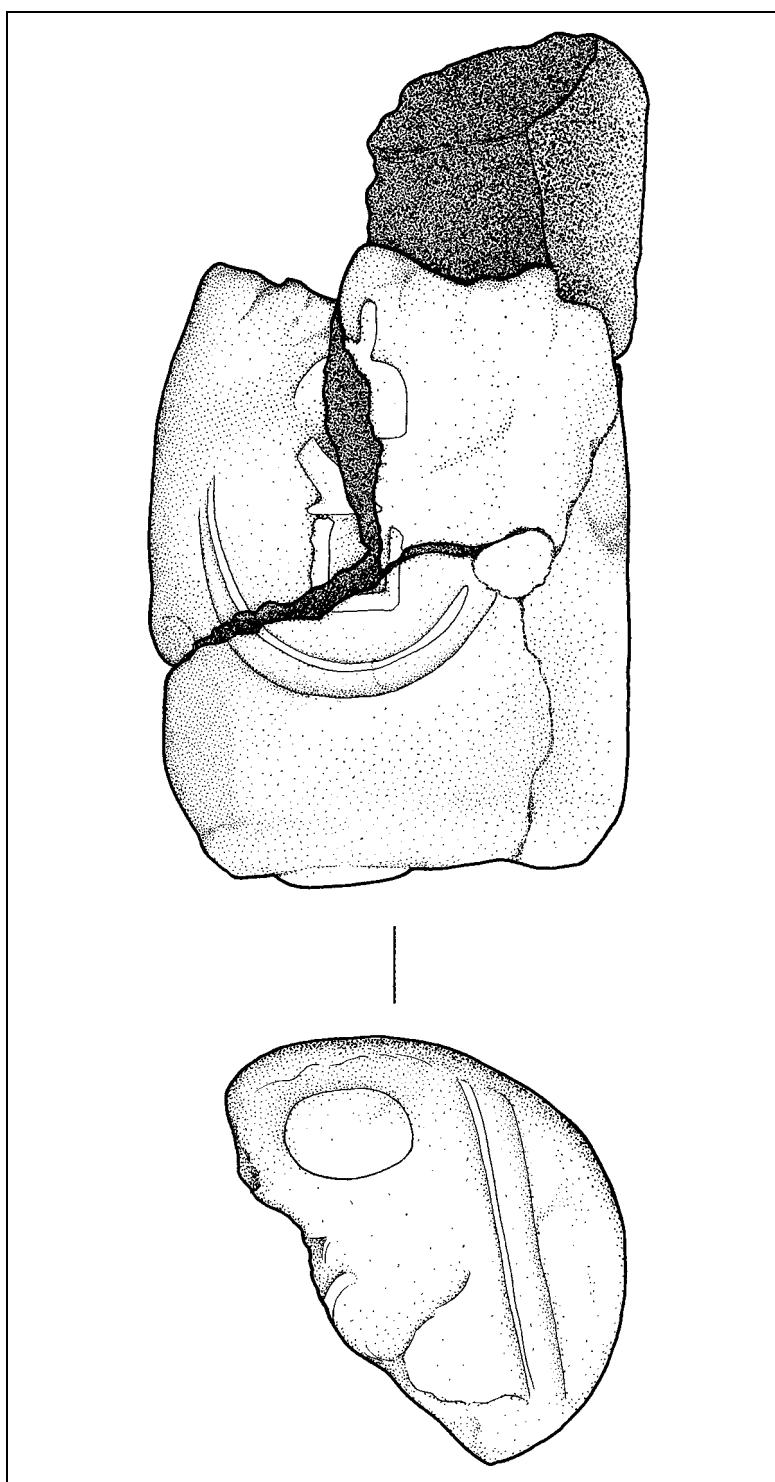


Fig 10. Cone fragment stamped with the prenomen of Hatshepsut (reproduced at actual size). *Drawing: Mark Roughley*

most significant because it did not have widespread later currency in Egypt or Palestine, and so strongly suggests a date for the original use of the cones during her reign (*c.* 1473–1458 BC). The co-regency is usually assumed to have ended immediately prior to Thutmose III's first Palestinian campaign in years 22–23 of his reign, when he is known to have entered Palestine via Gaza.²⁴ However, this assumption is not secure, so a dating for these cones to the time of that campaign should not be excluded.

DISCUSSION

Although these cones are unique in the Levant, they are remarkably similar in form, material and construction to – and fall within the typical size range (100–170mm) of – Egyptian ‘funerary cones’ (fig 11).²⁵ The latter constitute an Upper Egyptian phenomenon, with the overwhelming majority of provenanced examples deriving from Thebes, mostly during the Eighteenth Dynasty.²⁶ A handful of examples have been identified in Nubia. These correspond in form and usage to the Theban cones and appear to be a straightforward example of the introduction of Egyptian burial practices to Nubia during the Eighteenth Dynasty as part of the Egyptian colonization of the region.²⁷ The specific function of ‘funerary cones’ is much debated, but they are undoubtedly a funerary phenomenon, often inserted in batches of dozens or hundreds into the facade of a tomb.²⁸ The name and titles of the tomb-owner were typically stamped on the face and/or other surfaces, but there are no examples from Egypt which consist of the name of the king only. Moreover, the Egyptian examples are not stamped on the side. Given these substantive differences, the original function of the cones from el-Moghraqa remains enigmatic.

It should be noted that the remains of the cones are consistently broken off at a length of around 100mm: although the round stamped faces that might have projected from a wall have survived in large numbers, in only two instances (fig 9) does the apex of the cone survive. This implies that the cones had been employed as an architectural feature projecting from the facade, used to identify or seal a building, analogous to the Theban ‘funerary cones’. At some later date, possibly when this putative building was dismantled, the cones were broken away from the facade. The location and nature of a building incorporating the cones cannot easily be determined, but four observations can be made:

1. The presence of two major MB–LB I locales in the immediate vicinity of the cones suggests that their original context of use would have been in the general area north of the Wadi Gaza – to be associated either with Tell el-‘Ajjul (possibly the Eighteenth-Dynasty cemetery lying in the plain immediately north of the mound) or with el-Moghraqa.
2. The final deposition (although not necessarily the original use) of the cones is completely unrelated to the main MB occupation of el-Moghraqa, and appears to be associated with a phase of abandonment characterized by flooding in the southern area of the site and a subsequent rapid accumulation of sand dunes.
3. The prenomena of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III suggest that the cones had been used to identify or seal an official building associated with an Egyptian presence in the Gaza region, perhaps during the first campaign of Thutmose III in his Year 22–23, or as the result of a subsequent military or administrative presence.
4. The closest and most relevant Egyptian comparanda suggest that this building would have had a funerary function.



Fig 11. Egyptian funerary cone from Thebes, fourth prophet of Amun, Neferhotep (Eighteenth Dynasty); NMS A. 1950.157. *Photograph:* reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museums of Scotland

Although the contextual evidence is too limited to allow a full analysis of the original function of the cones there are several plausible interpretations. First is that this putative building was a tomb for an Egyptian official in the region. The presence of an Egyptian 'governor' at Gaza during the Eighteenth Dynasty has long been postulated on the basis of various contemporary sources,²⁹ but the archaeological evidence for such a structure remains elusive. The suggested Governor's Tomb excavated by Petrie at 'Ajjul certainly stands out from the other LB tombs at the site in terms of its size, construction and the wealth of the grave goods, but no single artefact recovered from the tomb clearly identified it as belonging to an Egyptian governor of the region.³⁰ This being the case, the location of the putative governor's tomb in the Gaza region still remains unidentified: the el-Moghraqa cones might in fact be the clearest and most convincing evidence for the existence of such a structure in the vicinity of 'Ajjul.

If indeed the cones from el-Moghraqa had been used to adorn a funerary structure, this has significant implications for our understanding of the impact of Egyptian – specifically Theban – administrative control and cultural practices within southern Syro-Palestine, not least because such a use of funerary cones is otherwise largely unknown outside Upper Egypt, let alone within Syro-Palestine. Furthermore, the Theban comparanda suggest that 'funerary cones' on a private tomb would be inscribed with the name and titles of the relevant official, not of the king. A second possibility, therefore, is that, rather than the tomb of an 'Egyptian' governor, the cones represent a local, Canaanite reworking of an Egyptian (that is to say Theban) custom, being part of the Egyptianizing decoration of the tomb of a local potentate.

Certainly other Egyptianizing materials and practices are eagerly adopted by the elite of southern Palestine throughout the LB period to enhance their personal standing and prestige within the indigenous communities.³¹ Despite the prevalence of Egyptianizing paraphernalia in settlement and cemetery contexts, there is, however, no compelling parallel within Syro-Palestine for the construction of an Egyptian-style funerary monument.

A more speculative theory is that these cones formed part of a communal tomb for fallen Egyptian soldiers, who would have been present in significant numbers during a military campaign, but whose bodies could neither be identified nor individually recorded. In this instance, the cones might have served as a physical epitome of the Egyptian offering cult, and personalized by being identified with the pharaoh (or, in this case, pharaohs) under whom the army served. Certainly we might expect large casualties in association with the Palestinian campaigns of Thutmose III, although as yet these have not been identified archaeologically.

A final possibility is that the Egyptian comparanda are misleading. Instead of decorating the facade of the tomb of an important official or a funerary structure associated with the army of Thutmose III, the cones might simply have been used to seal a structure associated with the Egyptian military administration of the region. Their very specific occurrence in Gaza, which has not been paralleled at any of the many Egyptian (-izing) structures found throughout the southern Levant, would therefore underline the particular special relationship developing between Egypt and Gaza (lying as it does at the end of the Ways of Horus) during the early years of the Egyptian New Kingdom empire in Palestine. The cones in fact might simply have been intended as a visual demonstration of Egyptian authority within the Gaza region. Even so, it should be emphasized that the only obvious Egyptian comparanda are in fact funerary and, moreover, that the form of the Egyptian cones from Thebes has a specifically funerary/religious connotation, being associated with the offering cult to the dead. This connotation in Egypt is reiterated by the nature of the inscriptions on the cones, which is clearly religious/funerary rather than simply being a seal. There is no clear parallel for administrative seals resembling the el-Moghraqa cones being used to seal administrative, religious or military buildings anywhere in Egypt or in her territories in Nubia and the Levant.

Whichever of the posited scenarios might be correct it should be reiterated that the cones were not found in their primary context but had been dumped at el-Moghraqa subsequent to the abandonment of the site at some point during the LB period. The dismantling of the supposed structure and the dumping episode presumably represent a significant episode in the history of the Egyptian occupation of the southern Levant.

The discovery of the cones at el-Moghraqa should add considerably to the debate on the nature and extent of Egyptian imperial domination of the Levantine littoral during the second millennium BC. Nevertheless, without further archaeological excavation at the site to provide more detailed contextual evidence, we can only speculate as to the original function of the cones. Consequently, their full significance in interpreting the unfolding relationship between New Kingdom Egypt and Palestine during the MB-LB transition remains elusive.

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NOTES

1. Clarke and Steel 1999, 223–4; Steel *et al* 2004.
2. J-B Humbert, pers comm, November 1999.
3. Steel *et al* 2004.
4. See discussion in Clarke and Steel 1999.
5. Gardiner 1920; Oren 1973; 1987; Bergoffen 1991.
6. Sethe 1927–30, 4/14.
7. Ibid, 648/5, 648/10–11, 649/9; Katzenstein 1982.
8. Stewart 1974; Fischer and Sadeq 2000; 2002.
9. Petrie 1932, 2–5; Oren 1992, 115; Kempinski 1992, 140–1.
10. Foucault-Forest 1996, 25–36.
11. Tufnell 1984, 92–106.
12. Negbi 1970; Stewart 1974, 26–44.
13. Bergoffen 2001; Fischer 2001.
14. Dothan 1985, 37–41.
15. Clarke in Steel *et al* 2004.
16. Steel *et al* 2002, 940; Steel *et al* 2004.
17. McCarthy in Steel *et al* 2004.
18. Collon 2002.
19. Dothan 1985, 41–2.
20. See catalogue of small finds and discussion of stratigraphy in Steel *et al* 2004.
21. Steel *et al* 2004.
22. Gorton 1996; Jaeger 1982.
23. The combinations *maat* with *ka* (Cone 99.01.09 = Gardiner Sign-List C10 with D28) and *ra* with *maat* (Cone 99.01.12 = Gardiner Sign-List N5 with C10) within cartouches can only be reconciled with the royal name *Maatkara*. The sign-list in *Egyptian Grammar* (Gardiner 1957) is the standard listing of Egyptian hieroglyphic signs.
24. Sethe 1927–30, 648/9–11.
25. Davies and MacAdam 1957. The classification ‘funerary cone’ remains standard within Egyptology despite objections raised, eg, by Ryan 1988.
26. Ibid; Kampp 1996, 66–8.
27. Survey of the New Kingdom cemetery at Tombos in 1999 resulted in the discovery of two ceramic cones in a tomb shaft dating to the late Eighteenth Dynasty. Other ceramic cones were also noted on the surface. These vary in length between 110mm and 170mm and were up to 60mm wide with a rectangular section. One of the cones had very faint traces of a stamp impression but this was not legible. Website: <<http://www.spicey.demon.co.uk/Nubianpage/TombosTMB005.html>>.
28. Davies 1938; Reeves and Ryan 1987.
29. Redford 1992, 199–203.
30. See discussion in Steel 2002, 41–4.
31. See discussion in Higginbotham 2000.

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NEW SCIENTIFIC DATING OF THE LATER BRONZE AGE WELLS AT SWALECLIFFE, KENT

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The Swalecliffe later Bronze Age well complex was reported in detail in volume 83 of the Antiquaries Journal.¹ The site comprised seventeen wells cut into the base of a previously reduced hollow. Groundwater could thus have been more readily accessed within the subsequently cut well pits. The depth of the base of the wells, at up to 2.5m below ground level, and their consequent waterlogged nature, allowed exceptional preservation of wooden linings and plank steps. Application of dendrochronological and radiocarbon dating suggested that the individual wells were used in sequence over a period of around 500 years, from an origin probably in the late thirteenth century BC to abandonment probably within the seventh century BC. The earlier phases (1–4) were dated mainly by dendrochronology, a 348-year sequence known as SWALECLF 1, whilst the later phases (5–7) were dated by a series of five radiocarbon dates. A second, undated 163-year dendrochronological sequence, SWALECLF 2, was considered to have been broadly tagged by a radiocarbon determination from phase 6 well 5033 (from which part of SWALECLF 2 was obtained) to 1000–820 cal BC.² English Heritage has recently commissioned and interpreted high-resolution radiocarbon dating of the SWALECLF 2 tree-ring sequence. The results of the ‘wiggle-match dating’ of this sequence now confirm that the dated wood within well 5033 was intrusive. The new information has also provided accurate dating for well 5015 and its pottery well bucket, and therefore a modification of the site phasing is required.

NEW DATING EVIDENCE

The high-precision radiocarbon measurements were obtained from the Queen’s University, Belfast Radiocarbon Laboratory following submission of the floating dendrochronological sequence at Swalecliffe, SWALCLF 2. Consequently, it is now possible to date that sequence absolutely, and thereby to suggest dates for the features from which the timbers were collected, 5015 and 5033. The six samples consisted of wood from three different pieces of timber (5124.1–3), which spanned contiguous twenty-year intervals within the SWALCLF 2 sequence. The samples appear to have come from the primary fill of feature 5015. They were prepared and dated using methods outlined by Pearson³ and McCormac.⁴

The individual radiocarbon measurements, or conventional radiocarbon ages,⁵ are shown in table 1.

The calibrated radiocarbon dates are expressed in the format recommended by Mook.⁶ The 95 per cent confidence intervals of the calibrated dates were obtained using the maximum

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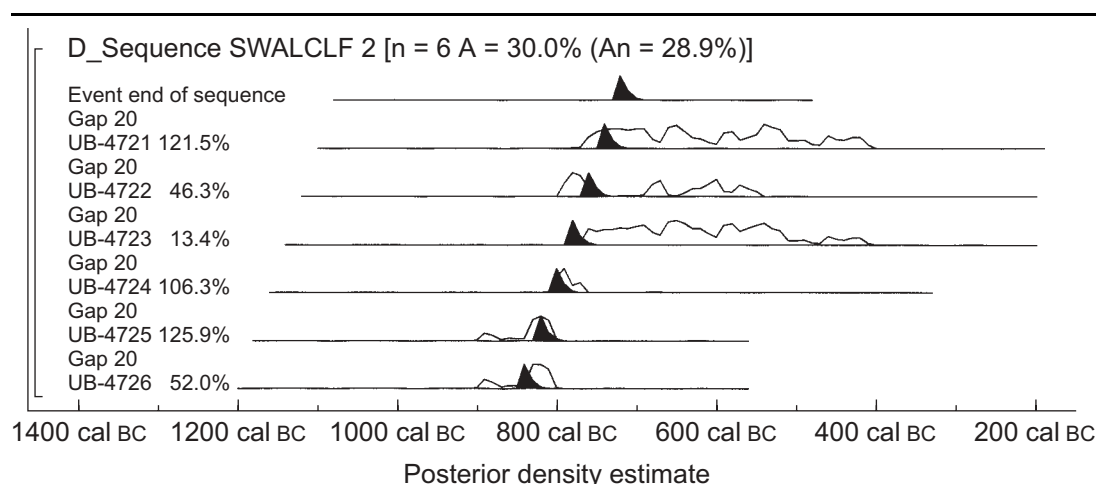
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Table 1. The six high-precision radiocarbon measurements from SWALCLF 2

Sample	Years in SWALCLF 2 sequence	Laboratory number	Radiocarbon age (BP)	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (‰)	Calibrated date range (95% confidence)
S1	124–143	UB-4721	2467 ± 20	-26.74 ± 0.2	765–405 cal BC
S2	104–123	UB-4722	2534 ± 20	-26.71 ± 0.2	795–545 cal BC
S3	84–103	UB-4723	2476 ± 20	-27.14 ± 0.2	770–410 cal BC
S4	64–83	UB-4724	2585 ± 20	-26.90 ± 0.2	805–765 cal BC
S5	44–63	UB-4725	2679 ± 21	-26.42 ± 0.2	895–800 cal BC
S6	24–43	UB-4726	2682 ± 21	-27.19 ± 0.2	895–800 cal BC

Table 2. The wiggle-match sequence from floating tree-ring chronology SWALCLF 2



intercept method⁷ and the INTCAL98 calibration curve,⁸ without taking into account the known age gaps between the samples. The end-points of the confidence intervals have been rounded outwards to the nearest five years. The very broad confidence intervals for the later dates (samples S1–S3) are due to the plateau in the radiocarbon calibration curve in the middle of the first millennium cal BC.

The known age difference of twenty years between each of the samples allows the sequence of radiocarbon results to be fitted to the calibration curve by ‘wiggle-matching’, using the program OxCal 3.5.⁹ The mathematical approach adopted is discussed fully by Christen and Litton.¹⁰ This analysis suggests that the last of the radiocarbon dates falls between 748–720 cal BC (95 per cent probability). As the tree-ring sequence included twenty growth rings (144–163) after the last of the dated samples, we can deduce that SWALCLF 2 ended in 728–700 cal BC (95 per cent probability).

This sequence is shown graphically in table 2. The probability distributions in outline are simple calibrations of the radiocarbon results, obtained by the probability method.¹¹ The distributions in black are posterior density estimates, calculated by OxCal using the known age differences between the radiocarbon samples. Date ranges in the text given *in italics* are derived

Table 3. Estimated felling dates for timbers in the tree-ring chronology SWALCLF 2

Timber	Feature	Growth rings	Position in SWALCLF 2 sequence	Evidence of sapwood	Relative felling date (SWALCLF 2 sequence)	<i>Estimated felling date (cal BC)</i>
S5008A (5124.1 < 3 >)	5015?	149	1–149	?h/s boundary	?159–95	?732–696
S5008B (5124.2 < 3 >)	5015?	117	36–152	?h/s boundary	?162–98	?729–693
S5008C (5124.3 < 3 >)	5015?	86	58–144	four rings	150–86	737–701
5053B	5015	57	86–142	absent	after 152	after 729–693
5053H	5015	74	47–120	absent	after 130	after 761–733
5054F	5015	117	14–130/131	bark edge	winter 130/131	winter 761–733
5125 < 63 >	5033	69	95–163	bark edge	163	winter 728–700

from these posterior density estimates, and so combine the evidence from both radiocarbon and tree-ring dating. The structure of the model is exactly defined by the OxCal keywords at the left-hand side of the figure. The overall index of agreement (A) is above the critical value (An), indicating a satisfactory fit between the model and the radiocarbon results.

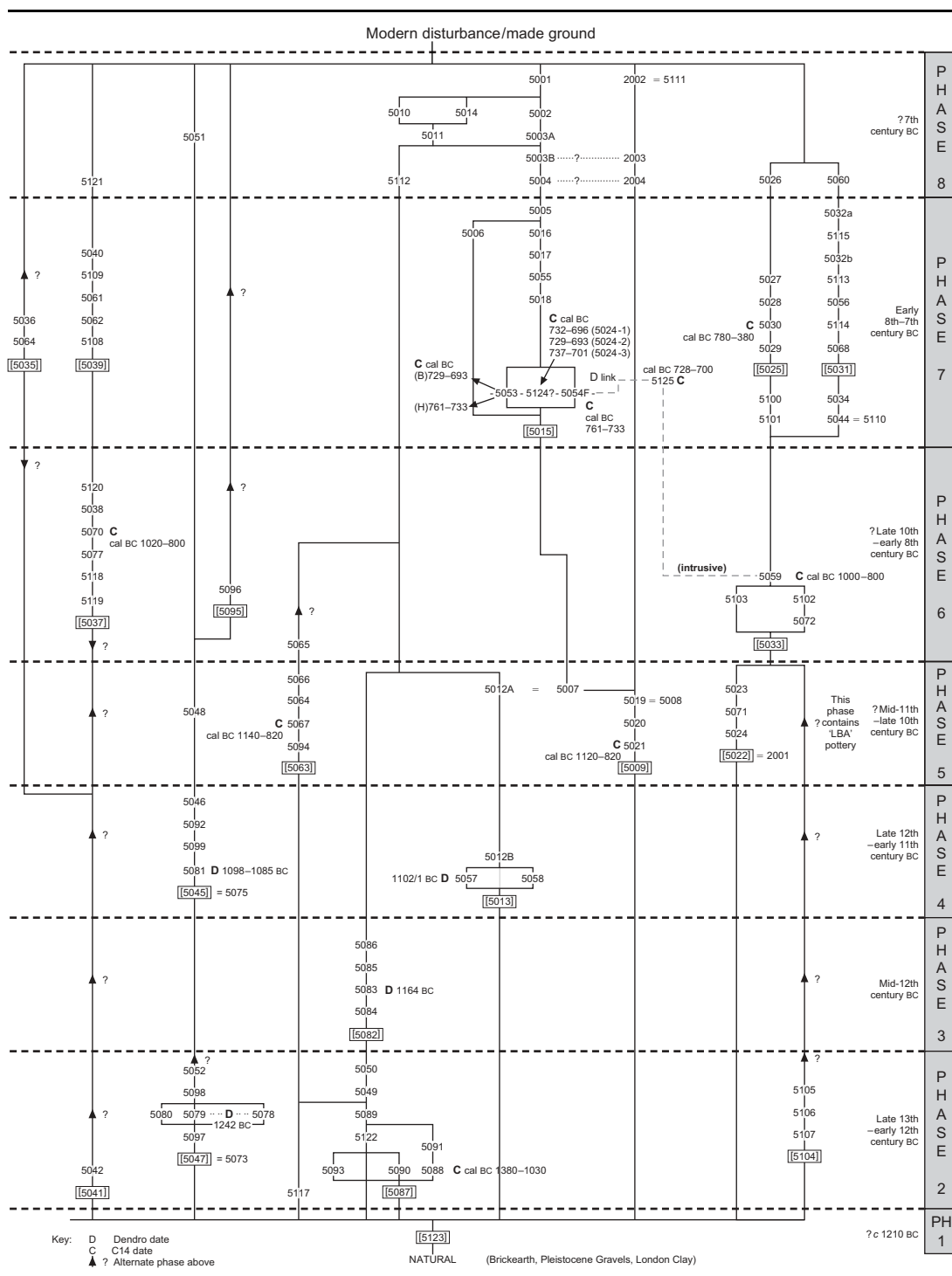
We can go further, however, and provide estimates for the dates of each timber contained in the SWALCLF 2 tree-ring chronology (table 3). If the 163rd year of the SWALCLF 2 sequence fell in 728–700 cal BC (95 per cent probability), then the first year of that sequence falls in 891–863 cal BC (95 per cent probability). These parameters allow us to date absolutely the individual samples that Tyers¹² was only able to date relatively using the SWALCLF 2 floating dendrochronology sequence. He estimated the felling date of each timber (where the bark edge did not survive) by assuming that each log had a minimum of ten and a maximum of forty-six sapwood rings at the time it was felled (ie there would have been at least ten and up to forty-six tree rings after the heartwood/sapwood boundary). When no evidence of sapwood survived, the date of the outermost ring of heartwood provides only a *terminus post quem* for the felling date.

These dates would suggest a mid–late eighth-century cal BC date for the deposition of the wood within pits 5015 and 5033. This is slightly later than the previously published tenth- to early eighth-century dating proposed for phase 6 of the site chronology and considerably later than the tenth-century estimate for wells 5015 and 5033.¹³ Timber 5125 < 63 >, found loose within well pit 5033, could thus provide a *terminus ante quem* for the construction of this feature, although the probability that this wood was intrusive to well 5033 is discussed below.

DISCUSSION

The latest dates for the ‘wiggle-matched’ radiocarbon series from within wells 5015 and 5033 are clearly later than that anticipated by the phasing presented in table 8 of the published site

Table 4. Swalecliffe context matrix, incorporating absolute radiocarbon and dendrochronology dates, as revised in 2004



report.¹⁴ The finding that well 5015 dates to the mid–late eighth century BC now places the well more accurately than was previously possible to within phase 7 (early eighth–seventh century BC) of the Swalecliffe site chronology. It has thus been demonstrated that well 5015 was cut after the 1000–820 cal BC radiocarbon date previously derived from seeds at the base of 5033.¹⁵ This is seemingly contradictory at first glance since the tree-ring sequence for ‘loose’ oak pieces from the upper fill of water hole 5033 (fill 5125) is cross-matched with step plank 5054F from well 5015 by Ian Tyers.¹⁶ However, in light of the above radiocarbon dates, the wood within fill 5125 of well 5033 can now be confirmed as intrusive to that feature. A suspicion that this could have occurred was noted in the original paper,¹⁷ although the considerable time lag between the construction of well 5033 of phase 6 and the deposition of wood 5125 in phase 7 (possibly during the construction of well 5015) is longer than was expected.

The new dates provide support for the previous assertion that individual wells were potentially in use for several decades. The earliest felling date of *winter 761–733 cal BC* for the step plank within well 5015 (step 5054F) is likely to pre-date the felling of probable well revetment material 5124.3 – dated *737–701 cal BC*. The intrusive wood within well 5033, also thought to derive from the neighbouring well 5015, has a remarkably similar date range to sample 5124.3 of *winter 728–700 cal BC*, and certainly post-dates the felling of step 5054F. This suggests later repairs to the revetment of the well, and although the length of time between construction and repair could be as little as five years, the date ranges suggest that it was potentially well over a decade. To add a note of caution, it is possible that a mixed stockpile of wood with various felling dates was utilized for the well lining and step, rather than material being harvested when required.

This close dating also facilitates an important refinement of the pottery dating presented within the original report. Specifically, it provides a very close radiocarbon date to tag the ‘well bucket’ bowl found upturned as a votive offering on the base of well 5015 to the turn of the eighth century BC (the probable felling dates of 5054F, 5053B and H and the three 5124 dates). Peter Couldrey had estimated the date of this bowl to be tenth to ninth century BC, based on the dating evidence available in 2003. However, he also noted that the pot form has been found in eighth-century contexts elsewhere.¹⁸ The complete bowl found on the base of well 5033 needs no further refinement of its date since the lower levels of 5033 (below which the pot was found) are radiocarbon-dated to 1000–820 cal BC, whilst the 5125 wood was found (probably intrusively) at a higher level of the well 5033.

The addition of reliable dating from a second tree-ring sequence from the Swalecliffe site (SWALCLF 2) has thus further refined an already remarkable dating sequence for this unique Late Bronze Age well complex (table 4). The proven approximate 500-year duration of stock wells from around 1210 BC to *c* 700 BC is a valuable tool for the evaluation of an identifiable zone of Late Bronze Age agricultural intensification located on the eastern tip of the Thames estuary and centred on the Wantsum Channel.¹⁹

NOTES

1. Masfield *et al* 2003.
2. BETA 168708; 2760 ± 40 BP.
3. Pearson 1984.
4. McCormac 1992.
5. Stuiver and Polach 1977.
6. Mook 1986.
7. Stuiver and Reimer 1986.
8. Stuiver *et al* 1998.
9. Bronk Ramsey 1995; 1998; 2001.
10. Christen and Litton 1995.

11. Stuiver and Reimer 1993.
12. Tyers in Masefield *et al* 2003, figure 27.
13. Masefield in Masefield *et al* 2003, 106–9.
14. *Ibid*, 107.
15. BETA 168708; 2760 ± 40 BP.
16. Tyers in Masefield *et al* 2003, 89–93.
17. Masefield in Masefield *et al* 2003, 71–2.
18. Couldrey in Masefield *et al* 2003, 96–7.
19. Yates 2001.

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BRITAIN'S FIRST BRASS

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Stamps on the blade of a sword from the Thames, originally considered to be Anglo-Saxon, now place the sword stylistically in the La Tène II period (late third to early second century BC). X-ray fluorescence tests have shown that the gold-coloured foil covering the stamps consists of 80 per cent

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copper and 20 per cent zinc, this being the formula for brass. The sword therefore represents the earliest known use of brass in Britain.

Bronze, the alloy of copper with tin, and brass, the alloy of copper with zinc, are the two main copper alloys used in human history. Although zinc ores are far more common than tin ores, zinc is much harder to smelt, so brass is the more difficult of the two alloys to make.¹ Put very broadly, brass first appears in the first millennium BC and had become the most common copper alloy throughout the Old World (with the exception of the Far East) by the end of the first millennium AD,² although with considerable local variations.³

In Britain the situation is rather simpler: brass was introduced by the Romans and remained the main copper alloy used by the Saxons and other Germanic tribes thereafter, although bronze remained the prevalent alloy in the Celtic west.⁴ The earliest brasses previously recorded from Britain were fibulae from St Albans and Colchester dating from the early first century AD, just prior to the Roman conquest. The metal from which they were made is very likely to have been imported from the Roman world that was already well established just over the Channel.⁵

Now, however, a much earlier example of brass use has been found that pre-dates the appearance of the Romans in north-west Europe by at least a century, and is the earliest example yet recorded from Britain. The brass is found on the blade of a sword (fig 1) that was acquired by the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities of the British Museum in 1929,⁶ very probably shortly after its discovery in the Thames at Syon Reach, Isleworth, in west London.

For many years after acquisition the sword was included with the Saxon swords at the British Museum, and was not fully recognized as being of Iron Age date until quite recently. It was only transferred to the Department of Prehistoric and Roman Britain Antiquities in 1984 (both departments have now been reunited as the Department of Prehistory and Europe).

As the sword is included in the forthcoming *British Iron Age Swords and Scabbards*, by I M Stead, to be published by the British Museum Press, it will not be described in detail here. It is a medium-length (625mm) blade typical of the La Tène II period. Only the tanged sword blade survives, but this is in excellent condition and has two near-identical stamps. The design appears to show a deer with antlers (fig 2). So far, no close parallel for the design has been found, although the style is similar to that found on the reverses of various central-eastern Gaulish potin coins.⁷

The stamps are covered by foils of a golden-coloured metal which is completely uncorroded. Many years ago they were analysed as part of a general examination of Anglo-Saxon swords in the British Museum, and it was noted that they were made of brass. Brass was quite common in the Anglo-Saxon period and thus the composition of the foils passed without comment. By contrast, brass is hitherto unknown in the British Iron Age, and so the foils were recently re-examined to confirm their composition and to ensure that they were original.

Although the iron of the sword is in generally excellent condition, there is a little corrosion and it is clear that the edges of the foils are overlain by undisturbed original corrosion products. Thus the foils were in place before the sword entered the river. The surfaces of the foils are in pristine condition with no evidence of corrosion. This was almost certainly their condition when found, for there is no trace of green copper corrosion in the surrounding iron

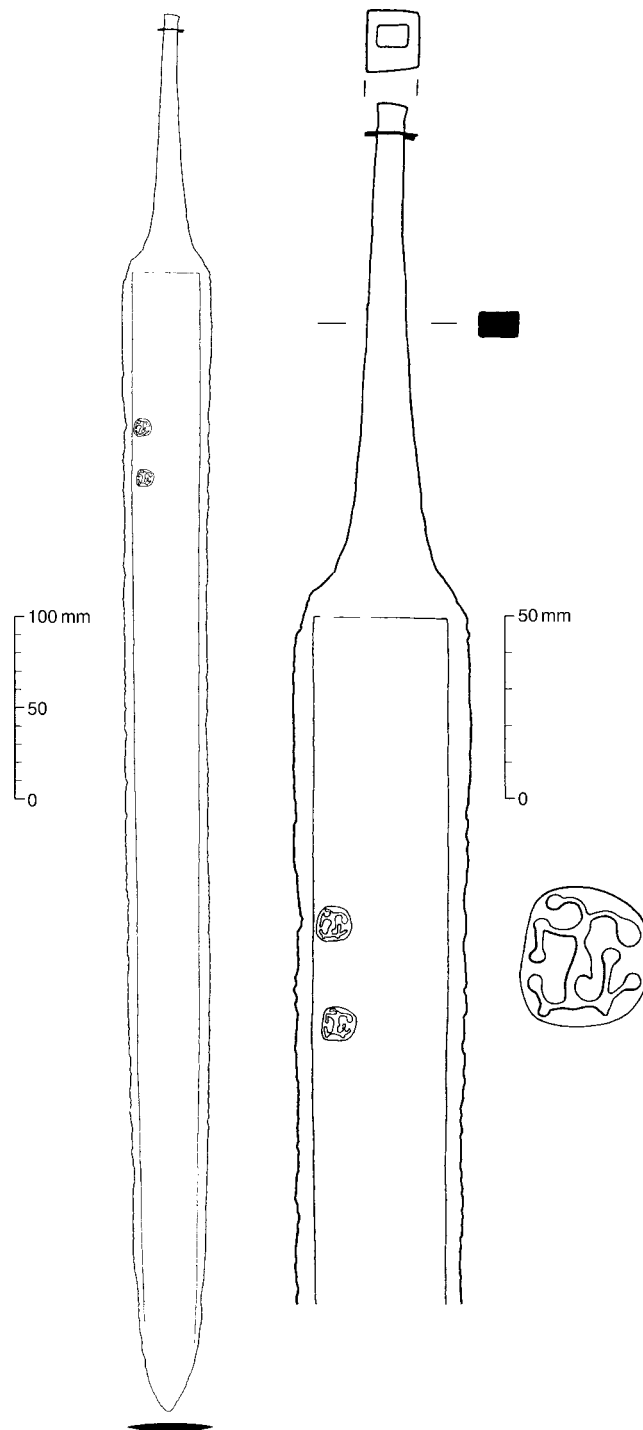


Fig 1. The La Tène II sword from Syon Reach, Isleworth. The two foiled stamps are illustrated on the blade. *Drawing: British Museum*



Fig 2. The La Tène II sword from Syon Reach, Isleworth. Detail showing one of the foiled stamps. The brass of the foils is in pristine condition, protected both by the presumed anaerobic burial conditions and by the more electro-negative iron surrounding it. *Photograph: S La Niece/British Museum*

corrosion, or any evidence that corrosion has been mechanically removed from the surface of the foils.

The sword has a stable and firmly attached patina of iron oxides, but with little or no deep corrosion. This strongly suggests that it had lain in an anaerobic environment – very likely the waterlogged mud of the Thames foreshore at Syon Reach, where the oxidation of the metal would be inhibited. In addition, the brass of the foils would be further preserved by contact with the surrounding iron which, being more electro-negative, would act as a sacrificial anode.

One other possibility has to be considered. The bright gold colour of the foils is similar to that of some antiquities made of copper alloy that have been buried in waterlogged anaerobic conditions and that have been found to be covered in a thin layer of very golden chalcopyrite. This is a mixed copper-iron sulphide, deposited by sulphur-reducing bacteria during burial, that can sometimes have the appearance of gilding,⁸ and examples have even been published as such.⁹ Analysis of the Syon Reach foils failed to detect sulphur, however, and so the present surface is likely to be original.

The foils were analysed by energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence using an open architecture system that allowed the sword to be freely positioned in the path of the X-ray beam. This was done first in the early 1980s, before the true date of the sword was realized, and again more recently.¹⁰ The analyses were made directly on the surfaces of the foils without any cleaning or

preparation, and thus the analyses should only be regarded as semi-quantitative, although the excellent condition of the foils gives every reason to believe that the present surface analyses are close to the original composition of the body metal.

Both foils contain copper with approximately 20 per cent of zinc, and no other non-ferrous metals could be detected (with detection limits of about 0.1 per cent). Approximately 0.5 per cent of iron was also detected, but this could originate, in part at least, from the patinated iron that completely surrounds the foils.

Some other stamped blades with golden or silvery foils are known from elsewhere in Europe.¹¹ These include three long swords with foiled stamps. Two have three stamps covered with foils described as 'being of gold' and the third has stamps described as 'being of gold and of silver'.

Three swords with short blades have foiled stamps that are described as being of brass, one of them a short sword from Munich-Untermenzing apparently with gold-foiled stamps on one side and 'probably brass' on the other.¹² The other two are from France; one is now in the Lyons Museum and the third comes from Mirebeau-sur-Bèze. Both of the French blades have foiled stamps – the former described as brass, while the golden metal of the latter apparently 'failed to respond to the touchstone test'.¹³

In fact, none of these foils seems to have been chemically analysed and it is possible that all are of brass. The Isleworth foils look remarkably golden, without a trace of green corrosion as noted above. The foils on the sword from Munich-Untermenzing, which are apparently golden on one side and brazen on the other, could just reflect differences in the microenvironment on the two sides of the blade as it lay in the ground.

There are a very few Late Bronze Age and Iron Age copper-alloy artefacts known from Britain containing zinc. Those few have less than 1 per cent of zinc¹⁴ and come mainly from the Welsh borders – the Cerrig-y-Drudion 'hanging bowl', for example.¹⁵ This zinc almost certainly came with the copper ore from local mines such as Llanymynech, on the Montgomeryshire-Shropshire border, where the copper ores contain an appreciable zinc content,¹⁶ and was unlikely to be a deliberate addition. Some of the metalwork from the hoard at Tal-y-Llyn, in Merionethshire, which was believed to date from the Iron Age,¹⁷ contains items with a higher percentage of zinc, which should be classed as brass. These include one of the shield bosses and one of the trapezoidal plaques. However, Spratling pointed out that the hoard also includes a typical Roman lock-escutcheon, so the Iron-Age dating is no longer secure.¹⁸

It is very unlikely that the brass in the foils on these sword stamps was actually made in Celtic Europe, as there are no other contemporary brasses from Britain. In fact, there is little evidence for brass in Celtic Europe at all prior to the arrival of the Romans, although it must be admitted that not many pieces of metalwork have been analysed or metalworking sites scientifically investigated.

Amongst those that have been examined are the workshops at the Titelberg *oppidum* in Luxembourg.¹⁹ These workshops were operating from about 125 BC right through the Roman period. Pieces of metal were analysed from the workshops in various stages of manufacture, and although the numbers are small, they are suggestive. In the second century BC, all four of the pieces analysed were bronze; in the first half of the first century BC, three out of the nine pieces analysed were of brass containing between 11 and 23 per cent of zinc and little else; and in the second half of the century, twelve out of forty-three pieces were of brass.

The percentage of brass rose to about 50 per cent in the first century AD. By then the Romans seem to have established brass production by exploiting the rich deposits of zinc ore in

the Stolberg area near Aachen, whose products are probably exemplified by military fittings²⁰ and the well-known Hems Moor buckets, which all seem to be of brass.²¹ This area was later to become the centre of the major medieval brass industry.²²

However, the excavator at Titelberg stressed that all the early brass was almost certainly imported to the site from far away. Thus there are no remains or records of brass-making technology in Celtic Europe. For that one has to go to the eastern Mediterranean, specifically to Anatolia, which is, of course, exactly what Celtic warriors did in the third and second centuries BC, although not just to collect exotic metals!

In Anatolia there are numerous zinc/lead/silver ore deposits, some having been extensively worked in antiquity. At one, in Phrygia, near Andreida – modern Balıkesir – in western Anatolia, Strabo described the collection of small amounts of metallic zinc that were used to make brass.²³ There are also finds of early brass in Anatolia, and other classical authors give some descriptions of the processing of zinc ores²⁴ from which it is possible to reconstruct the usual processes for making brass.²⁵

The zinc sulphide ore would have been roasted to produce zinc oxide, which would then have been smelted in a furnace to produce zinc metal. Instead of an ingot forming in the base of the furnace, the metal formed as a gas, which rose out of the furnace and reoxidized. This was the central problem with zinc production and until methods of condensing the vapour out of contact with air were devised in India about a thousand years later,²⁶ the production of metallic zinc was impossible. Instead, the ancients carefully designed their furnaces to collect the dense white clouds of zinc oxide rising from the furnace. This white powder, together with a little charcoal, was then added to molten copper in a closed crucible, such that the charcoal reduced the zinc oxide back to a zinc vapour which promptly dissolved in the copper, forming brass directly.

Coins of the first century BC from Anatolia – including issues that are the earliest regular series of brass artefacts so far known, and that are directly ancestral to the Roman reformed coinage of 27 BC and 23 BC – tend to contain about 20 per cent of zinc, similar to the amount in the foils described here.²⁷ The amounts of brass in the foils cannot be more than a few milligrams and the brass for all of the foils could be contained in a single one of these coins. This is the probable way in which the metal came to western Europe – in the purse of a returning mercenary soldier. He may well have believed he had gold: in fact, it was a much more interesting metal.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

1. Craddock 1995, 292–302.
2. Craddock (ed) 1998.
3. Craddock 2000.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Bayley 1998.

6. PEE Reg. 1929, II–II, 2.
7. J Williams, pers comm.
8. Duncan and Ganiaris 1987; Scott 2002, 227–30.
9. Oddy and Meeks 1981.

10. For details of the methodology used at the times these analyses were performed, see Cowell 1977 and 1998.
11. Fitzpatrick 1996.
12. Dannheimer 1975, 59.
13. *Ibid.* 39.
14. Craddock and Werner 1991; Northover 1991; Musson *et al* 1992.
15. Stead 1982.
16. Adams 1991; Musson and Northover 1989.
17. Savory 1976, 48.
18. Spratling 1966.
19. Hamilton 1996.
20. Jackson and Craddock 1995.
21. den Boesterd and Hoekstra 1965.
22. Tavenor-Perry 1910; Schleicher 1974.
23. Jones 1929, Bk 13.1, 56c, p 115; Craddock 1998.
24. Gunther 1934, 234, 623–5, and Riddle 1985.
25. Craddock 1995, 292–302; Craddock (ed) 1998; Craddock *et al* 1998a; Craddock and Eckstein 2003.
26. Craddock *et al* 1998b.
27. Craddock *et al* 1980; Burnett *et al* 1982.

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A ROMAN INSCRIBED TABLET FROM RED HILL, RATCLIFFE-ON-SOAR (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE)

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This annotated transcript and translation of a Roman curse tablet found on the site of a rural Roman temple in 1963 shows that the curse was prompted by the theft of woodcutting tools and protective clothing.

Red Hill (SK 494304) is one end of the ridge which commands the confluence of the River Soar with the Trent, and takes its name from the colour of the Keuper Marl which composes it.¹ Indications that it was the site of a Roman temple were confirmed in 1990 by the discovery of an inscribed Roman lead tablet which dedicated stolen property 'in the temple of the god', *in fanum dei*.² The first such tablet from the site was found in 1960 and, without referring to his temple, it identified the god as Jupiter.³ It was published in 1963 by (Sir) Eric Turner, who was also shown a second tablet found there in 1963, the subject of this paper.⁴ In March 1964 he sent his transcript to the editor of *Roman Inscriptions of Britain* with the comment: 'individual words can be articulated here and there [...] but I do not understand the whole'.⁵ In July 1964 he wrote to the excavator, Brian Williams, that he was 'inclined to think that it is a list of tools dedicated to the deity, but more work will be needed'.⁶ So the tablet has remained unpublished, except for a drawing by Williams 'not guaranteed to

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Fig 1. Roman inscribed lead tablet, Ratcliffe-on-Soar. Scale 3 : 2 (the original is 82mm wide). *Photograph* (1964): E G Turner

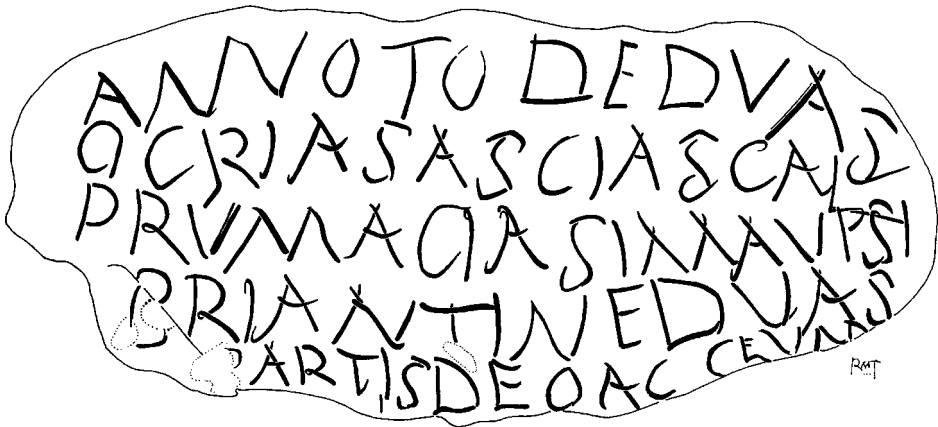


Fig 2. Roman inscribed lead tablet, Ratcliffe-on-Soar. Scale 3 : 2 (the original is 82mm wide). *Drawing* (2003): R S O Tomlin

be a perfect interpretation of the original'.⁷ It is now in the Brewhouse Yard Museum, Nottingham Castle.⁸

These three tablets are what are loosely called 'curse tablets'. In Britain they tend to be petitions to a god prompted by theft, and more than two hundred have now been found at various sites, Red Hill being the most northern.⁹ The 1963 tablet is an oval 82mm wide by 38mm and, like the 1960 tablet, it has been trimmed from sheet lead *c* 1mm thick with a purplish patination (fig 1). But unlike the other two tablets, and indeed most British curse tablets, it was apparently never folded deliberately. There is a diagonal band of damage from bending, not drawn but visible in the photograph, and the bottom left-hand corner is crumpled and corroded, but otherwise the tablet is complete and in good condition.

One face was inscribed with a stylus or needle-pointed instrument with five lines of neat capital letters. They do not have the added serifs typical of 'Rustic Capitals', but they were

made with some style and care (fig 2). They cannot really be dated, but for other reasons a fourth-century date is likely.¹⁰ The first four lines are well spaced, the words as usual not being separated, but there is some crowding towards the end. These lines occupied most of the space available, and forced the scribe to squeeze the fifth line into the narrowing gap between them and the lower edge. The reading of the first four lines, letter by letter, is almost entirely clear; and this is largely true even of the fifth line. But the interpretation presents problems, as Turner saw, not all of which can be solved.

Letter-by-letter transcript¹¹

ANNOTODEDVAS
OCRIASASCIASCAL
PRVMACIASIMAVPSI
BRIANTINEDVAS
PARTISDEOAC CEVM

Reconstructed text¹²

annoto de duas
ocrias ascia(m) scal-
pru(m) ma(n)ica(m) si m(ulier) au[t] si
b(aro) RIA NTINE duas
partis deo AC CEVM

I make a note of two gaiters, an axe, a knife, a pair of gloves,
whether woman or if man ... two parts to the god ...

COMMENTARY

Line 1. *annoto*. This is the first instance of the verb *annotare* (better *adnotare*) in a British curse tablet.¹³ Its meaning here is not certain, since it is followed by the preposition *de*, whereas in normal usage it is transitive, ‘to note (something)’.¹⁴ Many British curse tablets are prompted by the theft of personal belongings, and the list of clothing and tools in 1–3 indicates that this is the case here. The stolen property is often ‘given’ to a god, the usual verb being *dono* (‘I give’), but there are variants.¹⁵ So it is possible that *duas partis* is the object of *annoto*, the preposition *de* being partitive: ‘I assign two-thirds of my property to the god’. But this is difficult: the sense of *annoto* would be strained, likewise the use of the preposition *de* in a partitive sense, and a continuity of syntax would be required which this text does not have (note especially the intrusive formula in 3–4).¹⁶ So it is more natural to take the preposition *de* as introducing the object of complaint, as in Saturnina’s ‘memorandum’ at Uley ‘concerning the linen cloth which she has lost’: *commonitorium ... de lintiamine quod amisit*.¹⁷

Lines 1–3. *de duas ocrias* (etc). In Classical Latin the preposition *de* requires the ablative case, but by the third century there was confusion in Vulgar Latin between the accusative and the

ablative, and from the fourth century ‘*de* begins to be used with the accusative as a general oblique case’.¹⁸ The ‘generalisation of the accusative as the prepositional case’ is found as early as the second century, but almost never in British curse tablets of any date.¹⁹ So a fourth-century date here seems likely.

Line 2. *ocrias*. The word is properly *ocreas*, but the short *e* in hiatus after a consonant has closed to *i*, a common development. The identical term, *duas ocrias*, occurs in the Caistor St Edmund curse tablet which lists stolen property for recovery by the god Neptune.²⁰ *Ocreas* are specified with other items, including *ascias* and *manicas* (see below), in a Roman list of farm equipment. These leather ‘greaves’, or rather gaiters, were worn by farmworkers and huntsmen to protect their legs.²¹

Line 2. *ascia(m)*. Like *duas ocrias* (see above) this is an accusative, not an ablative. There was a marked tendency not to pronounce the final *-m* of the accusative case, even in educated speech, and it is often omitted in sub-standard texts influenced by the spoken language.

Lines 2–3. *scalpru(m)*. A blade or cutting edge. The word is used by agricultural writers for a variety of specialized instruments: part of a vine-dresser’s knife, part of a bee-keeper’s knife, a knife for budding or grafting.²² The mention of an ‘axe’ and protective clothing suggests that this is a heavy knife, a billhook. The final *-m* was omitted, like that of *ascia(m)*. The *M* here belongs to the next word.

Line 3. *ma(n)ica(m)*. The scribe wrote *MACIA*, but *macia* is found only once, in a medical writer where it means ‘pimpernel’, which is unlikely here. The context suggested by the other items is one of brushwood clearance or woodland management, for which the Roman handbook already mentioned recommends gaiters (as above) and leather gloves, *manicas de pellibus*.²³ *MACIA* is thus a mistake for *manica(m)*, ‘glove’ or rather ‘pair of gloves’, supposing the scribe thought that *manica* was a collective neuter plural by analogy with the diminutive form *manicilia* (‘gloves’), but treated it as a feminine singular. This process is typical of Late Latin and early Romance, and it is analogous to the modern English treatment of the plural noun ‘media’ as if it were singular. Alternatively, the scribe intended *manicas* and omitted the final *S* because it was the first letter of the next word (*si*), but we would then expect *duas* (compare *duas ocrias*). His confused spelling, with its transposition of *C* and *I*, may be due to visual confusion with *ASCIA* in the line above.²⁴

It is possible, but less likely, that the scribe was abbreviating or garbling the longer word *manicilia* (‘gloves’), since *manicilia dua* and *manicili[o]s* are the subject of two other curse tablets, from Bath and Uley respectively.²⁵ They show that gloves, discarded on leaving work, were liable to be stolen – or at least mislaid: St Columbanus cursed the thief who had stolen his gardening gloves, only to find they had been taken by a bird.²⁶

Lines 3–4. *si m(ulier) au[t] si b(aro)*. Variants of this formula, which defined the unknown thief, are frequent in British curse tablets.²⁷ It is similarly abbreviated as *S B S M*, *s(i) b(aro) s(i) m(ulier)*, in an unpublished Uley tablet.²⁸ Abbreviation here may indicate, not only that the formula was familiar, but that the scribe was pressed for space; also that he resorted to abbreviation or omitted letters by oversight elsewhere. *au[t]* (‘or’) is redundant, but is guaranteed by the context of alternatives; the scribe evidently wrote *P* in error for *T*. There is casual damage, but not a stylus-stroke, to account for the bottom stroke of ‘E’ drawn by

Williams and read by Turner; the curving upper stroke belongs to P, and is not the double stroke of E.

Lines 3–5. *si m(u)lier au[t] si b(a)ro RIA NTINE duas partes deo AC CEVM*. The formulation is close to that of another Uley tablet, where the text is likewise corrupt: *[qu]i frenem involaverit ... si baro si mulier deo donator duas partes AFIMA sua tertia ad sanitatem*, '[The thief] who has stolen (my) bridle ... whether man or woman, is given to the god ... two-thirds ... one-third to (his) health'.²⁹ The second of the phrases they have in common, *duas partis deo*, suggests that 'two parts' (ie two-thirds) were promised 'to the god' if he recovered the stolen property, an unusually high proportion; the first Red Hill tablet promises Jupiter only one-tenth.³⁰

In the Uley tablet this formulation requires two verbs, one for the 'theft' itself (*involaverit*) and the other for the 'gift' (*donator*, ie *donatur*). At Red Hill they would seem to be lost in the letter-groups RIA NTINE and AC CEVM.

First RIA NTINE. The formula *si mulier si baro* and its variants understand a verb of stealing, amounting typically to 'whoever has stolen [the specified property], whether man or woman'; much the most common verb is *involavit/erit*, but *furaverit*, *levavit* and *tulerit* are also found.³¹ R may then abbreviate *r(es)*, 'the property', the word often used at Bath and Uley; otherwise it may be taken with the preceding letter, BR for *b(a)r(o)*. IANTINE is possibly a corruption of *involavit* ('has stolen'); there is some visual similarity, especially between the initial IAN and INV.

Then AC CEVM, which defies explanation. The letters are cramped because the scribe ran out of space. There may be a vertical stroke (for I or L) after the first C, but it looks more like a bending-stress than a stilus-stroke. What is read as E may be L, as Turner thought, but there are certainly two diminutive cross-strokes. The final VM is appropriate to a noun or pronoun (*eum*), not to the expected verb. Possibly the scribe intended *acce(pt)um* ('received').

CONCLUSION

The text cannot be understood entirely, despite its legibility, but the substance is clear. The anonymous petitioner has lost some agricultural gear: protective clothing and tools used for clearing brushwood and brambles, perhaps, or for coppicing; his gaiters, axe, knife and gloves. Naturally he blames an unknown thief. To recover his property, he asks the god to force the thief to return it, and he enlists the god's support by promising him a share.³² The tablet he wrote or at least commissioned is a precious, if unedifying, glimpse of an everyday story of country folk in later Roman Britain.³³

NOTES

1. Elsdon 1982; Palfreyman and Ebbins 2003. I am grateful to Susan Ebbins and the Redhill Research Group for renewing my interest in this tablet, to Andrew Poulter for taking me to Red Hill, and to Jim Adams, Patrick Sims-Williams and the *Antiquaries Journal's*

anonymous referee for their comments on a draft of this paper.

2. *Britannia*, 24 (1993), 310–13, no. 2. The date and circumstances of discovery do not accord with the 'third' tablet noted by Elsdon 1982, 16 and 19, with n 12, which remains

- unaccounted for. A fifth tablet found in 1992, not unfolded but apparently uninscribed, is noted in *Britannia*, 24 (1993), 310, n 4.
3. Turner 1963. Noted by Elsdon 1982, 16 and 30, figure 8.
 4. Likewise noted by Elsdon 1982, 16 and 30, figure 8.
 5. E G Turner to R P Wright, acknowledged by Wright on 19 March 1964. The 'words' read by Turner were *voto, duas, scias* or *Ascal()*, and *duas [] part[el]s deo*.
 6. E G Turner to B C J Williams, 24 July 1964, quoted in Williams 1964, 55.
 7. Williams 1964, 54, reproduced half-size as Elsdon 1982, 30, figure 8.
 8. Inv. no. 1974.337. The 1960 tablet (HHL 186) is also there. I am grateful to the curator, Anne Insker, for allowing me to study them both there in November 2003.
 9. Tomlin 1988. Most but not all British tablets, unless they are lists of names, are 'petitions' rather than 'curses'. Bath is the most important site, but others are listed on pp 60–1 (where the present tablet is no. 25); the next most important site is Uley, for which see Tomlin 1993.
 10. For a tabulation of capital-letter forms see Tomlin 1988, 91. The tablet was found 'some five inches below the surface in fine soil bearing carbon traces', with twenty-two coins, one third-century, the others all of the period AD 367–92 (Williams 1964). This is not an absolute date (the tablet may have been residual), but the use of the preposition *de* with the accusative also suggests a fourth-century date; see the commentary below.
 11. The letters NN in line 1 are ligatured. There is a space after C in line 5. The two dotted letters are uncertain.
 12. Words have now been separated, and those which can be interpreted are transcribed in lower-case letters. Letters omitted by abbreviation or oversight are supplied in round brackets. The letter for which another was written by mistake is restored in square brackets. The letters C and I in line 3 have been transposed. These editorial changes are discussed in the commentary.
 13. There is no instance in Audollent 1904 either, nor apparently in more recent discoveries.
 14. *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *adnoto*.
 15. Tomlin 1988, 63–4. The first Red Hill tablet uses *donatur* twice, first to 'give' the god the duty of exaction, then to 'give' him one-tenth of the stolen money.
 16. *Oxford Latin Dictionary* cites one instance of *adnotare* in the sense of 'designate' (*Digest* 32.1.1.3), but this is a special case (of 'islands' for those condemned to exile) and does not justify treating *ammoto* as equivalent to *dono* here. For this it would surely have been accompanied by *deo*, first word or second. In Vulgar Latin the genitive tends to be supplanted by the partitive usage of *de*, but this tendency is not found in formulaic British curse tablets. What may be the only instance, *dono de pecunia* in Tomlin 1993, 130, no. 78 (unpublished), is not really comparable since it occurs in a long and fluent text.
 17. Tomlin 1993, 121, no. 2. With the exception noted in n 16 above, the preposition *de* is used in British curse tablets in this sense ('of', 'about', 'concerning') or in its separative sense ('from my purse', 'from my house').
 18. Woodcock 1959, 29.
 19. Adams 1977, 36. *d(e) iumentu[m]* may occur in a Uley tablet (Tomlin 1993, 118, no. 1), but the text is not certain. Maybe the only instances occur in the 1990 tablet from Red Hill (*Britannia*, 24 (1993), 310, no. 2), in *fanum dei devovi*, and in a fourth-century tablet from Bath (Tomlin 1988, 230, no. 97), *Basilia donat in templum Martis*, in neither of which does the preposition *in* with the accusative have a final meaning (compare Adams 1995, 113–14). But perhaps there was a sense of 'carrying into' the temple, since *de (h)ospitio* is found (correctly) in the Red Hill tablet, and *de hoc* (ambiguously) in the Bath tablet.
 20. *Britannia*, 13 (1982), 408, no. 9.
 21. Palladius i 42, *de instrumentis agrestium*, including *tunicas vero pellicias cum cucullis et ocreas manicisque de pellibus, quae vel in silvis vel in vepribus rustico operi et venatorio possint esse communes* ('leather jackets with hoods, gaiters and gloves of leather, which can be used in woodland and brambles by farm-workers and huntsmen alike').
 22. Columella iv 25.1; ix 15.4; Palladius vii 5.3; Pliny, *Natural History* xvii 119, respectively.
 23. Palladius i 42.4, quoted above in n 21. The usual meaning of *manica* is 'sleeve', but in this passage protection for the hands is surely meant. In view of the other evidence for protective gloves, discussed by Tomlin 1988, 114, Palladius' *manicas de pellibus* should be seen as 'gloves of leather'. They are thus translated by Martin in the (French) Budé edition (1976).
 24. Transcription errors by scribes are naturally difficult to prove, since the reading and context must first be clear, but examples

- include PERDNT for *perdat*, PAXSA BAEAREM for *paxsa(m) ba(ln)earem* in Tomlin 1988, 114, no. 5, and 150, no. 3 respectively; PEDIT for *perdidit* and the transposition MAIET for *meiat* in Tomlin 1993, 125, no. 4; TBDIIO for *t(i)b(i) d(on)o* in *Britannia*, 28 (1997), 455–8, no. 1. Errors such as PEDIT and TB resemble abbreviation by contraction, but this is almost unknown in the Roman period.
25. Tomlin 1988, 114, no. 5; *Britannia*, 27 (1996), 439–41, no. 1.
 26. Jonas, *vita Columbani* i 15, quoted with further discussion in Tomlin 1988, 114.
 27. Tomlin 1988, 67–8.
 28. Tomlin 1993, 130, no. 75.
 29. Ibid, 126–7, no. 5.
 30. Turner 1963, *donatur deo s(upra)s(crip)to decima pars*. See further Tomlin 1993, 121, no. 2 (lines 11–12), *deo s(upra)dicto tertiam partem [d]onat*, with note on p 122.
 31. Tomlin 1988, 67–8; 64.
 32. It is not clear what this amounted to. The other petitioner may have intended to make an offering (say a silver votive leaf) from one-tenth of his stolen *denarii*, but when the property was indivisible and the god's share somewhat larger – for example one-third of Saturnina's linen cloth (Tomlin 1993, 121, no. 2) – the god may have been regarded as the part-owner, but the petitioner enjoyed the usufruct. In this spirit the fictional millionaire Trimalchio promised Mercury one-thousandth of his profits, but made the gold into a ten-pound bracelet which he wore himself (Petronius, *Satyricon* 67).
 33. More glimpses might be recovered from Red Hill, were it excavated. The extreme abbreviation of the familiar formula *si mulier si baro* suggests, as at Uley, that the text was one of many.

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MANCHESTER'S ANCIENT NAME

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Mamucium, the Roman name of Manchester, is often explained as 'place on the breast-shaped hill' from the hypothetical British mamma 'breast; breast-shaped hill'. But the name of Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, suggests this is baseless. A likelier etymology is 'place on the river called Mamma, "mother"', apparently the old name of the River Medlock, perhaps revered as a Celtic goddess.

Mamucium, the name of the Roman fort at Manchester (SJ 8397), occurs in the Antonine Itinerary as *Mamucio* and *Mamcunio* or *Mancunio*. Though the last of these is familiar from *Mancunian* (first recorded in 1904, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*), scholars have long accepted *Mamucio* as the correct form and explained it from (unattested) British **mamma* 'mother'.¹ Yet the actual meaning has been a trickier question. It has perplexed antiquaries from at least 1586, when Camden suggested a link with Welsh *maen* 'stone'. Although this etymology must be dropped, James Tait thought it more rational than some later ones.² It was still cited as late as 1967, as John Hind points out.³ Recent opinion is as follows. All agree with Bradley's derivation from British **mamma*, but feel the literal meaning 'mother' makes no sense. Rivet and Smith thus follow Kenneth Jackson in positing a meaning 'breast; round hill' for **mamma*; Mills accepts this, with hesitation; Coates and Breeze translate it as 'place of the breast-shaped prominence'.⁴ This would be the rise on which the fort was built. Since specialists in Celtic philology show confidence here (although central Manchester is flat and lacking in hills), the matter might seem settled. Yet in a letter of 14 January 2004 to the writer, Professor David Dumville of Cambridge expressed scepticism and suggested further investigation. Hence this note.

What follows has two parts. The first examines Rivet and Smith's discussion of *Mamucio*; the second uses new evidence to offer a fresh etymology. First, Rivet and Smith. They worked from Jackson's British **mamma* with the supposed meaning 'mother; breast; breast-like hill' plus an adjectival suffix *-ucio-*. They saw the latter in British-Latin *Cicucium*, also understood as 'breast-like place, breast-like hill' (but see below), which was probably the name of the Roman fort at Brecon Gaer (SO 0029), Powys. The suffix *-uc(i)o-* occurs too in the British personal name *Vindomorus* 'he of *Vindomora* (= Ebchester, near Durham)' on an inscription (RIB 2053) from Drumburgh, Cumbria. Rivet and Smith cited parallels for 'breast-like hill' in the Spanish toponyms *Mamblas* (near Avila) and *Mambrillas* (near Burgos), both from Latin *mammula* 'little breast'. They referred as well to the Two Paps of Anu (Irish *dá chích Anann*) in east Kerry, which are twin peaks called after a pagan Celtic goddess; and to Mamhead (near Dawlish, Devon), Mamble (near Worcester), Mam Tor (near Buxton, Derbyshire), Maumbury Rings (Dorchester) and Mamheilad (near Pontypool, Monmouthshire), all linked to a supposed British form **mamma* 'breast; round hill'.⁵

Does this hold water? Apparently not. Support for a sense 'breast; round hill' in British **mamma* is shaky, to say the least. There is no evidence for it in written Celtic. Medieval and

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Modern Welsh *mam* means ‘mother’, but never ‘breast’; the same is true of Cornish *mam* and Breton *mam(m)*; the Old Irish cognate *muimne* means ‘foster mother’, not ‘breast’.⁶ Scholars have had in mind Latin *mamma* ‘mother; breast’. Yet to say that, because Latin *mamma* means both ‘mother’ and ‘breast’, therefore British **mamma* did too, with the additional meaning ‘round hill’, is flimsy reasoning.

The supposed parallels elsewhere in Britain are also unconvincing. Let us look at *Cicucium*, likewise explained as ‘place of the breast-like hill’. The Welsh cognate here is *cig*, which (like Old Cornish *chic* and Breton *kik*) means ‘flesh; meat’. It does not mean ‘breast’. Although its Irish cognate *cích* means ‘teat, breast’, there is no reason to think this sense ever existed in British. Vendryes thought the original meaning here was ‘flesh’ (compare the Greek cognate *kikus* ‘strength; vigour’; those with much flesh or muscle would be strong). Irish ‘teat, breast’ would therefore be a development unique to Goedelic.⁷ So there is no justification in Brittonic for taking *Cicucium* as ‘breast-like hill’.

As to how *Cicucium* would be better understood, there seem two possibilities. (They provide an exercise in reasoning useful when we return to *Mamucium*.) One answer is implied by the name of Cigfa, a heroine of the twelfth-century *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*.⁸ Since *cig* ‘flesh’ occurs in a Brittonic personal name, *Cicucium* may thus mean ‘place of Cicuc(i)us’ (a strapping muscular fellow?), just as *Blestium* (the Roman fort at Monmouth) apparently means ‘place of Blestus’.⁹ On the other hand, since the personal name **Cicuc(i)us* seems unrecorded, we may instead be dealing with a nickname like that of *Blatobulgium* ‘flour-sack’ (the Roman fort at Birrens, Dumfries and Galloway), which had three large granaries. Brecon Gaer played a vital role in controlling south Wales. It had a garrison of 500 cavalry and commandant’s house, as well as an extensive civil settlement (with guest-houses?) by its north gate (as shown in Mortimer Wheeler’s memoir of 1926).¹⁰ On the analogy of *Blatobulgium* ‘flour-sack’, *Cicucium* might thus be a nickname meaning ‘meatpot’, ‘butcher’s store’, or the like (*cig* is still Welsh for ‘meat’, *cigydd* for ‘butcher’). Because soldiers usually care more about food than scenery, this is a more compelling interpretation of *Cicucium* than ‘breast-shaped hill’. It is also based on evidence from the Brittonic languages. If this etymology is correct, we might reflect on the vast numbers of livestock slaughtered there, presumably below the fort by the River Ysgir, which would remove blood and offal.

After completing the above paragraph, the writer came across observations on a list (Vindolanda tablet 5) of Roman food supplies (including roe deer, pork, ham and venison), where the editor notes that recent archaeological studies of bone remains at Roman forts show ‘a good deal of meat was consumed’ at such places, despite the common belief that Roman soldiers ate very little meat.¹¹ Interpretation of *Cicucium* as ‘meatpot’, ‘meat shop’, or the like may hence accord with modern scientific research. We may also note that *-ucium* is rare in British-Latin toponyms, but is attested in the unidentified *Ulucium* of Vindolanda tablet 174; unless, of course, ‘Ulucium’ (the reading is uncertain) is to be taken as *Cicucium*.¹²

As for Mamhead, Mamble, Mam Tor, Maumbury Rings and Mamheilad (as also Mansfield in Nottinghamshire), these offer no proof for British **mamma* ‘breast; round hill’. Mamheilad (SO 3003) in Monmouthshire is easily dealt with. Citing the early form *silua Mamilet*, Ifor Williams explained it from *map Milet* ‘son of Mil’ (*Milet* being a genitive). *Mil* he regarded as a personal name ‘Soldier, Warrior’, from Latin *miles*. He noted other Welsh toponyms with the element *map* ‘son (of)’ in the north Dyfed commots of Mabelfyw, Mabudryd and Mabwnion.¹³ As there is no philological link here with hypothetical British **mamma* ‘breast; round hill’, there is hence no support in any Welsh toponym for *mam* in that sense.

How, then, do we interpret the names of Mansfield (SK 5361), Mamhead, and so on in England? The first of these appears in Domesday Book as *Mamesfelde* ‘open land by the *Mam*’, the River Maun, a tributary of the River Idle. Margaret Gelling acknowledges that *Mam* might have begun as a hydronym, but, ‘as there is no known river-name of this kind’, thinks instead that the river was called after a local hill, ‘as there is good evidence for a hill-name *Mam*’.¹⁴ Later writers agree.¹⁵

This can be turned on its head. Evidence for a hill-name *Mam* is not ‘good’, but poor. Evidence for rivers named after Celtic mothers is (as we shall see below) very strong, the most obvious of these being the Marne, long recognized as being sacred to the goddess *Matrona* ‘great mother’.¹⁶ The simplest and most obvious implication here is that Mansfield was called after its river, which was known as *Mam* ‘mother’, and which the pagan Britons may have regarded as divine. Once we regard *Mam* as a hydronym meaning ‘mother’ and not a hill-name meaning ‘breast’, our difficulties begin to fall away.

Other forms may be dealt with thus. With Mamhead (SX 9381) in Devon we have a hybrid, the latter element having been taken as English ‘head’ or hill.¹⁷ Yet, given the evidence from Mansfield, it would be more logical to understand *Mam* not as ‘breast-like hill’ but as referring to an intermittent stream with its ‘head’ or source at Mamhead, where the land rises sharply. On this reading, Mamhead would parallel Coverhead and Ribblehead in Yorkshire (sources of the Rivers Cover and Ribble), Bride Head in Dorset (source of the River Bride), and so on. If so, the *Mam* would have been a stream with a British name, like the Kenn to the north of it and Dawlish (‘dark one’) Water to the south.

This leaves us with Mamble, Mam Tor and Maumbury Rings. Mamble (SO 6871), at the end of a ridge fourteen miles (23km) north west of Worcester, is attested in about AD 957 as *Momela*, which has been taken as the genitive of a tribal name; others regard it as a diminutive of Celtic origin meaning ‘little hill’.¹⁸ However understood, its evidence is inconclusive. Mam Tor (SK 1283) in north-west Derbyshire is recorded late and caused difficulties for Jackson, who thought it might be Irish. To suggest it means ‘breast rock’ on the basis of *Mamucio* is to argue in a circle. In the context of present arguments Defoe’s translation ‘Mother Rock’ may be significant (and is certainly accurate); but in any case it is dangerous to use this late form to explain a British-Latin one.¹⁹ As for Maumbury Rings, a Roman amphitheatre later used (until the eighteenth century) as a place of public execution in what is now south Dorchester, recent writers now reject a Celtic origin.²⁰

In short, reconstructed British **mamma* ‘breast; round breast-like hill’ seems a ghost. If anyone at this point wishes to quote Goedelic *mám* ‘yoke; mountain pass; hill’, as with the Maumturk (‘boar’s pass’) Mountains in Connemara or Mam Rattachan (NG 9019) near Kyle of Lochalsh, Scotland, it may be said that this has no etymological link with British **mamma* ‘mother’.²¹ Nor are Modern Irish *mám* and *mama* ‘breast, pap’ relevant here, since they are not recorded before the seventeenth century and derive from Latin *mamma*.²²

Having, it is hoped, demolished arguments for British **mamma* ‘breast; round breast-like hill’ and *Mamucium* as ‘place on the breast-shaped hill’, we may ask what replaces them. On this three points may be made: (a) Mansfield in Nottinghamshire and Mamhead in Devon point to a Celtic hydronym meaning ‘mother’; (b) Celtic rivers are often called after goddesses or other female beings; (c) many Roman forts are called after rivers. This can be shown as follows.

If we accept that the *Mam* or Maun of Mansfield has a Brittonic name meaning ‘mother’, it will have many sisters. The Marne (<*Matrona* ‘great mother’) of France has already been mentioned. The Ribble of north Lancashire was known to the Britons as *Belisama* ‘most shining one’ (a goddess of wisdom who was worshipped in much of Gaul); the Brent of

suburban Middlesex was the goddess *Brigantia* ‘exalted one’; the rivers Dee of north Wales, Galloway and Aberdeenshire were all called ‘goddess’ (Brittonic *Deva*), as was the Don of Aberdeen (*Devona*).²³ In Ireland *Loégda* ‘calf-goddess’ was the old name of Bandon River, south of Cork; the Boyne of Meath is the ‘white cow’ (a goddess); the Avoca at Arklow was once called *Dea* ‘goddess’; the Shannon was formerly *Sena* ‘old goddess’; the Bann of Ulster is the ‘goddess’.²⁴ These Celtic river-goddesses reflect ancient beliefs. Watson quotes Homer on the god of the River Scamander, who rose against Achilles in aid of the Trojans; he also quotes Gildas on the pagan Britons, who, before the coming of Christianity, heaped blind adoration on mountains, wells, hills and rivers (*montes ipsos aut fontes vel colles vel fluvios*).²⁵ So there should be no difficulty in believing that at Manchester there was a river once called *Mamma* ‘mother’, a bringer and sustainer of life, and probably revered as such.

This explanation of *Mamucium* as referring to a river tallies with the names of other Roman forts in Britain, called after rivers beside them (rarely after hills). Examples here include Bremenium, Calacum, Canovium, Danum, Derventio, Deva, Devona, Dubris, Galava, Gariannum, Isca, Lactodurum, Lagentium, Nidum and Segontium, on rivers that respectively were roaring, noisy, reedy, swift, surrounded by oaks, a goddess, a great goddess, watery, strong, frequented by herons, full of fish, milky, blade-like, a vanisher underground and powerful.²⁶ It is reasonable to add *Mamucium* to this list. The river in question would be the Medlock, now with an English name meaning ‘meadow stream’, which lay immediately south of the fort (itself on a site west of Deansgate and the former Central railway station).²⁷ Even though the river *Mam* was renamed by the English, the form survives in the *Mameceaster* of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for AD 923 and Domesday Book’s *Mamecestre* ‘Manchester’. On this reading Manchester would resemble Colchester, Doncaster, Exeter, Lancaster, Leicester, Ribchester and Towcester in having a toponym with a first element that refers to a river and a second to a Roman fort.

If we can be sure that *Mamucium* means ‘place on the river *mam(m)a* “mother”’, the problem of Manchester’s name can be taken as solved. It can be seen that a correct answer was indicated in 1900 by Bradley, who related *Mamucium* to British **mamma* ‘mother’. Unfortunately, lacking a close knowledge of Celtic hydronyms, he did not see how this could refer to a landscape feature, even though the etymology of *Marne* < *Matrona* ‘great mother’ was known to Celticists in his day and offered a clue.

What conclusions does this allow? It provides new information on Manchester’s origins. The city would be called after a river which the Britons considered as a mother, and probably thought of as divine. That *Mamucio* derives from a river (with a crossing just east of the fort), and not from a settlement, implies that the area was effectively uninhabited when the Romans arrived and made the place an important road-junction. It reinforces the early associations of Manchester with the Medlock, as opposed to its post-Roman and medieval development at the north end of Deansgate. It also casts light on the mentality of the Celts in this region. If they worshipped the Medlock, archaeologists may find evidence for the cult of a river-goddess there, hard though it may now be to see the Medlock as a pagan Celtic goddess or divine river, like the Nile or Ganges, as it winds obscurely below railway arches in regions of heavy industrialization.²⁸

NOTES

1. Bradley 1900.
2. Tait 1909.
3. Hind 1974.

4. Rivet and Smith 1979, 409–10; Mills 1991, 221; Coates and Breeze 2000, 318–19; Coates 2002.

5. Rivet and Jackson 1970, 76; Rivet and Smith 1979, 307, 409–10, 502–3.
6. *Geiriadur* 1950–2002, 2332.
7. *Geiriadur* 1950–2002, 477; Vendryes 1987, 95–6.
8. Thomas 1938, 79.
9. Rivet and Smith 1979, 269.
10. Houlder 1974, 129.
11. Bowman 1983, 34.
12. Bowman 1994, 110 n 4.
13. Williams 1939–41.
14. Gelling 1970.
15. Mills 1991, 221–2; Coates and Breeze 2000, 325.
16. Watson 1926, 426; Loomis 1956, 99.
17. Coates and Breeze 2000, 293.
18. *Ibid.*, 341.
19. *Ibid.*, 289.
20. *Ibid.*, 294–6.
21. Vendryes 1960, M 15.
22. *Dictionary of the Irish Language* 1913–76, s. vv.
23. Rivet and Smith 1979, 267–8, 279, 336–8.
24. O’Rahilly 1946, 3, 4–5, 6.
25. Watson 1926, 425–6.
26. Rivet and Smith 1979, *passim*; Breeze 2002; Breeze 2003.
27. Cf Bu’lock 1974, 168.
28. I here thank most sincerely Professor D N Dumville of Cambridge for photocopies and for prompting this paper. But for him, I should almost certainly never have thought of writing it.

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ON THE WITHAM BOWL

James Graham-Campbell, FSA*

The only known illustrations of the lost Anglo-Saxon silver hanging-bowl from the River Witham, Lincolnshire, are those in the Society's collections, including a hitherto unknown sketch, published here for the first time. Further information concerning the bowl's pedigree, since its discovery in 1816, has also come to light, together with evidence for its survival into the twentieth century. Attention is also drawn to three recent finds of ornamental metalwork from southern Scandinavia of stylistic relevance to the bowl's internal decoration in the form of a free-standing animal.

The recent publication of an article by Paul Sorrell in *Country Life*,¹ entitled 'Where is the Witham bowl?', has prompted this review of the discovery in 1816 of what is, by any standards, a most remarkable Anglo-Saxon artefact. More particularly, this note examines the evidence for its pedigree down to its last known public appearance in 1868 – and seemingly on into the beginning of the twentieth century. It was, however, only after its disappearance that the Witham bowl came to permanent prominence, following the discovery by T D Kendrick, in 1941, of 'a carefully executed coloured drawing' of the lost object, in one of the scrap-books in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London (fig 1).² This consists of a single sheet of paper on which there are three views of the bowl, in ink outline, together with its cross-section, which is enhanced with a watercolour wash (fig 2), arranged around watercolour details of the four panels of blue-and-white millefiori glass that ornament its escutcheons, lettered A–D (fig 3); the composition is contained within a ruled border outline. The drawing is both unsigned and undated,³ but outside the border there is a pencilled annotation in the distinctive hand of Albert Way: 'Silver basin found in the River Witham, near Lincoln now in the possession of John Heywood Hawkins, Esq. of Bignor Park, Sussex'.⁴

The absence of a scale (or any measurements) has been taken to indicate that the bowl is represented full-size and such is generally believed to be correct. In this case, the diameter of its rim is 160mm, the height of the central figure is 30mm, and the millefiori panels are approximately 15mm square. The detail gives every appearance of having been carefully executed so that, for example, two of the four (upside-down) human heads that provide the low legs on which the bowl would have stood are shown as tonsured, whereas the other two have full heads of neatly parted hair. There are, however, two obvious exceptions to this general observation (ones that can, at least, be checked against the evidence of the two independent woodcuts to be described below): the fact that the basal panels of scrolls and interlace are not rendered correctly as beaded filigree, being left plain, resulting in Kendrick's impression that they were '(?) embossed';⁵ and, secondly, that the appearance of the bowl has been 'improved' by the restoration of all its twenty-eight (blue-glass) settings, although the larger central setting on the underside of the bowl is left empty.

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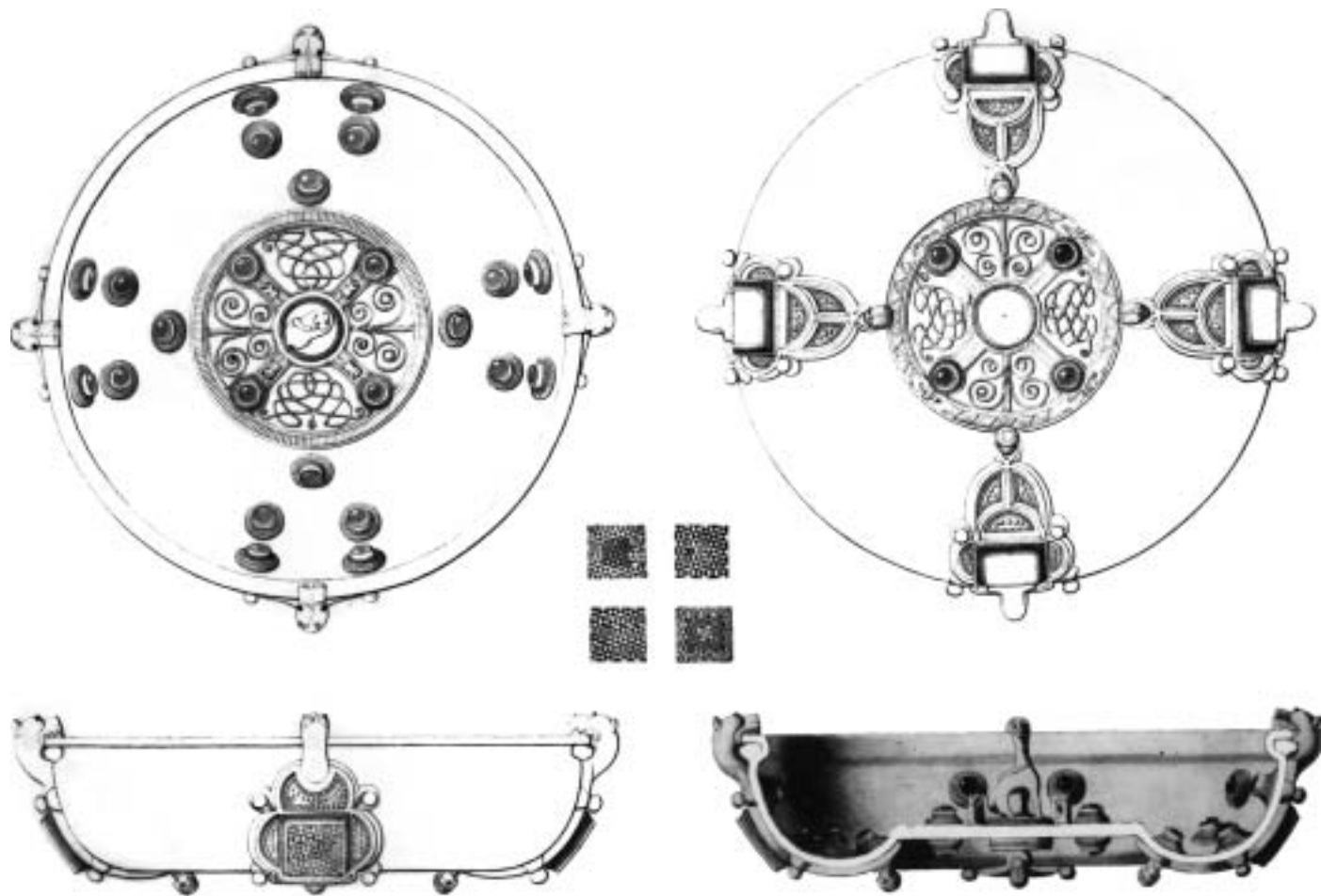


Fig 1. The lost Witham bowl: watercolour drawing in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London. *Photograph:* Society of Antiquaries of London

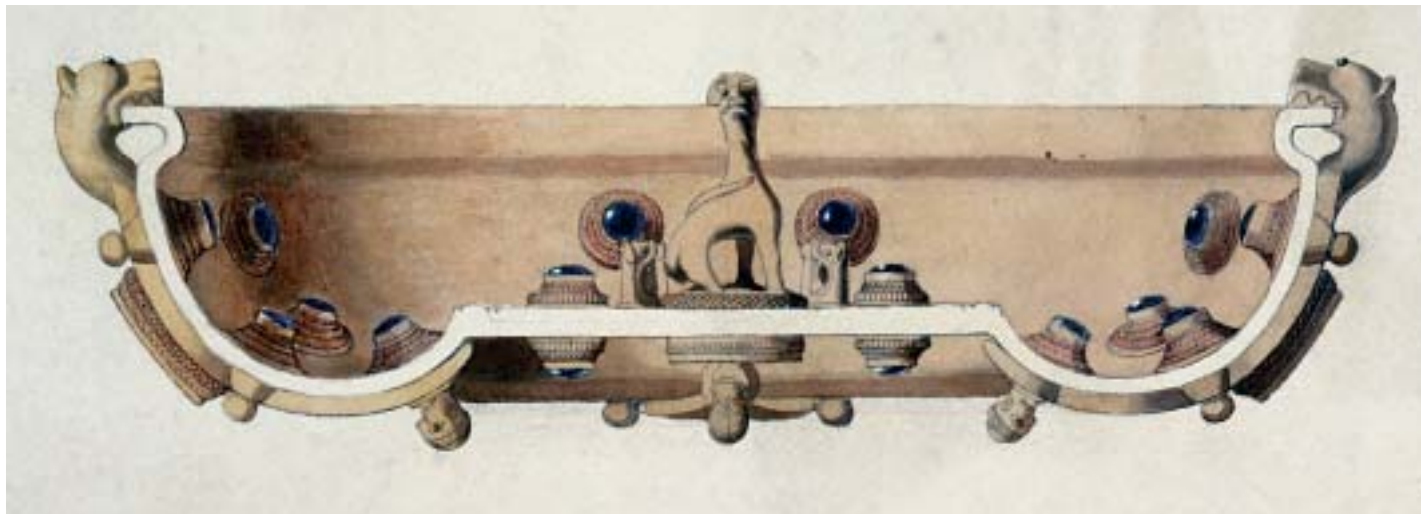


Fig 2. Detail of the watercolour drawing showing the Witham bowl in section (full-size). *Photograph:* Society of Antiquaries of London

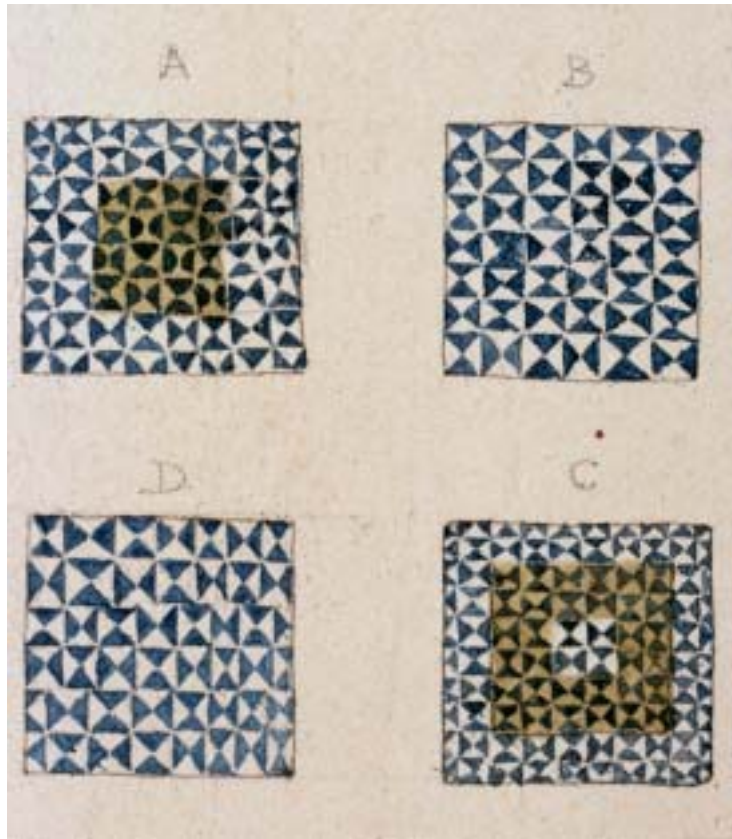


Fig 3. Detail of the watercolour drawing of the millefiori glass settings on the Witham bowl (reproduced at twice actual size). *Photograph*: Society of Antiquaries of London

According to Kendrick, his wartime discovery of the drawing came about ‘by chance’ while, in his capacity as Secretary, he was making a ‘selection of books for evacuation from the Society’s Library’. He immediately published the drawing in the *Antiquaries Journal*, dividing it so as to form two plates, but even so it had to be reduced in size.⁶ These accompanied a note by him entitled: ‘A late Saxon hanging-bowl’, in which he described it as ‘the most remarkable piece of pre-Conquest plate ever found in England’ and announced that he was trying to trace the whereabouts of this ‘supremely important and very precious antiquity’.⁷ Alas, his enquiries, seemingly initiated in February 1941, came to naught and – as indicated by the title of Sorrell’s article – its fate remains unknown.

Kendrick’s last recorded words on this subject would appear to be in a letter written by him to Rupert Bruce-Mitford on 24 December 1953, which was re-discovered during the search of a British Museum file containing letters written to Kendrick in 1942 by the Liverpool collector, Philip Nelson (to be referred to below). There is, in fact, no evidence for the existence of the ‘fat file’ that the Museum has been reputed to maintain on the possible whereabouts of this bowl.⁸

Kendrick’s letter was by way of a reply to Bruce-Mitford, for it states: ‘I had no success in chasing the Witham Bowl. I remember dimly that I had some kind of clue, possibly from Tom Lethbridge, but I am quite clear that the enquiry was unsuccessful’.

In fact, Kendrick's 'clue' seems to have come from another source altogether, as will become evident in due course, after some consideration of the bowl's dating followed by a description of its find-circumstances and its immediate history, concerning which there is rather more known than has yet been brought together in print.

As just mentioned, one of the people with whom Kendrick was in contact during his search for the Witham bowl was Philip Nelson, and it was Nelson, after Kendrick's note had appeared in print, who seems to have been the first to draw his attention to the fact that it had been exhibited at the National Exhibition of Works of Art, held at Leeds in 1868, together with some 300 other pieces from the collection of the same John Heywood Hawkins of Bignor Park, who lived until 1877. This information was conveyed to Kendrick in a letter, dated 'Trafalgar Day 1942', in which Nelson pointed out that its description in the Leeds *Catalogue* (by William Chaffers) 'amplifies your note Viz: 1. Silver-GILT. 2. "Scrolls & interlace" not embossed but GOLD filigree work'.⁹

Kendrick considered the Witham bowl to be a ninth-century object,¹⁰ but David Wilson's attribution of it to the eighth century¹¹ has received more general acceptance,¹² with Bruce-Mitford's dating wavering slightly over the years, from it being an '8th- to 9th-century piece' in 1959, of 'the ninth century' in 1983, and 'probably of late 8th or early 9th century date', in 1993.¹³

In addition to the Witham bowl, there are just two other silver hanging-bowls on record: that which forms part of the St Ninian's Isle treasure, from Shetland; and one found at Lejre, in Denmark. All three have their differences, but share their small size. The St Ninian's Isle bowl is much less elaborate than the Witham bowl, although it does have gilt mounts;¹⁴ it is considered by David Wilson to be somewhat earlier, dating 'towards the end of the seventh century or at the beginning of the eighth century'.¹⁵ The Lejre bowl has lost its escutcheons, but retains circular mounts ornamented with gold filigree on both the interior and exterior of the base.¹⁶ These mounts thus provide an obvious link to the more elaborate gold filigree decoration on the Witham bowl, but this was also embellished with twenty-eight blue-glass studs (fig 2) and another larger, but lost, stud on the exterior of its base. In addition, it possessed the four rectangular millefiori glass settings (fig 3) that have most recently been discussed by Rosemary Cramp because of the two related settings of millefiori glass excavated by her at the Northumbrian monastic site of Monkwearmouth. One of the Monkwearmouth pieces uses a composite rod 'identical in design' to that used to compose the Witham settings, while the colour combination on Witham's Mount A, 'translucent blue and opaque white' with 'opaque pale green and translucent blue', is matched on the second Monkwearmouth setting.¹⁷

The Witham bowl is in all respects by far the most elaborate of these three silver bowls, given that – in addition to its features already described – it has in its interior a remarkable three-dimensional representation of a sturdy, standing quadruped. This creature is regarded by four erect animal-heads; however, the equivalent four heads on the exterior are, as already noted, human – a further exceptional feature to encounter on Anglo-Saxon ornamental metalwork of this period. It is only quite recently (1995) that a damaged, gilt-bronze mount of Anglo-Saxon workmanship, clearly related to that on the inside of the Witham bowl, has been discovered through metal-detecting on the Danish island of Bornholm (figs 4 and 5).¹⁸

The Bornholm mount, from Agerbygård, Østerlars, is circular in form, with the same quadripartite division as that on the Witham bowl, each cross-arm also terminating in a circular setting. Its central circular field is unfortunately missing, as are two of the four that surrounded it; however, the two surviving fields both contain the remains of a pair of three-dimensional quadrupeds, sitting erect, with elongated necks. The four panels that comprise the



Figs 4 and 5. Two views of a gilt-bronze mount from Agerbygård, Østerlas, Bornholm.
Photographs: Kit Weiss, The National Museum, Copenhagen; courtesy of Bornholm Museum

border are filled alternately with plant-scroll and interlace; this combination, and the plant-scroll in particular, is readily paralleled in Anglo-Saxon art of the eighth century, for example in the architectural sculpture of Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire, where 'the narrow frieze' has an equally 'tightly organised' scroll, with the same combination of trefoil and single oval leaves.¹⁹

The animals on the Agerbygård mount, which was initially identified as being of Irish manufacture, have already been compared in print with a detached silver quadruped found at the 'central place' of Uppåkra, the predecessor of Lund (and thus in that part of southern Sweden that formed part of Denmark during the Viking Age).²⁰ This has eyes of red glass, and a gold ring around its neck from which an extension runs the length of its back to encircle the base of its tail. It is altogether squatter in its pose than the Witham animal, in part because its forelegs rest – or push down – on a pair of snakes whose bodies curl up its sides, which are further covered in ornament; it has a thick-set neck and a curious horn-like lappet. This animal is clearly not of Scandinavian manufacture, and Bertil Helgessen has reasonably concluded that it 'was probably produced in Western Europe in the late eighth or early ninth century' and that its 'symbolic language ... may be the good forces [lion] against the evil ones [snakes]'.²¹

A much closer parallel than this to both the Agerbygård and Witham animals is provided by another detached beast that has also been found recently in southern Scandinavia, at Tissø on Sjælland (an equivalent Danish 'central place' to Uppåkra in Skåne). This is not only because the Tissø quadruped has a longer neck and more upright stance, but also because it is made of silver-gilt, with a plain body, in the same manner as the Witham animal; in addition, both mounts have the same height (c 30mm).²²

The Witham animal was identified by Bruce-Mitford as 'a dog sitting erect',²³ despite the fact that the creature is clearly standing and has a tail long enough to wrap around its body. It also has a neck that is sufficiently elongated for its head to reach just above the rim (fig 2). Such elongated necks were a stylistic feature of the period,²⁴ but, in this case, the extra length would have meant that, when the bowl was filled with liquid, the animal's head would have risen above the surface. As a result, the creature, if 'dog' it was, would not actually have 'drowned' – as Bruce-Mitford supposed would have been the case had the bowl been filled with water – although it would of course have still been 'out of its element'.²⁵ Given the quality of the internal decoration of the Witham bowl, water remains the most logical liquid for it to have contained, as is now generally agreed to have been the case with the large Sutton Hoo bowl, with its rotating fish on a pedestal.²⁶ Indeed, Sorrell supposes the Witham creature itself to have been 'set on a revolving pedestal' because 'the illustrations show the animal in more than one alignment and thus indicate that its base was not fixed', but the evidence of the illustrations is at best ambiguous with regard to this matter, and it does not seem to me, at any rate, to support this conclusion.²⁷

Whichever, it seems reasonable to speculate that what was to Kendrick just 'a charming little creature' might rather have been intended as a water-monster or 'beast':

Whatever is found on land or in the sea of unknown and fearsome form of terrible bodily appearance can be called a beast. The kinds of sea-beast are almost innumerable, and with their so enormous bodies they churn up vast masses of waves as big as great mountains, and with their chests disrupt seas from the very bottom, whilst they direct their paths to the sweet river-courses and by swimming disturb the foamy depths with a great roar ... (*Liber Monstrorum* (c 725), Prologue to Book II).²⁸



Fig 6. Woodcut of the lost Witham bowl. *Photograph: Society of Antiquaries of London*

So maybe what stands within this bowl is one of those otherwise ‘... unknown beasts which the poets and philosophers emptily depict in the gilded discourse of their writings to have once existed in rivers or lakes and swamps, or in the deserted recesses of the globe’.²⁹ If it is objected that the Witham creature is an unlikely ‘water-beast’, because it has four legs and lacks a fishy tail, it may be recalled that hippopotami ‘were certainly regarded as bestial, rather than serpentine, by the compiler of the *Liber Monstrorum* (II.9 and II.17)’.³⁰

The fact that the basal ‘prints’ on the Witham bowl were indeed decorated with filigree – as described in the Leeds *Catalogue*, but not depicted in the drawing – became fully evident with the discovery by John Hopkins, when the Society’s Librarian, of a pair of unused woodblocks depicting the bowl at two-thirds the size (diam: 105mm) that it is shown in the drawing (figs 6 and 7). That these blocks represent a separate commission is evident from the fact that one of them is an oblique view, which could not therefore have been derived from the drawing, together with the fact that they illustrate the basal scrolls and interlace as being executed in filigree; in addition, as already noted, many of the (blue-glass) settings are clearly shown as empty. Neither of the blocks has any distinguishing marks to indicate when, where or by whom they were engraved.³¹

Hopkins’s discovery was first referred to in print by David Wilson in 1960, in a discussion of ‘serrated band filigree’, when he noted that the bowl had been exhibited not only in Leeds in 1868, but also in Lincoln in 1848.³² One of the woodblocks (the oblique view) was used for the first time the following year in *Archaeologia*, by Vera Evison,³³ and then again by Wilson in 1964;³⁴ the other view (of the exterior) remained unused until 1973.³⁵ The two prints were subsequently reproduced together, as here, by Bruce-Mitford, in 1993.³⁶

It is the *Catalogue of Antiquities* for the Lincoln (1848) exhibition, published in 1850, that completes the bowl’s initial pedigree, for it is stated there that: ‘It was found in clearing out the bed of the River Witham, near Lincoln, about 1820, and was purchased by the late Coningsby Waldo Sibthorp, Esq., by whom it was bequeathed to his brother-in-law, John Hawkins, Esq.’³⁷



Fig 7. Woodcut of the underside of the lost Witham bowl. *Photograph:* Society of Antiquaries of London

Indeed, only one more detailed account of the bowl's discovery has been located, that published in the *Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury*, for 19 April 1816, which was quoted in full by Bruce-Mitford in 1993, but for completeness and accuracy it is reprinted here:³⁸

In carrying out the works for the improvement of the river Witham, many sub-marine articles have been thrown up: lately near Washingborough, about 4 miles from this city, a complete canoe was found, of the length of 30 feet 8 inches, 2 feet high at the sides, and about 2 feet 6 inches wide, made out of a single tree: after being exposed to the air, it was found impracticable to move this curiosity, the least movement causing it to break. A great number of trees, several yards under ground, deer's horns, some of them very

large, and human skulls, &c. have been found; but the object of greatest value is a beautiful silver cup or basin, richly ornamented with wild animals, &c. and having in the centre a small statue: this is now in the possession of a gentleman in the neighbourhood.

The 'gentleman in the neighbourhood' who acquired this 'beautiful silver cup or basin' may thus be identified as the Coningsby Waldo Sibthorp who was one of the five sons of Colonel Humphrey Waldo Sibthorp (1744–1815), of Canwick Hall, near Lincoln, and it was his sister, Mary Esther Sibthorp, to whom John Hawkins, of Bignor Park, was married. According to a letter written by George Johnstone, a family member resident in Cornwall, whom Kendrick had contacted in March 1941 'at the suggestion of Mr Tupper of Bignor':

Christopher Henry Thomas Hawkins succeeded John Hawkins and was heir to all his effects I believe – other than settled property. He was a celebrated collector of all kinds of objects d'art and when he died left them to his widow – Mrs Hawkins of 10 Portland Place, who sold quantities of the collection from time to time – amounting in all to over $\frac{3}{4}$ million pounds. Christies did most of the selling for her ...

This letter, in the British Museum files (dated 6 April 1941), appears to have escaped the notice of Bruce-Mitford and others, and there is no apparent record of how far Kendrick himself may have tried to pursue enquiries with Christie's either during or after the Second World War. In fact, three major sales 'of the extensive collection of objects of art and vertu formed chiefly during the last thirty years by the late Mr. C. H. T. Hawkins' were held by Christie's in March, May and June 1904, when: 'the three portions extended to 2,430 lots and occupied eighteen days in selling. Two other days were taken up with the sale of the pictures and Turner and other engravings, the grand total amounting to £185,028'.³⁹

Two further sales, one of snuff-boxes and porcelain and the other of 'Unset precious stones', were held by Christie's in May and June 1905, but in none of the relevant sale-catalogues (held in the British Library) can the Witham bowl be located. On the other hand, Johnstone had made it clear in his letter to Kendrick (quoted above) that he was otherwise 'unable to assist your search for the whereabouts of the Anglo-Saxon bowl. I have not heard of it before I received your letter'.

Apart from this fundamental mystery concerning the fate of the Witham bowl (or rather the Washingborough or Fiskerton hanging-bowl, as it should really be known),⁴⁰ there remains a second mystery as to how it came to be so well represented in the Society's collections, given that there was no proper publication of it during the nineteenth century, despite the preparation of both the drawing and the woodblocks. Some such information may of course yet come to light amongst the Society's records, but the most likely occasion for its illustration would have been before, during, or immediately after, the one time when it is definitely known to have been on public display in London. This was in 1850 'at the House of the Society of Arts', when Hawkins lent his bowl to the exhibition of 'Works of Ancient and Medieval Art', organized by A W Franks shortly before he joined the British Museum. In his *Catalogue*, the 'Preface' of which is dated 18 March 1850, Franks described it (in part) as follows:

94. A Vessel of *Silver-gilt*, probably of Anglo-Saxon work ... From the centre of the inside rises the figure of a lion. The rim has been formed for the admission round it of a cord or chain, but the use to which the vessel has been applied is uncertain. It was found in the river Witham, near Lincoln. IX CENT.⁴¹

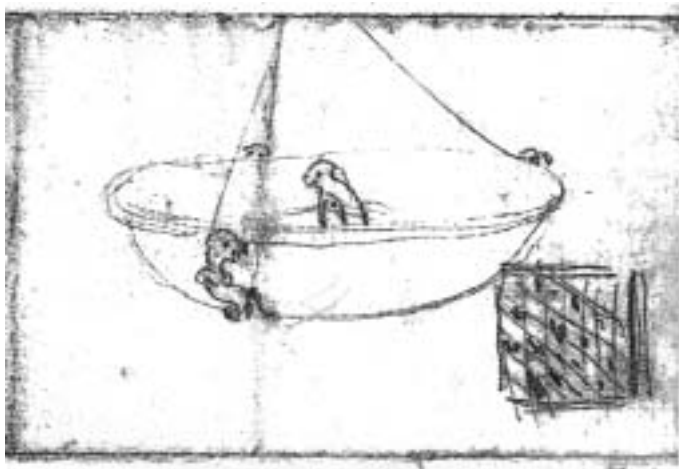


Fig 8. Pencil sketch of a hanging-bowl, attributed to Albert Way. *Photograph:* Society of Antiquaries of London

It may be surmised that, on this occasion, Franks actually displayed the Witham bowl suspended, given an intriguing piece of evidence that has recently come to light during the cataloguing of Albert Way's correspondence in the Society's library.⁴² Hastily drawn in pencil, on the outside fold of a letter written to Way by the Revd H Maclean on 15 June 1849 (concerning Anglo-Saxon grave goods from Searby, Lincolnshire), there is a sketch of what can only be the Witham bowl (suspended), together with a panel of its millefiori (fig 8). This is not executed to the usual high standard of Way's drawings, but it is entirely what one might expect had he chosen to make a quick record, on a piece of paper plucked from his pocket, of an unfamiliar object happened on in an exhibition case. Here, at any rate, seems to be a clue towards the possible resolution of the second mystery.

Anyway, the essential question remains: 'Where (if anywhere) is the Witham bowl today?'. An obvious suggestion would have been that it had already vanished long before Kendrick tried to trace it in the 1940s, for it seems only reasonable to suppose that Franks would himself have attempted, at some stage, to add the bowl to his own remarkable collection of medieval silver vessels, which was ultimately bequeathed by him to the British Museum, in 1897.⁴³ On the other hand, there is some intriguing evidence to indicate that the Witham bowl might have remained at Bignor Park after the death of Hawkins, when it was occupied by his daughter, Mrs Josephine Johnstone. It has been recalled by the mother of Fr Jerome Bertram, FSA, that when she was a child living at Bignor Park Cottage with her mother there was a locked 'Museum Room' which supposedly contained Hawkins' collection of antiquities.⁴⁴ Mrs Johnstone clearly had no interest in such things, having banished them to the Cottage, and Fr Bertram supposes that the contents of the 'Museum Room' would have been disposed of after her death (c 1923), when Bignor Park was sold, given that 'cousins who remember visiting [my] Grandmother after that [for she enjoyed a life interest in the Cottage until 1951] are not aware of them'. However, had the Witham bowl been entered into any important sale of antiquities during the 1920s, it seems most improbable that it would not have been recognized by the British Museum for what it was and thus rescued for the nation. The mystery remains!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I particularly wish to thank the then General Secretary (David Morgan Evans) and the Librarian (Bernard Nurse) for their encouragement and assistance in compiling this paper on the Society's remarkable, if mysterious, record of a unique Anglo-Saxon artefact, as also Leslie Webster, now Keeper of the Department of Prehistory and Europe, and her British Museum colleagues, Angela Care Evans and Susan Youngs, for their assistance in trying to locate a departmental file on the bowl for me, and for access to the crucial correspondence files for 1941–2 from which I have quoted above. I am also most grateful for assistance to: Thomas Cadbury (City and County Museum, Lincoln); Jerome Bertram (The Oratory, Oxford); Richard North (UCL), for his introduction to the *Liber Monstrorum*; and to Finn Ole Nielsen (Bornholm Museum), for providing the information on the Agerbygård mount, including the loan of the photographs published here. My thanks are also due to both Professor Rosemary Cramp and Sir David Wilson for having commented on a preliminary draft of this note; their advice has been to its material improvement (as has that of both Leslie Webster and David Wilson with regard to the recent Scandinavian finds), but the remaining errors and infelicities are naturally my own.

NOTES

1. Sorrell 2002.
2. Kendrick 1941, 161; Early Medieval Antiqs 61.1.
3. It will be suggested below that this drawing most probably dates from *c* 1850, when the bowl is known to have been exhibited in London; the Society's *Catalogue* entry suggests that 'one attribution would be Robert T Stothard, working in London as a miniaturist 1821–57 and providing occasional drawings for *Vetusta Monumenta* for which this drawing may well have been intended'.
4. Albert Way, who was elected a Fellow in 1839, served as Director from 1842 to 1846 and bequeathed his papers to the Society on his death in 1874.
5. Kendrick 1941, 162.
6. Ibid, pls XXXIV–XXXV.
7. Ibid, 162.
8. Sorrell 2002, 65; Sir David Wilson recalls the existence of a file on the Witham bowl maintained by Rupert Bruce-Mitford, at the British Museum, but none such appears now to be in the possession of the Department of Prehistory and Europe.
9. Chaffers 1868, 182, no. 19: 'Anglo-Saxon Silver-gilt Bowl ... the spaces between filled in with gold filigree knots and scrolls ... in the centre a statuette of some animal.'
10. Kendrick 1941, 162.
11. Wilson 1964, 18.
12. Eg, Cramp 1970, 331, n 2.
13. Bruce-Mitford 1959, 258; 1983, 240; 1993, 59.
14. Wilson 1973, 55–7, 108–12, 134–7, pls XXIV–XXV.
15. Ibid, 112.
16. Wilson 1960a.
17. Cramp 1977, 331–2.
18. I am most grateful to Finn Ole Nielsen for having brought this object to my attention, during a recent visit to Bornholm Museum (Vang Petersen 1996, 242; Watt 1996, 69, fig 23, a–b), and for the invitation to publish it after I have had the opportunity of studying it in Copenhagen.
19. Jewell 1986, 96, pl XLII; see also Cramp 1977, 194, figure 50.
20. Helgesson 1999.
21. Ibid, 191 (English summary).
22. Jørgensen and Pedersen 1999, figure on p 7.
23. Bruce-Mitford 1983, 264, n 3.
24. Eg, Cramp 1977, figures 62 and 63.
25. Bruce-Mitford 1983, 240.
26. Ibid, 239–40.
27. Sorrell 2002, 64.
28. Orchard 2003, 289.
29. Ibid, 291.
30. Ibid, 42, n 71.
31. The Society's *Catalogue* attributes these woodblocks 'possibly' to Orlando Jewitt (1799–1869), but notes that it is 'unusual'

- for this artist's work to be unsigned (Early Medieval Antiqs 60.1 and 2).
32. Wilson 1960b, 24, n 44.
 33. Dunning and Evison 1961, figure 8.
 34. Wilson 1964, pl II, c.
 35. Wilson 1973, pl LII, a.
 36. Bruce-Mitford 1993, pl 9, a–b.
 37. *Catalogue of Antiquities* (1850), xxxi.
 38. Bruce-Mitford 1993, 59.
 39. *The Connoisseur*, 9 (1904), 258–9.
 40. It is known to Lincolnshire Museums (City and County Museum) as the 'Washingborough Hanging Bowl' (White 1979, 3), but has most recently been referred to in print as the 'Fiskerton hanging bowl' (Stocker and Everson 2003, 281); the latter work contains a map of the central Witham valley, including the location of the Washingborough-Fiskerton finds (ibid, fig 17.1).
 41. Franks 1850, no. 94.
 42. This illustration was first brought to my attention by Susan Youngs, after it had been discovered by Elizabeth Lewis (Ms 700/111/5/045.14); see also n 4.
 43. Read and Tonnochy 1928; Wilson 1984, 42–3; Cherry 1997, 193.
 44. Pers comm (8 September 2003); deposited in the Society of Antiquaries.

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THE DISCOVERY AND SAVING OF THE TOURNAI FONT AT THE COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF SAINT-VINCENT, SOIGNIES, BELGIUM

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In 1991 the author completed research for his dissertation on the twelfth-century Tournai fonts for a Master's degree in Art History at the University of Essex. Based on this research, his first published article sought to update the paper by our Fellow G C Dunning.¹ In 1997, during his research for The Romanesque Fonts of Northern Europe and Scandinavia,² the author discovered and published further information about the products of the Tournai School.³ Among the fonts listed in the author's 1993 paper were the 'fragments' at Soignies, known to be built into the fabric of the church. Late in 2003 his attention was drawn to a monograph⁴ published by the Chapter Museum of the collegiate church of Saint-Vincent, Soignies (about 16km south west of Brussels), detailing the recovery, conservation and subsequent display of the font bowl. This article has been pieced together from the three sections of that monograph and we are indebted to the Museum, and to the scholars whose articles make up the monograph, for permission to use their material and a selection of their illustrations.

SOIGNIES AND ITS TOURNAI FONT

The earliest parts of the collegiate church of Saint-Vincent date from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. One of the pointers to the early dating was the existence of sections of a black limestone Tournai font bowl reused as building material high up in the western tower. They were set in the north wall, about 12 metres from the ground. The good condition of the pieces and the fact that they were known to relatively few people is due to the construction in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century of a building against the north side of the tower of the church. Its roofline covered the courses of stone in which the bowl was set, so that it was protected from the weather and hidden from view.

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It is well known that the stone of which these fonts were made is brittle and sensitive to frost, and there are several examples of which only fragments remain, including at least two others that have also been reused as building material, at Saint-Pierre at Lessines and at Escanaffles, though at both these churches the stones are set in the wall at no more than a metre above ground level. The west tower of Saint-Vincent was erected in the mid-thirteenth century, suggesting that the bowl had a very short life and had already failed no more than a century after its manufacture. However, the font now in use in the church dates from the fifteenth century and it is tempting to suggest that the failure was not as early as the thirteenth but happened in the first half of the fifteenth century. Against this, there is no evidence of restoration or repair work where the fragments were found and, in fact, the masonry in that part of the tower matches that on the western facade at the same height.

One of those who knew of the existence of the fragments and their location was the well-known Belgian archaeologist and art historian, Jean-Claude Ghislain, who had long harboured a desire to see them extracted from the tower and, as far as might be possible, reconstituted as a font bowl. Eighteen years after the publication of his monograph on the church of Saint-Vincent, an opportunity occurred in 1993 to put his ideas to the test. A major restoration was planned for which there would be present both scaffolding and the necessary skilled labour force. Eventually the work was carried out in September 1995 and it proved possible to extract the fragments, lower them safely to the ground and move them to the Chapter Museum for the painstaking work of conservation and restoration. There is, alas, insufficient space to report here the detail of the work carried out but suffice it to say that the operation produced one large stone, comprising about half the bowl (fig 1), and two smaller pieces, each with one of the other two corners (fig 2). There were, of course, many smaller fragments broken off either when they were built into the wall or in the process of taking them down. The three large pieces, when correctly juxtaposed, revealed the whole decorative programme of the vertical faces of the bowl and, less well preserved, that on the upper surface. Rich top decoration is a notable feature of the fonts of the Tournai School.

What had been lost at some time in the existence of the font was a total of 50–100mm from the underside of the bowl, so that it is no longer possible to determine whether it was made to be supported on a single central shaft or with the addition of four colonnettes beneath the corners, the latter being the more common (1 + 4) form of these fonts. There is no evidence to show how this damage may have occurred but it is well known that Tournai limestone is highly schistous, frost-sensitive and liable to delaminate. Horizontal splitting is visible in almost every example of the genre to a greater or lesser extent.⁵ If the Soignies font had suffered in this way, losing in the process some 20 per cent of its overall height, the crucial factor would have been how little thickness of stone still remained beneath the deepest part of the hollowed-out basin. A major loss here, as is clearly the case from Ghislain's measurements, would have led to such weakening of the block that vertical fractures could have occurred as normal stresses altered over a period of time or on any occasion when attempts were made to move the font. In fact the thickness of stone beneath the bowl never exceeds 30mm and at the centre is less than half that figure.

In order to display the reconstituted bowl in the Chapter Museum in a way that would demonstrate to visitors how it would originally have appeared, it was necessary to create a supporting structure as close as possible to the original. Although it is not possible to be certain whether it had been a single or multiple support font, comparisons with other examples from the School pointed to a 1 + 4 configuration being the more likely. The necessary pieces were fabricated from a similar stone⁶ and the only slightly jarring element is



Fig 1. Block 1: the virtual half-bowl fragment partially freed from the wall before lowering. *Photograph*: J Deveseleer, Musée du Chapitre



Fig 2. Blocks 2 and 3: the two quarter-bowl fragments *in situ* before removal. *Photograph*: J Deveseleer, Musée du Chapitre



Fig 3. The restored bowl on its new supports on display in the Chapter Museum at Soignies. *Photograph: G Focant, Ministère de la Région Wallone*

the essential flat stone sheet between the shafts and the underside of the bowl to ensure that the weight is carried evenly (fig 3). The work of restoration began in December 2001 and was completed in time for the bowl to be installed as part of the collections on show in the Museum in mid-2003 when the monograph was published. The first article, by J Deveseleer, sketches the background and describes how the removal of the stones was achieved. The second, by Jean-Claude Ghislain, sets the font in the context of other products of the School and gives a detailed description of the piece and its decoration. The third, by MM Bénédicte Reynders and Jacques Vereecke, describes the process of restoration and preparation for display.⁷

THE BOWL AND ITS DECORATION

The near complete, albeit fragmented, bowl allows most dimensions to be established accurately (length of the sides: 810mm; height of the face: 240mm; diameter of the basin: 575mm; depth of basin at the deepest point: 265mm). Ghislain suggests that a further 50mm might be added to the overall height, bringing it up to 305mm. These figures, when compared with other products of the School, show that the Soignies bowl is one of the smallest of the thirty Tournai fonts for which comparable figures may be ascertained, holding 24th position for bowl height and diameter of basin and 26th for height of face and the length of the sides.⁸ There is no particular significance in these facts as the variable quality of the stone and the shallowness of the beds in which it occurs were probably most often the deciding factors in determining the finished size.

The decoration of the font, so Ghislain tells us, shows signs of use of the point of the carving tool, indicating that there had been no intention that it should be polished.⁹ Its present appearance must therefore be close to that of the original condition. The upper surface of the bowl is decorated, as is the case with all known examples, but, contrary to what Ghislain says,¹⁰ is very much simpler than most. All four vertical faces are framed by a plain narrow band about a centimetre in width and bear representations of lions and mythical beasts, such as are found on several fonts of the School with which there are certain stylistic links. In one respect it is unique: on Tournai fonts which have two sides bearing the same type of decoration, the identical sides are always adjacent to each other, never on opposite sides of the bowl but at Soignies the two matching sides are opposite.¹¹ Further, an analysis by the author of all the known face decoration showed that no single type of motif is unique to a specific font; something closely related is to be found elsewhere, even if with minor variations. At Soignies this mould is broken and the three mythical figures on one side resembling, at first glance, mermaids with divided tails, are not to be found elsewhere as face decoration, though Ghislain has identified a near identical version at Zedelgem where the motif is used in one of the spandrels of the upper surface (fig 4).

Examining the decoration in detail, the two identical sides display crouching lions, crups to the centre and the heads at the corners turned to face the viewer (fig 5). Working from the photographs alone there is only a suggestion of a mane, though hair *en brosse* shows clearly between the pricked ears of both beasts. Claws are displayed on fore and hind paws, while tails pass between the hind legs and over the flanks, curving back over the rump.¹² The faces have deep-set, almond-shaped eyes and whiskers are to be seen on either side of the straight nose. Lions are common on Tournai fonts; others resembling those at Soignies are to be found at St Peter's, Ipswich (where the lions are three to a side and stand), at Kontich (with mane on shoulders), at Vermand (winged and with a clear mane beneath the chin) and at Saint-Just-en-Chaussée. All, except for Vermand, have two outward-facing lions on each side while at Ipswich there is a third in the centre.

Of the other two dissimilar sides, one also displays a pair of beasts, heads again to the corners, and turned to face the viewer (fig 6). The heads, at the end of long necks, are bent back to look out over the shoulders. The eyes, nose, pricked ears and face-creases are almost identical to those of the lions described above but the mouth is unlike anything to be seen elsewhere: long, oval and compressed in the centre to form a figure of eight which does not quite cross over in the middle. There can, however, be no question of these beasts also being lions; they are winged and lack hind legs, a common representation of a medieval dragon. Their bodies, which taper to the tail, emerge from the mouth of a lion's mask, inverted, at the



Fig 4. The top surface spandrel of the Tournai font at Zedelgem (for comparison with the face motifs at Soignies). *Photograph:* G Focant, Ministère de la Région Wallone



Fig 5. Faces 1 and 3: a pair of lions addorsed, heads to the corners. *Photograph:* G Focant, Ministère de la Région Wallone



Fig 6. Face 2: one of a pair of addorsed dragons, issuing from an inverted mask which can just be seen at the left. *Photograph: G Focant, Ministère de la Région Wallone*

bottom of the side of the bowl, while a fan-shaped palmette fills the triangular space above. The image of an inverted mask spewing forth ornament is unique for the sides of Tournai fonts, though it does occur in spandrels of the upper surface.¹³ On the other hand it is common on the products of the neighbouring School on the Maas, suggesting the involvement of a mason who had worked in the quarries of both the Maas and the Scheldt, or that the sponsor was familiar with the products of both Schools. The mask, which acts as the source of the dragon's bodies, shows the common characteristics of the pricked ears, almond-shaped, deep-set eyes and straight nose.

The fourth side is a puzzle. It displays three identical motifs in linear placing across the whole width of the face (see fig 3). In each case a broad, vertical 'body' bifurcates at the bottom and then turns upwards and back in a curve with the ends touching the upper plain framing band; these ends terminate in shapes like leaves, curving inwards. At the top of each central vertical section is a mask, again inverted. These masks closely resemble the faces of the lions on the paired sides. Viewed from above (that is, upside down: fig 7), these three images look as if they are lions' masks with massive, curling rams' horns issuing from the top of the head. The decoration of this side is completed with short fans of five leaves, which fill the spaces at the bottom, created by the bifurcations. The version of this motif in the upper spandrel at Zedelgem (see fig 4) has been flattened to fit the space available, has longer plumes of leaves at the ends of the bifurcations and has a pair of leaf motifs emerging from the mouth. Apart from this last point it is otherwise essentially the same as the three at Soignies.

The upper surface of the bowl is also decorated, though more simply than many of the Tournai fonts (fig 8). As with the faces, there is a plain framing band right round the top of the



Fig 7. Face 4 (shown inverted for comparison with figs 1 and 3): the three lions' masks with bifurcated bodies issuing from the top of the head. *Photograph: G Focant, Ministère de la Région Wallone*



Fig 8. The decorated upper surface, showing spandrel ornaments, concentric banding around the basin and the later marks of provision for closure and locking of the font. *Photograph: G Focant, Ministère de la Région Wallone*

bowl but it is interrupted by the triple concentric banding which encircles the basin. These bands, one broad between two narrow, are quite plain and reach to the centre of the four top edges. The spandrels offer two motifs, paired in opposing corners. In two cases, palmettes issue from pots and the other pair seem to consist of motifs such as fleurs-de-lis with an extra, lower, pair of leaves. Sadly, these two spandrels are the worst-damaged areas of the font and it is difficult to be precise, especially when working from photographs.¹⁴ The nearest parallels in spandrel decoration are to be found at Guarbecque, Nivelles (fragments), St Mary Bourne and Thornton Curtis.

DATING

It is notoriously difficult to date any Romanesque font more precisely than to about fifty years, unless there is in existence for the church a record of the licence to baptize. Even that gives no more than a *terminus post quem* because baptisms were often carried out using lay vessels for the holy water before a proper, purpose-made font had been provided. It is likely that the Tournai quarries were occupied in this work of making fonts from around the middle of the twelfth century and for no more than about fifty years in total.

RESTORATION AND DISPLAY

The work of restoring, conserving and consolidating the bowl took more than two years and, despite the presence of the major pieces which fitted well together, there was much to be done, beginning with ridding the Tournai stone of all the accretions of mortar and rubble which filled the void of the basin and covered the whole surface except where the carved sections were exposed on the outer face of the wall. The major pieces, once cleaned, had to be assembled and held in a wooden frame before restoration could begin. Only when this was complete could decisions be made and work put in hand to display the bowl to the best advantage. An order was placed for a base, central shaft and four colonnettes. Because of the severely compromised state of the underside of the bowl it was not possible for it to be placed directly on these shafts and a flat slab was used so that the weight of the bowl could be evenly spread, to avoid a recurrence of the problems which may have caused its failure in the first place. It was rightly decided not to attempt to copy the decoration of the base or shafts found on other fonts of the School, nor was any attempt made to create artificial capitals for the corner colonnettes, which would have been carved out of the underside of the bowl on the original.¹⁵ While not in its original glory, the Soignies font bowl can now be seen and admired by visitors to the Chapter Museum and M Ghislain is to be congratulated for his determination, and his colleagues in this venture for their skills and support.

NOTES

1. Drake 1993; Dunning 1944.
2. Drake 2002.
3. Drake 1997.
4. Deveseleer *et al* 2003.

5. Guarbecque shows very clearly this weakness in the stone.
6. The local Soignies 'blue stone' was selected for its similarity to the original but also because it

differs sufficiently in colour for the separation between old and new work to be distinct.

7. 1) 'Le sauvetage de la première cuve baptismale de la collégiale Saint-Vincent', Jacques Deveseleer, Curator and Secretary to the Chapter; 2) 'La cuve baptismale romane de Soignies et la sculpture Tournaisienne', Jean-Claude Ghislain, archaeologist and art historian; 3) 'La restauration des fonts baptismaux de Soignies', Bénédicte Reynders and Jacques Vereecke, restorers and conservators. Unfortunately, ill health has prevented the author from visiting Soignies himself, so any interpolations could only be based on a reading of the photographs.
8. These are 24th and 26th of approximately thirty fonts of which sufficient survives to allow reliable measurements.
9. Unlike, eg, Dendermonde, Lichtervelde, Montdidier, St Bavon and St-Just-en-Chaussée, or all eight of the fonts in the English subgroup.
10. Ghislain, in Deveseleer *et al* 2003, 18, talks of 'La richesse relative de la margelle ...'. In fact, on many of the bowls the spandrels are more

ambitious than at Soignies and the concentric bands around the rim of the basin are also carved with masks, foliage and other motifs. It is worth remarking that this applies most especially to those bowls that are highly polished.

11. Drake 1993, 50.
12. The pose of tail between the legs is a common attribute of medieval lions, though the plume of the tail is often extended forward along the beast's back.
13. For example, at Dendermonde and Zedelgem.
14. However, Ghislain, in Deveseleer *et al* 2003, 13, says that all four spandrels have different ornament, though two only differ in detail.
15. The rightness of this decision is to be gauged from the appalling error in France over the provision of new supports for the font at Noordpeene. Here the fact that the capitals formed an integral part of the underside of the bowl was overlooked and new ones were carved out of the tops of the colonnettes. This font has, therefore, a two-tier structure of capitals, producing an ungainly and unaesthetic appearance, besides being historically incorrect.

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THE PRODUCTION OF RABBITS IN WILTSHIRE DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

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Warrens provided a profitable use for the light soils and steep hillsides of the chalk downlands of England, and during the seventeenth century many thousands of rabbits were produced annually. The paper considers the documentary evidence for Wiltshire warrens, the complex and profitable

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leases granted by landowners, the large-scale traffic in rabbits and the damage that they caused to neighbouring farms and woodland. The complaints of farmers, coupled with increasing prices for corn, cattle and sheep, led gradually to the decline of the formerly lucrative trade in rabbits as cultivation and improved pasture were extended on the high downland.

ORIGINS OF THE WILTSHIRE RABBIT INDUSTRY

The rapid expansion of population and the growth of towns during the seventeenth century greatly increased the demand for the relatively cheap meat provided by rabbits, while rabbit skins and fur were used for many purposes, including the manufacture of fashionable hats and caps.¹ The well-drained chalk downlands of Wiltshire were ideal for the nurture of rabbits, and from the later Middle Ages many warrens were established and provided a lucrative use for the thin, marginal soils and steep hillsides which at that time were regarded as unsuited to other purposes. The lease of land for warrens provided a useful source of additional income for landowners, and the profits from the sale of huge numbers of rabbits became a significant feature of the agricultural economy of the county (fig 1).

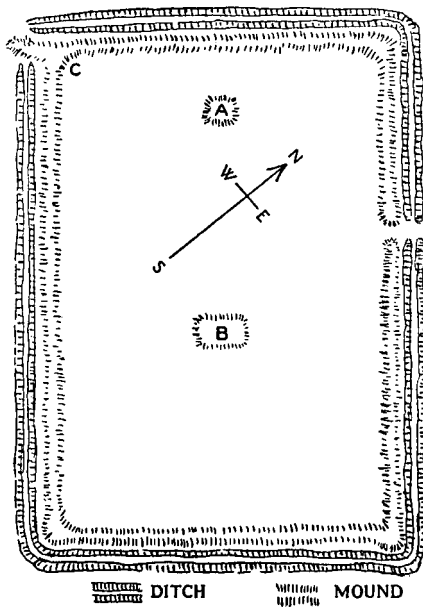
Medieval warrens existed in many parts of the county, including Aldbourne, Liddington, Wanborough (fig 2), Chisenbury, Mildenhall and Broad Chalke. As well as the warrens mentioned below, archaeological evidence has also revealed the sites of numerous others, among them warrens at Kingston Deverill, Steeple Langford, Lydiard Tregoze, Barford St Martin, Stapleford, Hullavington, Hyam near Malmesbury (figs 3–4), Whitesheet Down near Stourton, and on the high downland west of Downton. The warren at Aldbourne commanded an annual rent of £40 during the fifteenth century, and in 1434 could supply almost a thousand rabbits valued at £14 to the royal household and sixty-six couples sold to other customers.²

In 1416 a lease of the warren within the park at Castle Combe was granted to Thomas Perys, specifying that he was carefully to conserve the rabbits and was to ensure that an adequate stock remained at the expiry of his lease. In 1495 the rental of the warren in Clarendon Park produced an income of £100 for the king's household.³ In his will of 1598 the wealthy Bristol merchant, Sir John Young, left to his wife, Joan, his large mansion by the dockside in Bristol and his productive warren at Hazelbury in Wiltshire. From the warren she was to receive 'two hundredthe cupple of connies yearlie to be taken upon the warren groundes there to her said use at such time as she shall require the same'.⁴ John Aubrey commented upon the number of rabbits produced at Aldbourne and described it as 'our famous coney-warren, and the conies there are the best, sweetest and fattest of any in England; a short, thick coney, and exceeding fatt'.⁵ Throughout the seventeenth century the adults were generally referred to as 'conies' and only the young were described as 'rabbits'. For example, the rental of the warren at Broad Chalke in 1631 included '10 couple of conies and 10 couple of rabbits'.⁶

The 'warren' or 'conygre' place-names to be found all over the Wiltshire downland bear witness to the number of warrens and to the scale of the former trade in rabbits. Many small warrens were also constructed by landowners to supply their own households. Much documentary evidence exists concerning the management and profitability of the warrens. Far from being the pests which they later became, rabbits were cosseted, encouraged to breed and given every attention. On the exposed downland they had to be carefully looked after if they were to survive the harsh weather and deep snow of the seventeenth-century winters, and if the warren-keepers were to profit from the well-known fecundity of the rabbits. Artificial burrows known as 'berryes' or 'clappers' were provided for them; they were fed on hay and 'rowe' or



Fig 1. Sites of seventeenth-century warrens in Wiltshire identified from documentary or landscape evidence. *Drawing: James and Tina Bond*



Plan of Earthwork on Sugar Hill, Wanborough.

Fig 2. Earthwork of former warren on the downland at Wanborough measuring 480 feet by 336 feet (146m $\times$ 120m), showing the surrounding bank and ditch, two small entrances and two surviving 'pillow mounds'. From *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*, 42 (1922-4), 248-9, with permission

coarse grass and bracken; and branches of elder and hazel from which they could nibble the bark were laid on the burrows, providing them with some protection against the elements. An example of the creation of artificial burrows for rabbits occurs in a legal dispute in 1551 when John Warneford, lord of the manor of Sevenhampton in the clay vale near Highworth, stated that he had made 'vii or eight severall berryes in Clappers upon xvi acres of land ... and replenished and noryshed the same [with] conyes only for the provision of his hows in Sevenhampton'.⁷ In a survey of the Earl of Hertford's park at Amesbury in 1609 'two round Coney berryes' were said to have been made and stocked with 'xiii Coople of Connyes putt into the grounde. All which xiii Coople of Connyes with their encrease did breede and feede therefrom'.⁸

Much care was taken to protect the rabbits from predators such as stoats, weasels and foxes, and there are many references to traps, 'falls', 'engines' and 'gins' for catching vermin before they could enter the warrens. Warrens were also enclosed with banks and fences in an attempt, not always successful, to prevent the rabbits from straying. The most common variety was the familiar wild rabbit, which was described by seventeenth-century warreners as 'gray'; some black rabbits were also kept and commanded a higher price. Warrens generally included a 'lodge' or dwelling in which the warrener and his family could live in order to protect the rabbits from poachers, who were an even greater danger than animal predators. Examination of the former warren site at Lydiard Millicent during the nineteenth century revealed the foundation of the warrener's lodge, surrounded by the 'pillow mounds' which had contained the rabbit burrows and by other earthworks which were identified as vermin traps.⁹

Although most Wiltshire warrens were on the light soils of the chalk downland, a few were on lower lying land, such as Lydiard Millicent, which is on clay within the former royal forest of Braydon. Warrens on the Longleat estate were especially vulnerable to poachers from nearby Warminster. In 1687, for example, a large crowd of men attacked one warren during the



Fig 3. Pillow mound at Hyam Farm near Malmesbury, part of the extensive system of earthworks belonging to a large warren established on Malmesbury Abbey estate which continued in use after the Dissolution. *Photograph:* Joseph Bettey



Fig 4. Another part of the former warren at Hyam Farm, near Malmesbury. *Photograph:* Joseph Bettey

daytime, threatening violence to the warrener and his wife, breaking the windows of the lodge and killing numerous rabbits within the warren. There were many similar incidents involving the poaching of both rabbits and deer.¹⁰ The present paper goes on to examine the evidence from manorial surveys, leases and legal disputes concerning the management, productivity, tenure and profitability of Wiltshire warrens, the marketing of the rabbits and the many disputes over the damage which they caused.

Much information about the facilities, extent and profitability of the warrens is provided by the surviving leases. The fact that such elaborate and expensive legal agreements were drawn up is itself an indication of the importance of warrens to the economy of the large estates which dominated most of the Wiltshire chalkland. A lease of the warren at Mildenhall granted by the lord of the manor, Sir Walter Hungerford, in 1586 refers to the lodge for the warrener, the specially constructed burrows or 'berryes' for the rabbits, the fencing and the 'Gynnes [gins] for the destruction of vermin' (fig 5). The warrener also had the right 'to cutt frythe [brushwood or undergrowth] to stragge [cover] the berryes' during harsh weather. The annual rent was 'foure hundred Couple of Conyes'. They were to be delivered to the landlord 'so that he kepe house any where within Thirtye miles of Mildenhall'; otherwise the tenant was to pay a yearly rent of £10. It is indicative of the productivity of warrens that such high rental could be demanded.¹¹

Even more detail is included in a lease for twelve years of a warren or 'Connigere' at Easton Royal in 1608. This was between Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, of Tottenham House in Savernake Forest, and two warreners, Michael Clarke, yeoman, and James Whithart, husbandman, of Easton Royal. The warren covered 150 acres (60 hectares) newly enclosed with a hedge, together with 'a lodge or dwelling house'. The tenants were to maintain and repair 'the boundes fences ... burrowes, banckes, and berryes, flapps, trappes and falls nowe beinge within or upon the same'. The annual rent was £5 in money and 500 couples of rabbits 'good, swete and mete to be served' to be delivered to the earl's house whenever the earl 'shall like best to chuse and appoint'. If the full complement of 500 couples were not demanded or delivered, the tenants were to pay ten pence per couple for the number lacking. The earl also reserved the right to depasture so many sheep or cattle on the warren each summer as his bailiff should think 'good and expedient'. At the end of the lease the tenants were to leave at least 600 rabbits on the warren as breeding stock.¹²

The site of this warren at Easton Royal is still known as Congrye Farm, and the fact that it is little more than two miles from the mansion at Tottenham Park explains an unusual addition to this lease. The term 'coney-catcher' was used by contemporaries for rogues, and undesirable characters were evidently attracted to warrens. The earl was anxious that such persons should not be established close to his house, and the lease specified that the tenants should not:

keepe any person or servants under them, to walke the said warren close or groundes which shalbe misliked by the said Erle, his heires or assignes, but shall from tyme to tyme during the said terme remove and putt off such service or attendance there every such person or servants whome it shall happen the said Erle, his heires or assignes to mislike of upon notice or warninge given by the said Erle, his heires or assignes of such their mislike.¹³

In 1624 the earl of Hertford also granted a twenty-one-year lease of a large warren at Durley to Thomas Cary, yeoman. As with the lease of Easton warren, it was thought worth going to the expense of an extremely long and complex lease, prepared by an attorney and beautifully produced by a clerk. Durley warren was situated on the edge of Tottenham Park and covered

William Jones, clerk moeth to hote for terme of his
 life of the grant of Sir Walter Hungerford knight
 be indenture made to John Jones his father deceased & to
 him the said William and Stephen Jones his brother
 likewise deceased dated in the feast of St. Michael.
 The twentieth Anno regis Elizabeth. It is All that warren
 Lodge game and slaughter of conyes to be in the
 pish of Mildenhall called by the name of Lureedge
 with all and singular appertinences to the same belonging
 For the therefore every of rent foure hundred
 couple of conyes to be spent at the mansion house
 of the lord so that he kepe house any where within
 the pish of Mildenhall to be fetched and
 carryed away at the charge of the lord his heirs
 and assigns the said finding unto those that

Fig 5. Record of the lease from Sir Walter Hungerford to William Jones of the 'warren, lodge, game and Slaughter of Conyes' at Mildenhall for an annual rent of 'foure hundred Couple of Conyes'. From Mildenhall manorial court book 1586, Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office 442/1. Photograph: Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office

more than 150 acres (60 hectares). It was fenced and included two lodges. The annual rent was 760 couples of rabbits to be delivered at the earl's mansion when required, but no more than twenty couples at any one time and no more than eighty couples in any one week. At the end of the lease a breeding stock of at least 400 couples was to be left in the warren. Evidently this number of rabbits was considered sufficient to produce the annual rental of 1,520 rabbits, as well as enough to provide a livelihood for the warrener and his servants. The lessee agreed to keep the 'burrowes, banckes, berryes, flaps, traps and falls in good repair', and was given licence to take timber from Savernake Forest for this purpose. He could also take ten 'reasonable and indifferent' cartloads of firewood each year from the Forest, and six 'reasonable and indifferent' cartloads of 'rowe', that is grass, bracken and brushwood, 'for the covering and dressing of the said berryes' during harsh weather.¹⁴

Similar leases were granted by Wiltshire landowners throughout the seventeenth century. A late seventeenth-century example concerns a warren in Burderop Park, Chiseldon. This was an agreement made in 1696 between the landowner, Oliver Calley, and Francis Vicars of Aldbourne. Vicars took a lease of the large warren, together with a lodge, for five years for an annual rent of £30 and the obligation to maintain the pale around the whole park. An indication of the scale of this warren is provided by the requirement that one thousand rabbits were to be left in the warren at the end of the lease, 'viewed and estimated by two indifferent men'. The burrows were to be carefully maintained, and left 'tenantable and not mangled or decayed'. The lessee was given licence to take 'convenient browse [ie bracken and gorse] for the Conies in hard weather'.¹⁵

EVIDENCE OF THE TRADE IN RABBITS

Many of the rabbits from Wiltshire warrens were no doubt sold at local markets, but large numbers were also sold to dealers for dispatch to London and other towns. Unfortunately, no record survives concerning most of these transactions, but some indication of the scale of this trade is provided by the evidence given in a legal dispute in 1624. The case was brought in the Court of Exchequer by the Crown against John Bayley of Reading, who was a wholesale dealer in rabbits and game. Bayley purchased rabbits from Wiltshire for the London market and also for sale in his retail shop in Reading, and he was charged with illegally buying and reselling rabbits and game from royal properties, especially from Aldbourne Chase. Evidence was given to the Court by Owen Remyston, a poulterer aged 44 years, from Little Allhallows, Gratiouse Street, London. He stated that Bayley was 'a buyer of Connyes by whole sale of many persons from theyr grounds' and told the Court that during the previous year Bayley had sold him 'sixe thousand gray connyes or thereabouts and of blacke connies five hundred or thereabouts'. For the grays Bayley charged £3 1s 8d and for the black coneys £5 0s 0d per hundred delivered at Reading. Bayley had also sold partridges and pheasants to him.

That many of the rabbits sold by Bayley came from warrens in Wiltshire is also clear from the evidence given by William Longe, poulterer aged 30 years, from Longlane in the parish of St Sepulchre, London. He stated that during the previous year he had made several journeys to Wiltshire each week with two or more horses to fetch rabbits for Bayley. Each horseload comprised 300 rabbits, and he had brought loads from warrens at Aldbourne, Lydiard and Ramsbury. He further deposed that other carriers also fetched rabbits from Wiltshire on Bayley's behalf, delivering some to his shop in Reading and the majority to poulterers in London.¹⁶

DISPUTES CONCERNING WARRENS

Two principal factors led to the decline in the number of warrens. The first was the increasing profitability of wheat and barley and the consequent desire of landlords and farmers to extend their arable acreage or to provide extra grazing for the sheep flocks which were folded on the arable land. Much land previously regarded as waste or downland, suitable only for rough grazing, was brought into cultivation or profitably used as pasture. Associated with this was the second factor, which was the difficulty of confining the rabbits within a warren, and the damage they caused to neighbouring crops and woodland. Before the introduction of wire netting in the nineteenth century rabbits could not be prevented from escaping, there were constant complaints, and it was difficult for warren-keepers to live in harmony with their farming neighbours.

The long-established rabbit warren within the park surrounding the royal palace of Clarendon near Salisbury was abandoned for a quite different reason. This was destroyed by royal command of James I who was greatly addicted to hunting and frequently hunted deer within the park at Clarendon where he wanted a smooth surface on which his horse could gallop without fear of stumbling into rabbit holes ('coneyboroughes'). The warren within the park was said to be highly productive and lucrative; it had been leased by the earl of Pembroke, who was ordered by the king to destroy all the rabbits. This is clear from an Exchequer Commission appointed in 1612 to enquire into the condition of the park, the park fences, woodland and deer. Among the witnesses who gave evidence to the Commission was William Phillips, aged 42, who was the mayor of Wilton. He stated that he had heard:

the Kinges Majestie commande the right honorable the now Earle of Pembroke that the game of Conyes should be destroyed because the same by reason of the Conyboroughes was dangerous for his Majestie to ride after his delight and sport, as alsoe would bee then better for the increase and preservation of his Majesties deere there.

Another witness was John Fussell, gentleman aged 50, who had been appointed a keeper in the park by Queen Elizabeth. He had also heard the king order the destruction of the rabbits, and added that 'hee did likewise heare it reported that the cause wherefore his Majestie would have the same Conies destroyed was by reason of a fall which his Majestie had taken by a Conyborough in some other parke or place elsewhere'.¹⁷

Some warrens in south Wiltshire were abandoned and ploughed up during the early seventeenth century for the cultivation of woad. This highly profitable crop, used as a dye to produce the blue that was the basis of all the dark colours, had previously been imported. It began to be cultivated by clothiers from Salisbury during the late sixteenth century, and rapidly became popular. In 1594 a three-year lease of 65 acres (26 hectares) of Ashcombe warren in the parish of Berwick St John was obtained by the Salisbury clothier, George Bedford, in order to grow woad. By the terms of the lease the rabbits were to be allowed to remain on the rest of the warren, covering some 200 acres (81 hectares), and independent assessors were to certify that '500 couples of coneyes' remained on the expiry of the lease.¹⁸ Early in the seventeenth century the wealthy Salisbury lawyer, Henry Sherfield, joined with George Bedford and others in the cultivation of woad in the large warren at Blagdon Park on the border of Wiltshire and Dorset.¹⁹ At the same time Thomas Marshall, haberdasher, and Robert Eyre, clothier, both of Salisbury, took over a former 'conniger' or warren at Laverstock for the cultivation of woad.²⁰

The production of rabbits ceased on many other warrens because of protests and pressure from neighbours over the damage caused to their crops. At the Duchy of Cornwall manor of

Mere in 1617 the surveyor, John Norden, reported that: 'There was a warren upon a downe called Swincombe which by the petition of the tenants was destroyed and they were to paie £4 for a rente in lieue thereof'. He added that: 'They have discontinued the rent for some years past ... to be recovered'.²¹ The large warren at Durley on the edge of Savernake Forest, for which a rental of 1,520 rabbits was paid, was also the subject of constant complaints from neighbours throughout the seventeenth century. In 1633 all those with grazing rights on the downland surrounding the warren were granted licence to kill all rabbits which escaped and to destroy all burrows which the rabbits dug on the sheep commons. The warren itself, covering almost 150 acres (60 hectares), continued, however, until it was finally abandoned and the land enclosed in 1703. A farm was later established on the site, and continues to be known as Warren Farm.²²

As mentioned earlier, the most famous of all the Wiltshire warrens was the large area within Aldbourne Chase. As early as 1378 the abbess of Lacock was recorded as receiving four dozen conies each year from Aldbourne in compensation for damage done on her adjacent lands there.²³ Many thousands of rabbits were produced there during the sixteenth century, and the warren was described by the royal surveyor, John Norden, in a Survey of Aldbourne in 1617. Norden's doubts as to whether a rabbit warren was the most profitable use of land were to be echoed by others throughout the seventeenth century:

There is a spacious warren of Conys in grant by lease to the Earle of Pembroke, but nowe in the use and disposition of Thomas Walronde, Esquire. The rent to the Prince is said to be per annum – [blank]. The number of Conyes are said to be much increased and to annoy the tenants much in their corne and grasse and take the benefit of a large circuit of barren land which yet might be converted to much better and more intensive profit but in the conversion seemeth greate difficultie.²⁴

Norden went on to describe the influential Aldbourne resident who had subleased the warren from the earl of Pembroke. This was 'Mr Thomas Walrond who is alsoe farmer of the Mannor, Steward, Bailie and Woodward who having all absolute commaund hath all subjecte to his disposing. Hee is an honest gent and of manie friends that are tennantes to the Mannor'.²⁵

During the Civil War the tenants of Aldbourne seized the opportunity to destroy much of the warren. In 1652 an agreement was reached with the earl of Pembroke whereby a large part of the warren was to be converted to arable, but the agreement soon broke down and disputes continued.²⁶ In 1671 the earl complained to the House of Lords that 'divers husbandmen of Aldbourne' had taken possession of his warren and damaged his lodges. He claimed that the damage amounted to more than £2,000 in value. There is no indication that the House of Lords took any action.²⁷ Large numbers of rabbits continued to be produced, and at the end of the seventeenth century there was said to be a stock of 8,000 rabbits, increasing annually to 24,000.²⁸

Aldbourne warren also witnessed a dispute of a different kind during the years 1618–21. As noted above, Norden's Survey of 1617 revealed that William, earl of Pembroke, had secured a lease of Aldbourne Chase from the Crown, and had sublet the warren to Thomas Walrond of Aldbourne. Just outside the bounds of the Chase and adjoining Walrond's warren was another smaller warren at Upham, known as Hayleaze. This warren was managed by Henry Martin and his sons, who complained to the Court of Star Chamber that Walrond and his servants had attempted to destroy their warren by enticing away the rabbits. They alleged that Walrond's

servants had made holes in the hedge around their warren so that their rabbits could escape and that they did:

wickedlie laye ferrets dung and other noisome and hateful things to Conyes in the holles of the burrowes within the same warren [ie Hayleaze] to th'end to drive awaye your said subjects Conyes and game and make them forsak his said warren.

In his reply Walrond made numerous counterclaims, including the allegation that Martin and his sons had hunted and killed many rabbits at night within the Chase and had enticed rabbits from Walrond's warren to occupy new burrows which they had made for that purpose in Hayleaze:

And when they had ended their hunting they did whoope and hallowe and beate the hedges and bushes with their staves and pull theire dogs by the ears of purpose to make them Crye out suffer them to hunt with open mouths [ie without muzzles] that with the noyse thereof they might fright, dryve away and disturbe the said Chase Conyes from their feedings.²⁹

When attempts had been made to prevent them they 'have threatened some that yf they did stoppe them they would make some of their gutts hang about their heeles, or words to that effecte'.³⁰

The parties involved were typical of the men who leased rabbit warrens. They were prosperous freeholders from families long established at Aldbourne. Henry Martin was described as 'Esquire', and as well as property in Aldbourne, he also leased lands at Swindon, Snap and Wanborough. Thomas Walrond is listed as 'gentleman' and was evidently highly influential. The whole dispute and the costs of the inconclusive legal proceedings indicate the strength of feeling aroused by any threat to the considerable profits which could be made from the trade in rabbits.

The evidence given by witnesses incidentally illustrates the various methods by which rabbits were caught in the warrens. Many were caught by being driven into long nets called 'hayes' erected at night between the burrows and the feeding grounds; others were caught using ferrets and purse nets or were taken by dogs, which were normally muzzled to prevent damage to the carcasses.

The warrens at Aldbourne remained profitable and were actively managed throughout the seventeenth century. The survival of probate inventories for two warreners provides evidence of the scale of the trade in rabbits at the end of the century. Benjamin Stroud of Dudmore Lodge, Aldbourne, who died in 1689, was described in his inventory as 'Warriner'. His total wealth of £189 17s 0d included 'Coneys on the ground' valued at £80, and as well as farm stock and crops, he possessed a gun valued at 12s 0d and two 'gins' or traps worth 10s 0d. John Gilbert of Aldbourne who died in 1698 possessed a total wealth of £113 4s 6d. This included 'The stock of Rabbatts in the Warin' valued at £40, together with 'The neats [nets] and guns and a spade and other materials that belongeth to hunting' valued at £2 6s 6d.³¹

DAMAGE CAUSED BY RABBITS

The stream of complaints over the devastation wrought by escaping rabbits on corn crops and woodland came from all over the Wiltshire chalklands and from the higher land in neighbouring Somerset and Dorset. In 1660 the commoners of Mendip presented a petition to

the Lord Chancellor, complaining that there were so many warrens 'which yet continue fully stored with coneyes' that the common grazing for their cattle was much diminished 'which will be to the utter ruin of them and their poore families'.³²

A long dispute between warreners and farmers over the warrens at Hippenscombe and Oakhill, on the earl of Hertford's manor lying on the eastern border of Wiltshire, continued for much of the seventeenth century and is typical of what happened on many Wiltshire warrens. It ended with the final conversion of the warren to arable and pasture. Here, as elsewhere, the controversy centred on the damage to cornland and woodland caused by the rabbits, and the question of whether the land could not more profitably be used to graze sheep flocks, which could be folded on the arable land and increase the yields of corn. In a lease of the land at Hippenscombe in 1633 the tenant undertook to destroy all the rabbits in the warren. Evidently this was not carried out, since by the 1640s the sale of rabbits was said to produce £130 per annum for the tenant. In a claim for tithe on the rabbits made in 1658 the annual income from the warren was estimated to be £160. It was alleged that the rabbits had 'multiplied exceedingly' during the Civil War and that they had destroyed all the woods and coppices around the warren. When the farmhouse and buildings were destroyed by fire during the 1670s there was said to be 'not one timber tree on the premises' which could be used in rebuilding.

The warren continued to exist until 1698 when the lease reverted to Thomas, earl of Ailesbury. He granted a new lease to a group that included Edward Lisle of Crux Easton, Hampshire, an agricultural pioneer and writer and author of the influential work *Observations in Husbandry*, which ran to several editions during the eighteenth century. The new lessees took the view that the 160 acres (65 hectares) of warren could be more profitably used as sheep grazing, and that an enlarged sheep flock would be advantageous for folding on the greatly increased arable acreage that they had created. When their landlord objected they brought a case before the Court of Chancery in 1709. Depositions were taken from six respected local witnesses who agreed that the rabbits had done great damage to crops, grassland and coppices, and that using the 160 acres of warren for sheep grazing would be a great improvement and in the landlord's best interest:

... that preserving of the unploughed part of the said land called the Warren for a sheep sleight [ie grazing] onely will be an Additional Improvement of the same Farme, but maintayneing of Coneyes on the said unploughed part, the contrary.³³

Soon after 1710 the rabbits were evidently destroyed and the property was described as 'all that the Warren knowne by the name of Hippenscombe Warren sometime stock'd with Conyes'.³⁴ A similar process led to the abandonment of the majority of Wiltshire warrens during the eighteenth century as the price of grain and other agricultural products increased, so that by the end of the century very little remained of what had been an important and lucrative trade.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CSPD	Calendar of State Papers (Domestic)	RCHM	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments
EHSD	English Heritage Scheduling Document	SRO	Somerset Record Office
HRO	Hampshire Record Office	VCH	Victoria County History
PRO	Public Record Office (now the National Archives)	WCC	Wiltshire County Council
		WSRO	Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office

NOTES

1. Sheail 1978, 343–5; Thirsk 1997, 38–9. Extracts from some of the documentary sources used in this paper are included in Bettley forthcoming.
2. *VCH Wiltshire*, IV, 1959, 18; XII, 1983, 78–9; Bond 1994, 146.
3. WCC, Sites and Monuments Record; Poulett Scrope 1852, 235.
4. PRO PROB 11/74, will of Sir John Young 1598.
5. Aubrey 1847, 59.
6. Kerridge 1953, 11–12.
7. PRO STAC 3/4/9, printed in Warneford 1993, 50–1.
8. WSRO 283/6, Book D: surveys of Amesbury 1605–9.
9. EHSD SM34202.
10. Hainsworth 1992, 291.
11. WSRO 442/1, fols 260v–261: lease of Mil-denhall warren 1586.
12. WSRO 9/15/17: lease of Easton Royal warren 1608.
13. Ibid.
14. WSRO 9/22/10: lease of Durley warren 1624.
15. WSRO 1178/50: lease of Burderop Park warren, Chiseldon 1696.
16. PRO E134/22, James I/Michaelmas 21; E134/22, James I/Michaelmas 37.
17. PRO E178/4728, Exchequer Commission to inquire into the state of Clarendon Park 1612.
18. HRO 44M69/L28/3; L44/17.
19. HRO 44M69/L44/16–18; Bettley 1978, 122–7.
20. PRO E163/15/1.
21. PRO LR2/207, fols 24–24v: survey of Mere 1617.
22. WSRO 9/22/19: lease of Durley warren 1623; WSRO 1044/7: licence to destroy coneys at Durley Common 1633; WSRO 1300/36; WSRO 9/7/43: survey and sketch plan of Durley 1707; *VCH Wiltshire*, XVI, 1999, 78–80.
23. Rogers 1978, 78.
24. PRO LR207, fols 100–108: survey of the lands of the Prince of Wales 1617.
25. Ibid.
26. CPSD 1660–85, 278; *VCH Wiltshire*, XII, 1983, 79.
27. RCHM 8th Report, 1881, Appendix 162–3, House of Lords MSS.
28. *VCH Wiltshire*, XII, 1983, 79.
29. PRO STAC 8/212/6.
30. Ibid.
31. WSRO P3/S/724; P3/G/367. I am grateful to Robert Jago of WSRO for drawing my attention to these inventories.
32. SRO DD/SE49; DD/S/WH Box 30/46; DD/SK18/S135/4a; PRO Chancery Depositions 1686, 26/730–4. For Dorset see PRO DL44/103; DL44/570.
33. WSRO 9/17/34.
34. WSRO 9/17/24.

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LOVING CUPS AND GRACE CUPS

Claude Blair, FSA*

The paper discusses the ceremony of the Loving Cup that follows the dinners of many City of London livery companies. It concludes that, far from being of Saxon origin, as has been widely believed, it was a Romantic revival of the late eighteenth century derived, almost certainly, from the medieval use of grace cups.

Many City Companies have the custom of circulating the loving cup during their livery dinners, usually after Grace at the end of the actual meal.¹ Some of the menus printed for the occasion incorporate an account of the custom and its alleged origins, a characteristic example being that until recently used by the Armourers and Brasiers' Company:

The Loving Cup

The ceremony, which dates from the time of King Alfred, is still a splendid feature of the Hall-feasts of the City and of the Inns of Court.

The cups are of silver or silver-gilt with a cover and are filled with spiced wine immemorially termed 'Sack'. Immediately after dinner and Grace, the Master and Wardens drink to their guests a hearty welcome. The cups are then passed round the tables and each person after he has drunk, applies the [accompanying] napkin to the lip of the cup before he passes it to his neighbour.

While the drinker is occupied his neighbour on one side stands holding the cover of the cup in his right or dagger hand and his neighbour on the other side remains standing to protect him.

This custom is to ensure that the drinker is protected from treachery like that practised by Elfrida on the unsuspecting King Edward the Martyr at Corfe Castle who was slain while drinking. In Saxon days an enemy was sometimes stabbed when both hands were engaged holding the heavy drinking horns then used and whilst the arms were raised leaving exposed the vulnerable frontal sides of the body. Curiously enough it is anatomically not so effective to 'stab in the back' because of the tough wall of muscle which has to be penetrated.

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It is a constant source of argument which way the protector should face. At some Company banquets he turns his back on the drinker and at others he faces his back.

A ceremony that has remained in continuous use – by implication, in the City itself – since the time of King Alfred (877–91), and the story, with its corroborative anatomical detail of the treacherous Saxons persuading their enemies to come drinking in order to be able to stab them unawares, must appeal to everyone with the slightest feeling for the romance of history. Indeed, the account just quoted reads more like a passage from an early nineteenth-century Gothic novel than a statement of a sober historical fact and appears altogether too romantic to be entirely believable. Sadly, investigation only serves to confirm these doubts.

An obvious starting point for an investigation of any subject like the present one is that mine of antiquarian lore, John Brand's *Observations on Popular Antiquities*, of which the first edition appeared in 1777, a second, much enlarged by the addition of numerous notes by [Sir] Henry Ellis, in 1813, and a conflated version of this in 1877. None mentions the loving cup as such, but the following information about life in England under the Danes as it appears in its final form, under 'Pledging', in the last edition, reveals the origins of the modern ceremony:²

The word pledge Blount³ thinks is most probably derived from the French *Pleige*, a surety or gage. Some deduce the drinking expression 'I'll pledge you' from the time when the Danes bore sway in this land. It having been the common practice of those ferocious people to stab the natives in the act of drinking, with knives or daggers, people would not drink in their company unless someone present undertook to be their pledge or surety that they should receive no hurt while they were indulging.

Thus, in *Timon of Athens* we read:

'If I Were a huge man, I should fear to drink at meals,
Lest they should spy my Wind pipe's dangerous Notes;
Great men should drink *with Harness on their throats*'.

The allusion, Grey explains,⁴ is to the pledge exacted in the Danish period. Others affirm the true sense of the word to be that, if the person drunk unto was not disposed to drink himself, he would procure another as a pledge to do it for him. Strutt confirms the former of these opinions with the observation that, in the old mode of pledging each other, he who was going to drink asked any one of the company near him whether he would pledge him; whereupon the invited one, answering that he would, held up his knife or sword for his protection while he drank; for while a man is drinking he necessarily is in an unguarded posture, and exposed to the treacherous stroke of a hidden or secret enemy. But the custom continues Strutt, is said to have originated from the death of Edward the Martyr, who by the contrivance of his stepmother was treacherously stabbed in the back while drinking.

Henry's *History*⁵ refers to this subject in these terms: 'If an Englishman presumed to drink in the presence of a Dane, without his express permission, it was esteemed so great a mark of disrespect that nothing but his instant death could expiate. Nay, the English were so intimidated that they would not adventure to drink even when they were invited, until the Danes had pledged their honour for their safety; which introduced the Custom of pledging each other in drinking, of which some vestiges are still remaining among the common people in the North of England, where the Danes were most predominant.'

Strutt, who is cited as the source for the story about the origins of ‘the old mode of pledging each other’, was the distinguished antiquary-artist and author Joseph Strutt (1749–1802).⁶ The precise source amongst his numerous publications is the first volume of *Horda Angelcynnan, or, A Compleat View of the Manners, Customs, Arms, Habits, etc. of the Inhabitants of England*, which had appeared in 1774, three years before the first edition of John Brand’s own work. The quotation from Brand incorporates what Strutt says on the subject almost verbatim, but omits his last sentence, which cites one of his illustrations, showing a feasting scene from a well-known English psalter of c 1050,⁷ as confirmatory evidence for the Anglo-Saxon origins of the pledging ritual (fig 1). This shows three men seated behind a laden table, the one in the middle with a cup in his right hand, and the other hand raised as if in Benediction towards the man on his left, who turns his head towards him. The latter holds a knife raised vertically in his right hand and gestures to the left with his left hand, in which he holds a fish, while a kneeling servant proffers a dish and a spit charged with food to him. Strutt writes about it:

The above delineation seems perfectly well to agree with the reported custom; the middle figure is addressing himself to his companion, who tells him that he pledges him, holding up his knife in token of his readiness to assist and protect him.⁸

The knife that the companion holds, however, is obviously a domestic one which he was about to use – like the third diner at the other end of the table – to cut a serving from whatever is on the proffered spit, when his attention was distracted by the man with the cup. There is no obvious reason, in fact, for thinking that the latter is doing anything more than addressing a remark to his neighbour, or, at the most, offering to drink his health. The whole story must therefore be dismissed as Romantic nonsense!

Strutt does not actually use the term ‘loving cup’, though he refers to the ceremony now associated with it as being current in his own day. The earliest reference to the term I have been able to trace is one of 14 October 1808, cited in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, to ‘Loving Cups’ being supplied for the Lord Mayor of London’s Banquet of that year. The form of the reference clearly indicates that it must have been well known by that date: it is likely, therefore, to have come into use in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

A letter, signed ‘Paul Gemsage’,⁹ on the etymology of the word ‘bumper’ – in the sense of a brim-full drinking-vessel – published in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* in 1759¹⁰ not only provides negative evidence for the non-existence of the term ‘loving cup’ at that date, but gives the impression that even the ceremony associated with it, under whatever name, was not then generally known. The relevant passage is as follows:

The jolly toper is so fond of the thing we call a *bumper*, that he troubles not himself about the name, and so long as the liquor is but fine and clear, cares not a farthing in how deep an obscurity the etymology is involved. The sober antiquarian, on the contrary, being prone to etymology, contemplates the sparkling contents of a full glass with much less delight, than he does the meaning, the occasion, and the original of the name. I, Sir, who profess myself to be one of the latter tribe, am for discarding the vulgar original of the name, and for substituting something more plausible in its place. The common opinion, (I call it the common opinion, because I have heard it from so many) is, that the *bumper* took its name from the *grace-cup*; our Roman Catholic ancestors, say they, after their meals, always drinking the Pope’s health, in this form, *au bon Pere*. But there are great objections to this; as first, the Pope was not the *bon Pere*,

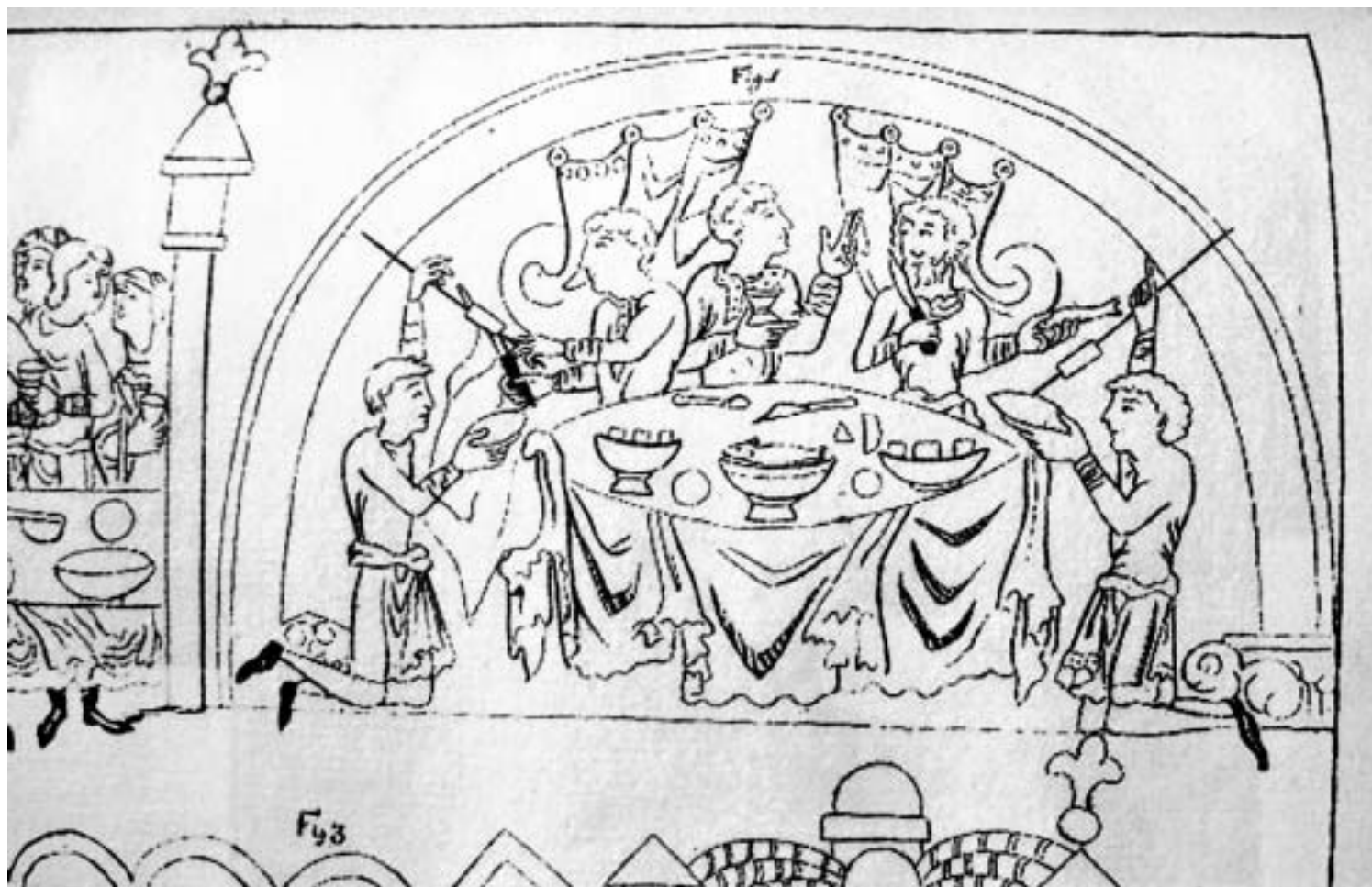


Fig 1. Engraving of a scene from an English psalter of c 1050 (British Library, Cott MS Tiberius C VI), from J Strutt, *Horda Angel-cynnan*, 1774. Photograph: Society of Antiquaries of London

but the *saint Pere*, amongst the elder inhabitants of this kingdom, the attribute of sanctity being in a manner appropriated to the Pope of Rome and his see. Again, the grace cup, which went round of course, after every repast, did not imply any thing extraordinary or a full glass. Then, *3dly*, let us consider a little the nature of the grace cup. Drinking glasses were not in use, at the time here supposed, for the grace cup was a large vessel, proportioned to the number of the society, which went round the table, the guests drinking out of the same cup one after another; Virgil describes something like it, when speaking of the entertainment Queen Dido gave to Aeneas ... The feast was ended, the cup went round after it, and the health was, That Jupiter would shower down his blessings, and that peace and concord might reign between the parties, the Trojans and the Tyrians; which leads me to remark, *4thly*, and lastly, that there is no proof of the fact, that the grace cup was the Pope's health. At St. John's college, Cambridge, the president, or his *locum tenens*, gave the *old house*, meaning prosperity to the college. But then this, it may be said, was since the reformation, therefore, to go higher, at Mr Newman's of Westbere, near Canterbury, in Kent, I saw the grace cup of John Foch, alias Essex, the last Abbot of St. Austin's, Canterbury¹¹... It was mounted with silver gilt, much in the manner as the shells of cocoa nuts commonly are and was very neat. Foch, the abbot, was a man of note in his time ... Mrs Newman was a Foch of the same family, and by that means the cup came to Mr Newman. Now the inscription round the neck of this cup, in old letters of the time, is this,

*welcome ze be
dryng for charitie*

This cup is too small to be a vessel employed in the common refectory of that large foundation, and probably was only used in the abbot's own apartment. But now, if the Pope's health was not usually drank, after dinner, by the religious societies, and I think there is no proof that it ever was, we can much less expect it should go round in those jovial meetings of the laity, where bumpers were introduced.

If the loving cup and its ceremony had been in common use in 1759 it is difficult to believe that Gemesage would not have alluded to them in connection with his explanation of what a grace cup was. It will also be noticed, incidentally, that he always refers to the grace cup in the past tense.

Gemesage was, in fact, correct in stating that a ceremony like that now associated with the loving cup was a very old one, and also in suggesting a connection with the grace cup. At the ancient Greek symposium, after the first dinner course, the guests passed round a goblet of wine from which each person poured a few drops on the ground and then drank a little, while at the Jewish ritual meal the grace after eating (enjoined in Deut 8 : 10) is accompanied by a cup of wine. The Authorized Version of the Bible says that at the Last Supper Jesus 'took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves' (Luke 22 : 17), but the late fourteenth-century Wycliffe Bible, which is a translation of the Latin *Vulgate*, gives this passage as 'Whanne he hadde take the cup he did gravis, and seide, Take ye, and depart ye among you'. It seems clear, therefore, that the loving-cup ceremony had its origins in a grace ritual, which no doubt had symbolic connections with the ritual of the Eucharist.

The loving cup should therefore really be called a 'grace cup', a name that refers to its use rather than to its actual form. The account of the monastery of Durham immediately before the Dissolution of the Monasteries by Henry VIII, known as *The Rites of Durham*, says, for

instance, that there was there 'a great mazer called the GRACE-CUP ... which did service to the Monks every day, after grace was said, to drink in around the table'.¹² The large fifteenth-century mazer, now at York Minster, which is inscribed to the effect that Archbishop Richard Scrope (d 1405) had granted forty days of pardon to anyone who drinks from it is an exceptional example of this category.¹³ Often, however, a standing cup was used as a grace cup, and one suspects that this may have been the function of the magnificent fourteenth-century 'King John' Cup at King's Lynn after its acquisition by the Town Corporation, and the various Tudor-shaped cups with inscriptions relating to drinking.¹⁴ Other civic examples are the Pickering Cup of 1607, belonging to Westminster Corporation, and that given to Lichfield Corporation in 1666/7 by Elias Ashmole.¹⁵ Such cups are still used for this purpose, but, for obvious practical reasons, the large two-handled form has been the one most favoured since its introduction in the late seventeenth century.

The actual ritual of the loving cup as it is now performed no doubt developed from one of the many toasting rituals in which drinkers have always indulged.

NOTES

1. This is a much expanded version of a note in my introduction to the catalogue of the exhibition *The Goldsmith and The Grape: Silver in the Service of Wine*, held in Goldsmiths Hall, 11–28 July 1983.
2. Brand 1877, 491–2. This is an expanded version of information given in the 1777 edition, 223–43. See also the 1813 edition, II, 223–37. A three-volume edition of Brand's book, edited by W C Hazlitt, that appeared in 1870 is not relevant to the present study.
3. Blount 1681, 500.
4. Grey 1754, II, 120, 161.
5. Henry 1774, 539, citing Pontoppidan 1742, 207–9.
6. See the entry for him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.
7. British Library, Cott MS Tiberius C VI (not VIII as given by Strutt). Temple 1976, no. 98, 115–17.
8. Strutt 1774, I, 49 and pl XVI (1).
9. The pen name of the distinguished antiquary, Samuel Pegge the Elder (1704–96), of whose name it is an anagram. See his entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.
10. *Gentleman's Magazine*, XXIX (1759), 270–2.
11. Potts 1923. The cup was given by Mrs W C R Randolph to St Augustine's College, Canterbury, on 14 December 1893. I am grateful to Miss S M Hare, FSA, for the information that it now belongs to the King's School, Canterbury. The wording of the inscription suggests that it might have had a function similar to that of the *Willkommenbecher* ('cups of welcome') owned by many old families and former craft guilds in Germany.
12. Raine 1842, 68. A mazer was a drinking bowl made of maple (*mazer*) wood.
13. A Latin inventory of the guild of Corpus Christi, York, dated 2 October 1465, in which the mazer appears, gives the additional information that to receive the award the drinker must be 'truly penitent and confessed' and should drink 'soberly yet with moderation, and not excessively ... [but] with a pure mind'. See Hope 1887, 146–9.
14. Penzer 1957–8.
15. Jewitt and Hope 1895, II, 161, 201–2, 314; Alexander and Binski 1987, no. 541.

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JOSEPH SIM EARLE, FSA, AND HIS BEQUEST TO THE SOCIETY

George McHardy, FSA*

The cataloguing of the Earle Collection of prints and drawings in 2001–2 prompted an enquiry into Earle himself. This paper sets out the results of that enquiry, outlines what was done in cataloguing the collection and seeks to draw wider attention to the nature and content of the bequest.

On 13 January 1893 the Revd Edmund Farrer proposed Joseph Sim Earle (fig 1) for election to the Society, and he was duly elected a Fellow on 8 June of that year. The certificate gives Earle's occupation as 'Gentleman', his address as 6 Kensington Palace Gardens, and his qualification as 'Attachment to the study of history and antiquities', a description quite commonly found on certificates of the time.¹

Farrer (1848–1935)² was a noted antiquary and his acquaintance with Earle perhaps began about 1885; for Earle subscribed to the first volume (1887) of Farrer's *The Church Heraldry of Norfolk*. That Farrer in his youth hunted and shot³ might, as we shall see, have bearing on how, by 1903, Earle came to be '[his] great friend, who helped me to collect material'.⁴

Earle's election was supported by Edwin Owen Tudor,⁵ James Heywood,⁶ Andrew White Tuer⁷ and Herbert Jones,⁸ four Fellows of great diversity who had, so far as I have been able to

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Fig 1. Joseph Sim Earle, FSA (1839–1912). Oil on canvas (1,114 × 740mm), by Lance Calkin, c 1884(?). *Source*: Society of Antiquaries of London, Picture Collection Add S.86

ascertain, no connection with Earle except perhaps proximity of residence and similarity of social background.

In his will,⁹ Earle expressed the desire ‘to be buried in the family vault at Kensal Green’ cemetery, in London, where indeed he was interred on 23 October 1912¹⁰ beneath a huge granite slab with convex top inscribed simply EARLE. On its edge his grandfather is said to be ‘William Earle of York’, *tout court*. Earle’s father is shown to be William’s second son, Joseph ‘of Kensington Palace Gardens’ (23 August 1803–26 May 1860),¹¹ and his mother, Anna, second daughter of the late John Sim (23 July 1811–9 January 1903).¹² Earle himself was their

eldest son and his date of birth, hitherto unknown to the Society, is given on the edge of the slab as 26 September 1839. York City Archives have been unable to trace any Earle that might fit this information concerning Joseph Sim Earle.¹³

The road in London named Kensington Palace Gardens was laid out in the 1840s.¹⁴ Earle's father was granted a lease on No. 6 in March 1845.¹⁵ The building was completed by April 1846 and Joseph Earle and his household moved in, into a road that, occupied by an aristocracy of wealth rather than of birth, had already by the 1860s come to be called 'Millionaires' Row'. No. 6 was to be Earle's home until the death of his mother, when he moved to 11 Pembridge Gardens.¹⁶ From there he moved in 1910 to 30 Pembridge Square,¹⁷ where he was living at the time of his death.

In the Crown Estate records there is a letter of 29 May 1845 sent by Joseph Earle from 'Frederick's Place, Brixton hill'¹⁸ and in the 1851 census return¹⁹ he is described as 'Timber merchant'. Despite this, no trace can be found of the name Earle in the Lambeth archive collections.²⁰ The son was not at home on the day of the 1861 census;²¹ but the 1871 census return²² shows Earle as having succeeded his father as 'Timber merchant' and as having been born in Surrey, amplified in the 1881 census return²³ to Lambeth, Surrey. By the time of the 1891 census²⁴ he is described as 'Retired timber merchant', aged fifty-one, and still unmarried, which he remained until death.

Earle is said in the *Essex Review*²⁵ to have been Commodore of the Brightlingsea Yacht Club, but that seems to be incorrect.²⁶ What is certain is that Earle was elected to membership of the Royal Thames Yacht Club on 6 May 1868 and remained a member until his death²⁷ and that he was a member also of the Royal Harwich and Royal London Yacht Clubs, of which last he was elected Commodore in 1878.²⁸ It seems indeed that Earle was yachtsman first and antiquary second, and that it was a mutual interest in sport and the open air that helped draw him and Farrer together. The two men would sail along the Essex and Suffolk coasts and, when in port, visit the churches of the hinterland²⁹ – Earle all the time practising his talent as a painter in watercolours (fig 2). And election to Fellowship of the Society might give him something of that status which, for all his relative wealth,³⁰ he perhaps thought his lack of a gentlemanly education³¹ and trade background denied him. He seems certainly to have been proud of his Fellowship: he uses 'FSA' in yachting circles,³² he gives the Society first refusal (over the British Museum) of his collection of books and prints, and he is described as 'FSA' on the family vault.

The trips in coastal waters were made in *Ianthe*,³³ Earle's thirteen-ton cutter yacht; for cruising he used the ninety-eight-ton ketch *Leah*,³⁴ which he bought in 1876. But he set out, it seems, as a racing yachtsman – and as a highly successful one. In 1867 he bought the forty-eight-ton cutter *Sphinx*.³⁵ On 1 June 1868 he won first prize in the first race organized by the New Thames Yacht Club, and the following year in a remarkable feat scooped first prize in the Royal London and the Royal Thames Yacht Clubs' matches, as well as in the New Thames Yacht Club's regatta – all within the one week.³⁶

Earle died on 18 October 1912 and his bequest to the Society was reported to Council on 13 November 1912,³⁷ when it was resolved to accept the prints and drawings but to ask the Executive Committee to make recommendations regarding the books. A little over a month later, on 18 December,³⁸ Council approved the committee's recommendation that 'the Society accept ... all those books marked in the catalogue of the collection by Mr [Mill] Stephenson & the Assistant Secretary as not being in the Society's Library'.³⁹ The 'catalogue of the collection' no doubt refers to the two big volumes – one for each county – in which Earle kept record of his collection. Prints and drawings are listed in the front of the catalogues, books at



Fig 2. Brightlingsea (Essex): inscribed (verso) 'nr Mr Aldous shipyard', and dated on sheet 17 March 1905. Watercolour (105 × 175mm), by Earle himself. Source: Earle Collection E3, 21(a)

the back. The various markings in pencil on the lists of books are doubtless those of Mill Stephenson and the Assistant Secretary, but their meaning is uncertain and, since the books have been dispersed throughout the library, it is difficult now to know how many books the Society acquired. But those with the special Earle Bequest bookplate in them that have been tracked down indicate that it was at least ninety-one, in addition to the first twenty-one volumes of the *Essex Review*.

The lists in the catalogues show that Earle's library consisted of some 121 Essex books and 174 Suffolk books, making about 300 in all. It is impossible here to outline the variety in date and rarity, interest and scope even of the ninety-odd books certainly acquired by the Society: it is as though, when not sailing, Earle was buying up everything he could lay his hands on concerning the two counties. The earliest item in his Essex collection is now in the manuscript collection⁴⁰ and is a copy (made perhaps for the Suffolk antiquary William Stevenson Fitch (1792–1856))⁴¹ of part of the journal of a tour through parts of Suffolk and Essex made in 1711 by Sir James Thornhill (1675–1734). The earliest items in his Suffolk collection are *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Stephen Fox* (1717) and part of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. Most of the books now in the Society's library are signed – always in pencil – by Earle (invariably with 'FSA' added) and sometimes they are dated, usually only with the year but occasionally with a location also. The dates range from 1897 to 1907, though his copy of Henry Davy's *Architectural Antiquities of Suffolk* (1827) is dated 1894. The books are all inscribed 'Ent^d' (in his catalogues, that is)

and, like many of the prints and drawings, have what appears perhaps to be an acquisition number, though there is nothing in the bequest to tell what the numbers in fact represent; they certainly do not link in any way with the entries in Earle's catalogues. Occasionally, there is a bookseller's note on the scarcity of the volume and, rather more often, a price; more rarely, there is even the cutting from the bookseller's list. For John Wodderspoon's *Guide to Ipswich* (1842), already 'Very scarce' when he bought it, Earle paid 4s 6d.

The two boxes of Earle's considerable collection of maps contain seventy-three Essex items and seventy-seven Suffolk. Again, they are collected from every possible source, and not a few have the price marked on them. One Essex map bears the stamp 'Hull Police Library' and prices range from 6d to the 4s 6d that Earle paid for Emanuel Bowen's *Suffolk Divided into its Hundreds* (1753). Saxton, Norden, Speed, Blaeu, Jansson, Blome, Morden, Emanuel Bowen, Cary, the Greenwoods and Moule are all represented in various editions in original or facsimile for both counties. Other maps are taken from books, railway timetables and prospectuses, directories and gazetteers, and newspaper supplements. Most of the maps are county maps, but there are some more local – hundred and other district – maps as well as road maps and such specialities as R Taylor's map of 1834 showing the sites of the religious houses, etc, in Suffolk and part of Cambridgeshire in the diocese of Norwich before their suppression by Henry VIII. There are also a number of estate and land maps often taken, it seems, from auctioneers' catalogues, considerably more of which, being smaller, are to be found in the boxes of prints and drawings (fig 3).

There are twenty-one of these boxes relating to Essex and another thirty-seven relating to Suffolk. The material is mounted on uniformly sized sheets – about seventy per box – and arranged under parishes in, where possible, ten categories: Churches (each followed by its architectural details and then by its fittings), Castles, Gates and Towers, Public Buildings, Private Buildings, Views, Antiquities and Curios, Arms, Seals and Bookplates, Maps and Portraits.

The catalogues already described list the items in the boxes, parish by parish. The pages of the two volumes are divided into four columns: Name (that is, generally, subject or description), Engraver (or artist, loosely defined), Date (of execution) and Remarks. The information given in this last column varies greatly. Sometimes the merely obvious, such as 'Postcard', is given; occasionally a date is indicated and, sometimes, even – very loosely – a source; but not infrequently nothing at all is given that will help identify or date an item.

If pencilled-in figures in the front of the Suffolk catalogue in any way serve as a guide to the progress and growth of the collection, the material was amassed by Earle between about 1899 (a couple of years later, that is, than his books) and about 1907. It is, once again, as varied as it is rich. There are prints and engravings, of course, but there are also watercolours (many of them Earle's own and of variable artistic merit),⁴² postcards, restoration appeal notices, letters, trade and visiting cards, newspaper cuttings, reports of society weddings, obituary notices, brass rubbings, sale and auction catalogues, etc. There is inevitably some duplication – especially in the views of churches and houses and in the portraits – but only rarely are there identical items:⁴³ the one print that looks so much like another will usually be found to be, say, the same illustration taken from another source.⁴⁴

The examination of each item that the recent cataloguing has required leads to a suspicion that Earle was more enthusiastic in his collecting than disciplined in his identification and record. In Suffolk, for example, Harlaxton Manor, Lincolnshire,⁴⁵ was put under Harleston, and the font at Sutton⁴⁶ was put under Stutton, where also a monument from St Matthew's Church, Ipswich, was put despite the heraldry depicted on it.⁴⁷ In all such cases the item was

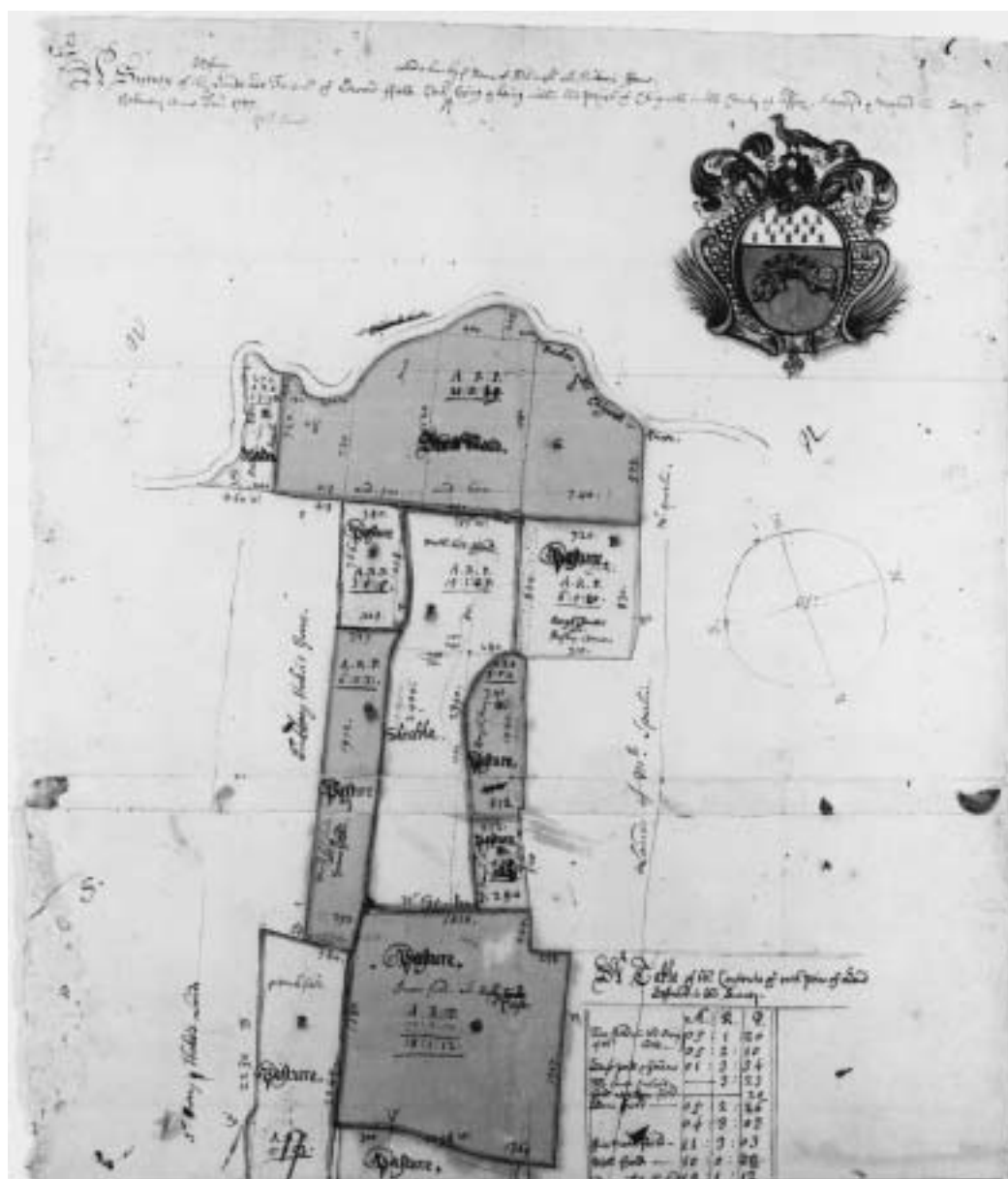


Fig 3. Chigwell (Essex): part of survey map of area within the parish of Chigwell, dated February 1727. Sepia pen and coloured washes (725 × 380mm, three pieces joined, T-shaped). *Source:* Earle Collection E5, 13

removed from the sheet and either put in its correct place in the collection or catalogued separately, with the Earle collection quoted as the item's provenance. Such movement of items within the collection has been noted on the sheets. Also carefully noted as 'Missing' with the date so found are those few items that have evidently disappeared since the collection came into



Fig 4. Letheringham (Suffolk): Letheringham Abbey. Sepia pen and grey-green wash (70 × 130mm). The house was built soon after 1600 on the site of a priory of Austin canons. Robert Hawes (1665–1731) made drawings of it that are now in BL Add MS 8987, at the end of which a collator has noted ‘f. 200 missing Nov. 1911’. *Source:* Earle Collection S23, 42



Fig 5. Woodbridge (Suffolk): tradecard of W B Horn, sailmaker and ship chandler. Engraving (60 × 95mm). *Source:* Earle Collection S37, 20(a)



Fig 6. Ipswich (Suffolk): church of St Mary-le-Tower. Monument to Richard Cock (d 1629) and wife. Pen and pencil (155 × 135mm). *Source*: Earle Collection S18, 34(g)

the Society's possession. There is evidence that Earle himself moved items or even reused sheets,⁴⁸ leaving on them traces of the fixings (often the edge of sheets of postage stamps). In such cases also the items have been noted as 'Missing' as a precaution, even though it cannot be certain that there was ever any item there on the sheet at all.

Of the two collections, that for Suffolk, besides being the larger, is the more interesting (figs 4 and 5). It is especially valuable for its drawings by Henry Davy (1793–1865)⁴⁹ – on whose life and works Earle wrote six books of notes⁵⁰ – for its items from the collection of Henry R Eyre, the theatre historian of Ipswich, and for the items that belonged to Fitch. Chief among the last are Isaac Johnson's preliminary sketch drawings (fig 6). Johnson (1754–1835)⁵¹ was a topographer and watercolourist, besides being a surveyor, like his father. His drawings are variously watermarked 1814 or dated about 1820. From them he produced, on commission, bound volumes of *Antiquities in Suffolk* and *Excursions in Suffolk*, in which the sketches are



Fig 7. Hockley (Essex): cattle being driven towards farmstead, signed and dated 'Chas. Warren delt/May 1817'. Pencil (195 × 265mm). Source: Earle Collection E11, 33(b)

worked up into finely finished wash drawings. He also produced fine drawings for the *Gentleman's Magazine* and for such authors as Gough, Nichols Nassau and Craven Ord to extra-illustrate their books. Most of Johnson's original sketches passed to Earle from the solicitor, artist and radical, Thomas Churchyard, via John Wodderspoon (1806–62),⁵² the journalist, artist and author of *Historic Sites in Suffolk* (1839). Other interesting items in the Suffolk collection are the drawings of Hamlet Watling (1818–1908),⁵³ schoolmaster, artist and antiquary. Much of all this material links up with drawings and manuscripts in the Suffolk Record Office at Ipswich, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Library.

The most interesting items in the Essex collection (which has been much less studied by scholars than the Suffolk material) are probably the Warren drawings (figs 7 and 8). Charles and Henry Warren, presumably brothers, were evidently trained by the same drawing master – so surely so that it seems impossible to distinguish their individual styles. The dates of those drawings that are dated lie between 1815 and 1817, amplified by Charles (who, as compared with Henry, usually gives the month as well as the year) to May 1815 and July 1817. Both Charles and Henry were at Waltham Abbey on the same day,⁵⁴ but that Henry drew West Thurrock Church in 1816⁵⁵ and Charles the following year⁵⁶ perhaps suggests that they did not always travel together. But these conclusions all depend on whether the signatures and dates, and even the captions to the drawings, are the artists' own; for all of them seem often to have been over-written or even added later.

Finally, though it is not part of the Earle bequest, mention should be made of the three-quarter-length portrait of Earle, with his left hand in the pocket of his frock coat (see fig 1). It



Fig 8. North Ockendon (Essex): street scene, signed and dated 'Henry Warren Delt/ 1817'. Pencil (200 × 230mm). *Source*: Earle Collection E14, 48(a)

was painted by Lance Calkin (1859–1936),⁵⁷ presumably about 1884, in which year it was exhibited in the West Gallery of the Grosvenor Gallery, London.⁵⁸ The picture, which is in oils on canvas, was given to the Society in 1925 by Earle's niece, Miss Twining,⁵⁹ whom we can now more precisely identify as Miss Alice Margareta Twining, to whom Earle had bequeathed it along with £400, the New Thames Yacht Club tankard and his articles of household or personal use or ornament, excluding the furnishings, fittings and equipments of his yachts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Generous in their help and kind to my work in every possible way have been those of the Earle family whom I was put in touch with through the good offices of Caroline Ready at the Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom, London: Mr Anthony Earle (Hertford), Mrs P Earle (Goring Heath), Mr Campbell Sim (Edenbridge) and Mr William Chatterton-Dixon (Tisbury). I am especially grateful to all of them.

NOTES

1. Certificates of candidates for election (SAL Archives).
2. *East Anglian Daily Times*, 10 April 1935; *Essex Review*, 60, 1951, 12; *Proc Suffolk Inst Archaeol*, 22, 1934–6, 228–9.
3. *Essex Review*, 60, 1951, 12.
4. Farrer 1903, dedication.
5. Certificates of candidates for election (SAL Archives); *Proc Soc Antiq*, 2nd ser, 16, 1895–7, 359, does but record his death on 20 November 1896.
6. Boase 1965, 648; *Proc Soc Antiq*, 2nd ser, 17, 1897–9, 154.
7. Bury 1987, 225–43, where a photograph of Tuer is reproduced on page 226.
8. *Proc Soc Antiq*, 2nd ser, 29, 1916–17, 159.
9. Proved in the Principal Probate Registry of the High Court on 28 November 1912.
10. Grave no. 15974/⁸⁷/₈₈.
11. He too was born in York (1851 census return, Family Records Centre, London HO107/1467, fol 154).
12. They married on 3 December 1836 at St Mary's, Bexley, Kent, where the marriage register describes Earle as 'of Christchurch in the County of Surrey' (pers comm, Bexley Local Studies and Archives Centre, 8 December 2003). No pertinent references to the Earles have been found in the Christ Church, Southwark, census returns of parish registers, so it would seem that the family lived in the parish but briefly, avoiding the censuses and leaving no entries in registers either (pers comm, Southwark Local Studies Library, 29 December 2003). Joseph Earle and Anne Sim had issue Anne Dowson (later Stewart), born 1837, Earle himself, Alice Katharine (later Twining), born 1844, and George William, born 1846. Earle's uncle William (1813–56) is found acting as Joseph Earle's solicitor in an undated letter enclosed with one of 24 April 1845 from the speculator Blashfield to the Crown Estate Commissioners; see n 18 below.
13. Pers comm, York City Archives, 26 November and 2 December 2002.
14. *Survey of London*, XXXVII, 1973, 151–93.
15. Ibid, 163.
16. Lists of Fellows (SAL Archives); *The Kensington, Notting Hill, Brompton and Knightsbridge Directory*, 1904, 155, has no entry for 6 Kensington Palace Gardens, but ibid 1905, 308, shows Earle resident at 11 Pembridge Gardens.
17. Lists of Fellows (SAL Archives); *The Kensington ... Directory*, 1910, 219, shows Earle still resident at 11 Pembridge Gardens, but the 1911 *Directory*, 219, has no resident for that address and shows him (page 221) resident instead at 30 Pembridge Square.
18. Crown Estate Office, London, file 11157. It has not been possible to locate Frederick's Place, because it was presumably a (now demolished) terrace of houses on the hill rather than the name of a street.
19. Family Records Centre, London, HO107/1467, fol 154.
20. The Timber Trade Federation of the United Kingdom was founded only in 1892, but three of its member firms, Churchill & Sim Ltd of Forest Row (founded in 1813), B & K Earle (Forestry) Ltd of Goring Heath, and Earle & Co of Hertford have been most helpful – even if they have been unable, alas, to shed light on Earle and his education and family background.
21. Family Records Centre, London, RG9/12, fol 72A.
22. Ibid, RG10/27, fol 35.
23. Ibid, RG11/21, fol 30.
24. Ibid, RG12/17, fol 17.
25. *Essex Review*, 60, 1951, 12.
26. Mr Eric Rust, Brightlingsea, pers comm, 11 November 2002, kindly steered my way among the several local boating clubs.
27. Pers comm, Captain A R Ward, 29 November 2002.

28. *British Yachts and Yachtsmen*, 409.
29. As Charles Partridge did (*Essex Review*, 60, 1951, 12) and as indeed Farrer's travel journal – which, cut up, serves as the mount, or sometimes the backing, of some of Earle's own drawings – clearly shows. In Earle's own working copy of Page (1844), part of his bequest to the Society, the dates are recorded of his visits to the different parishes in the county and the names of those in whose company he travelled. Besides Farrer and Partridge, his companions included Mill Stephenson, FSA, a Revd Mr Bicknell and, more rarely, Prince Frederick Duleep Singh, FSA. Earle and Bicknell visited fifteen parishes in the Risbridge hundred in October 1900, seven on the 11th and eight on the 12th.
30. The net value of Earle's personal estate was £54,860 4s 8d.
31. Earle is not to be found in the Charterhouse, Eton, Harrow, Rugby or Westminster school registers. His younger brother George went to Rugby (Rugby School Register, 1867, 216) and went on to matriculate at Oxford (Foster 1888, 403).
32. See, for example, *British Yachts and Yachtsmen*, 409, and the entries in *Lloyd's Register of Yachts*, 1906–7, 260 and 302.
33. *Lloyd's Register of Yachts*, 1878/9.
34. Ibid; a photograph of the *Leah* is reproduced in *British Yachts and Yachtsmen*, page facing 409.
35. *Lloyd's Register of Yachts* started only in 1878.
36. *Illustrated London News*, 29 May 1869, 553–4; there is a steel engraving of the *Sphinx* on page 549.
37. Council Book XI, 331 (SAL Archives).
38. Ibid, 337.
39. Executive Committee Book VII, 448 (SAL Archives).
40. MS 715; Willetts 2000, 310.
41. Blatchly 1988, 23.
42. They are initialled rather rarely, dated less so. Earle's style is easily recognizable and the attribution to him of a drawing can quite frequently be confirmed from his catalogues.
43. Earle S33, 56(c) and (d) is a case in point.
44. See, for example, Earle E20, 43(b) and 44(a).
45. Br Portfolio Lincs, 3.
46. Earle S33, 60(d).
47. I owe the correct identification of this item, Earle S18, 34(g), to Mr John A Goodall's reading of the sketchily portrayed heraldry.
48. See, for example, sheets Earle S22, S38 and S61.
49. *Proc Suffolk Inst Archaeol*, 29, 1964, 78–90.
50. Now in the Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich.
51. Blatchly and Eden 1979; Blatchly 1988, 36.
52. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 133/1, 1863, 122–3; Blatchly, 1988, 50.
53. *Proc Suffolk Inst Archaeol*, 39, 2000, 48–75.
54. Charles: Earle E19, 45(c) and 51(a); Henry: Earle E19, 41(d) and 50.
55. Earle E18, 73(b).
56. Earle E18, 73(a).
57. Stewart and Cutten 1997, 122; *Saur allgemeines Künstlerlexicon*, XV, 1997, 588; *Who Was Who*, III, 1967, 209.
58. Newall 1995, 59.
59. *Antiq J*, 5, 1925, 220.

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ET IN ARCADIA? THE PROBLEMS WITH RUINS

Dai Morgan Evans, FSA *

The value of ‘the Ruin’ as a stimulus to reflection on the past and the passage of time was well recognized in the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries.¹ An essential part of the organic, and therefore changing, ethos of the ruin was that it should be associated with whatever natural vegetation was appropriate and in a state of decay. This is summed up by the Revd William Gilpin’s statement in 1786: ‘A Ruin is a sacred thing. Rooted for ages in the soil; assimilated to it and become, as it were, part of it; we consider it as a work of nature, rather than of art’.² In 1982 David Watkin further concluded that a constant feature of the Picturesque is the subordination of architectural to associational values, which leads to the evocative powers of ruins and also the insistence that architecture is seen as part of its environment.³ Following this approach the ruin is thus seen as in decay (ruined), softened by vegetation and an integral part of its wider environment.

In contrast to these Romantic images are those of the twentieth-century ruin, caricatured, perhaps unfairly, by Osbert Lancaster’s concept of the ‘Ministry of Tidy Ruins’, which was seen to create monuments stripped of vegetation, supplied with neatly mortared walls, surrounded by suburban green lawns and supervised by a blue-uniformed custodian with a crown badge on his peaked cap. Importantly, the attempt was being made to ‘freeze’ these ruins in time and stop the ongoing processes of ruination. It is fairer, for reasons that will be touched on later, to call this approach ‘the Archaeological Ruin’. Monuments treated in this way were also often isolated from their environment, not only by fences or walls but also by unsympathetic neighbouring development changes. In effect they had become ‘islands of the past’.⁴ The contrast between these two approaches, the Romantic and the Archaeological, is so stark, often directly involving the same site, that the reasons and philosophy behind them bear some further examination.⁵

While the cult of the ruin experienced problems in the latter part of the nineteenth century,⁶ the practical end to the cult of ‘the Picturesque’ or ‘Romantic Ruin’ and its more formal replacement by ‘the Archaeological Ruin’ can be arguably placed at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁷ As a process, we are fortunate that it is relatively well documented. This is because the change was by, and in the hands of, the state. Two aspects of what happened to ruins in the care of the state will be particularly considered: the effects of technology, including the ability to control decay and thus ‘time’; and the effects of ‘access’, including the demands of the public and the loss of solitude.

Before the role of the state in the treatment of ‘the Ruin’ is addressed, however, it will be helpful to consider the earlier context for the treatment of the genre by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). The principles on which this Society was founded were set out in 1877.⁸ These state that there is ‘no doubt that within the last fifty years a new interest has arisen in these ancient monuments’. This new interest seems to fit quite neatly with contemporary changes to the way in which ruins were regarded. SPAB’s battle was against

restoration and for repair.⁹ Such repairs were to be by 'such means as are obviously meant for support or covering and show no pretences of other art'.

SPAB was often under attack for the alleged view that it would rather see a building or ruin fall down than be restored. For example, there was an exchange when the tower of St John's Church, Chester, fell down. The rector of St John's asked for information about the attitude of the Society. He received the reply: 'the Society ... does not "recommend that an old building be allowed to fall into a ruin"'. Whoever suggested this must have overlooked the obvious alternative to ruin on the one side and rebuilding on the other, which the name of the Society suggests'.¹⁰

SPAB found itself in a difficult situation in that, while it urged the repair not restoration of ruins, the need to control or halt the processes of decay inevitably led to agreement to some degree of work on a building or ruin in order to stabilize it. In short, SPAB could not support the continued ruination of a ruin. While SPAB often found itself in conflict with architects it nonetheless tended to an architectural approach in that the maintenance of the fabric of the structure inevitably came first. Examples of this are:

The Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Association have been doing good work in calling the attention of owners of ancient buildings to the harm which ivy and other vegetation is doing to them and in several cases much has been done to reduce the evil. The ivy has been removed from ... Rievaulx Abbey ... Easeby Abbey. There has been some murmuring at the loss of the ivy, but a little thought will surely show the objectors that the buildings are much more precious than the ivy, and that, beautiful as it may be, it is an evil when it is allowed to conceal and to destroy a work of art and a record which, once lost, can never be replaced.¹¹

This is confirmed by the work at Conway Castle in the closing years of the nineteenth century:

These proceedings have met with considerable opposition in the town, especially the removal of a quantity of ivy from the Castle. Nothing, however, seems to have been done to permanently injure the appearance of the ruins, and their stability is no doubt greatly increased. Though the removal of ivy may for a time reduce the picturesqueness of an old ruin, it is often, as in many parts of Conway, necessary, as ivy may be exceedingly destructive.¹²

Despite such 'non-picturesque' leanings SPAB was concerned about the unsympathetic approach of state bodies when it came to the treatment of historical monuments. In 1883 SPAB had cause to mention the poor work that had taken place at the Tower under the auspices of the Office of Works.¹³ In 1884 and 1885 Westminster Hall was being ill treated and in 1888 the Office of Works managed to cause damage to Westminster Abbey, in this case through the effect of the scaffolding for the service to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.¹⁴

These examples of the attitudes of the architects of the Office of Works might have given SPAB pause for thought, but the passing of the 1900 Ancient Monuments Act was received with great satisfaction.¹⁵ Ironically this was the year when its Annual Report was prefaced by the obituary for Ruskin and reproduced 'his last public act' in signing a memorial: 'Do not let us talk then of restoration, the thing is a lie from beginning to end'.¹⁶ It is also clear that SPAB saw the Act as the great chance for county councils to become involved in acquiring buildings of historic or antiquarian value.¹⁷ In this they were gravely disappointed and instead of increased local involvement the main role was played by the state.

THE 1882 AND 1900 ANCIENT MONUMENTS ACTS

The definition of the role of the state in the conservation of monuments lay in the passing of the Ancient Monuments Acts, not so much the well-known first Act of 1882, but the lesser known Act of 1900. Leaving aside the definition of what actually constituted an 'ancient monument', the key issue was what could be done to it and with what legal authority. The point is that once a site has been singled out for legal recognition it is necessary to do things to keep it in the state in which it first achieved that recognition. As all the monuments included in the 1882 legislation were prehistoric they were probably thought to have achieved a reasonably stable state and were, as 'works' or structures, generally not on a large scale.

In the 1882 Act 'for the better protection of Ancient Monuments' the emphasis on the responsibility of the Commissioners of Works as the guardians of monuments put into their care is on 'maintenance'. This word is then defined: 'The expressions "maintain" and "maintenance" include the fencing, repairing, cleansing, covering in, or doing any other act or thing which may be required for the purpose of repairing any monument or protecting the same from decay or injury' (s.2, 1882 ch 73).

The need for intervention in a ruin is clearly here, including the concept of 'protection from decay'. The supervision of the work on the protected monuments was entrusted to Lieutenant-General Pitt-Rivers, but from 1890 until his death in 1900 his failing health reduced the work that he could do, which in any case was undertaken on a voluntary basis. In the same year that Pitt-Rivers died, 'An Act to amend the Ancient Monuments Protection Act 1882' was passed, on 6 August 1900. This widened the definition of 'monument' by stating that: 'Where the Commissioners of Works are of the opinion that the preservation of any monument is a matter of public interest by reason of the historic, traditional, or artistic interest ... they may ... consent to become guardians thereof ...' (1900 s.1). This explicitly introduced the concept of 'historic' as opposed to 'prehistoric' monuments.

There was also a widening of responsibility to allow local authorities a role: 'The council of any county ... may ... become the guardians of any such monument, and may undertake or contribute towards the cost of preserving, maintaining, and managing any such monument ...' (1900 s.2). A new concept was introduced: 'The public shall have access to any monument of which the Commissioners of Works or any county council are the owners or guardians ...' (1900 s.5).

The change of emphasis from 'maintenance' as the means for 'protection' in 1882 to preservation, management and public access as of right (the word is 'shall', not 'may') in the 1900 Act is highly significant, and marked a major change in the formal attitude to the monuments, their treatment and the role that they were expected to have in society. Public access, of course, had nothing to do with methods of preservation but would come to influence them in due course. This change of emphasis is reflected in the report of the Inspector of Ancient Monuments for the year ending 31 March 1911, which will now be considered in detail.

THE 1911 REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS

The memorandum by the First Commissioner of Works, Lord Beauchamp, introducing this report, sets out the history of the Ancient Monuments Acts, their implementation and the appointment, on 25 March 1910, of a new Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Mr C R Peers,

Secretary to the Society of Antiquaries.¹⁸ In his report, Peers considers the expansion of the number and type of monuments in guardianship. Before the passing of the 1900 Act these had all been prehistoric but in his report he includes a schedule of 'historic monuments', with the warning that 'The condition of the monuments is, on the whole, satisfactory, though it is impossible with the funds available to put into practice as thorough a scheme of preservation as could be wished' (p 4). What this 'scheme of preservation' was is set out later in the report. The important sections for our purposes are: [p 10]

VIII. In view of the importance of the materials and methods of pointing to buildings under State protection, the use of *lias* lime mortar has been the subject of a general order, and a detailed specification has been drawn up and circulated ...

IX. In conclusion, I beg to submit certain observations of a general character suggested by the foregoing report. [Peers then discusses the operation of the Acts and their wider effect; he goes on to state:] No adequate record has been up to the present time kept of the treatment of each monument year by year; but this is essential if the history of the monument is to be preserved.

The measures which should be adopted in order to secure the most effective protection of a monument may be set down as follows:

- i. Structural and superficial repairs, ie grouting, underpinning, pointing, treatment of decayed surfaces, removal of ivy and weeds, &c.
- ii. Enclosure by fencing where necessary.
- iii. Care of the site, ie, grass cutting, prevention of disfigurement by visitors, the provision of notice boards, &c.
- iv. The preparation of accurate and complete measured plans, elevations and sections.
- v. Photographs.
- vi. The compiling of official guidebooks to single monuments or to groups of monuments.

The first three of these measures have long been recognized and put into practice; the second three, which are of at least equal importance, are very far from being generally applied even today.

There is not much published literature on the philosophy of the conservation of ruins following the practices derived from the 1900 Ancient Monuments Act and its successors. What there is came towards the end of the twentieth century. The first was the valuable statement in 1977, from the last Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Andrew Saunders, in his introduction to the collection of essays presented to his predecessor, Arnold Taylor.¹⁹ In this, Saunders makes a robust defence of an 'unashamedly archaeological approach' to the preservation of monuments as the 'essential data for the study of man through the remnants of his material culture'. He further draws a distinction between the 'conservation' of the environment as 'a living and developing entity' and the 'preservation' of monuments, essentially as static ruins, although he does conclude that there is 'room for both concepts, conservation and preservation, one complements the other'. In 1983 Saunders carried out an important review of a century of ancient monuments legislation.²⁰ He looked again at the Ancient Monuments Acts and their implementation and when it came to the principles of 'maintenance' he repeated the words in the introduction to the 1912 Inspector's Report. They were: 'to avoid, as far as possible, anything which can be considered in the nature of

restoration, to do nothing which could impair the archaeological interest of the Monuments and to confine themselves rigorously to such works as may be necessary to ensure their stability ... and to perpetuate their existence in the form in which they have come down to us'.

The other important contribution to the philosophy of the preservation of monuments was the 'essay' published by Dr Michael Thompson, who had been an Inspector of Ancient Monuments, notably as the Principal Inspector for Wales.²¹ To use the words of his preface: 'the first step was to understand the treatment of ruins as it has been carried out over the last seventy years. There is no general study, no periodical to which one can turn for an account of this work, and indeed much of it has now passed beyond living memory'.

A further note needs to be added here. Nowhere in Thompson's book do the words 'preserve as found' appear but in the twentieth century they were certainly the yardstick by which work should be carried out on state sites. Glyn Coppack uses them in his description of recent work on Wigmore Castle and notes their origin to the days of Peers.²² There is an apparent conflict, however, between actively preserving a ruin and observing the principle of 'preserve as found'. To an extent this appears to have been accepted by Saunders in his statement in 1989:

the archaeologist has an important part to play, helping to devise the preservation regime ... ensuring that the archaeological integrity of the monument is maintained. **All forms of intervention to delay the processes of decay do, in themselves, alter the monument** [my emphasis]. It is the duty of the heritage manager to ensure that such intervention is kept to a minimum and is well documented.²³

THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGY

The following case studies are all derived from the published work and comment of others. They each involve ruined monuments that served as inspiration to artists of a Romantic persuasion, but which were subsequently taken into state care. They comprise Tintern Abbey and Stonehenge, whose Romantic credentials are clear, together with a passing look at Llanstephan Castle in Carmarthenshire. Also considered are two lesser known sources of inspiration, Pentre Ifan cromlech in Pembrokeshire and Hardknott Roman fort in Cumbria.

Tintern Abbey

An early example of the effects of technology was that most iconic of romantic ruins, Tintern Abbey.²⁴ In 1901 the site was purchased by the state from the Duke of Beaufort. There is no doubt that the ruins, while looking much as they did in the Buck print of 1732, were in an increasingly unstable state. The solution adopted by the Office of Woods to 'stabilize' the ruins involved taking down the east window and replacing it with an identical replica. This included the addition of horizontal mild steel struts. The east crossing arch was taken down in order that it could be rebuilt, although because of a dispute, the rebuild was itself taken down and reconstructed again. In 1913 Tintern Abbey was transferred from the Office of Woods to the Office of Works and placed under the supervision of Charles Peers, as Inspector of Ancient Monuments, and the Director of Works, Frank Baines. Their solutions involved driving large quantities of Portland cement into the wall cores in order to stabilize them. The central crossing and adjacent wall heads were strengthened by cutting trenches into the wall tops and

inserting ferro-concrete beams which were then disguised by masonry. The south nave arcade, which was bulging, was held by a metal lattice girder on the plane of the medieval roof. The nave piers were subsequently taken down and steel stanchions erected with the 'historic' masonry being replaced around them.

Llanstephan Castle

While Tintern Abbey is an early example of the 'civil engineering' approach to conservation, even the simple act of repointing walls could cause significant changes. The classic case of this is Llanstephan Castle in Carmarthenshire. This came into the guardianship of the Ministry of Works in 1959. The original guidebook of the 'blue-cover' type was published in 1963. This follows the usual scholarly approach that typified these guides. There is a history of the site, a detailed description that discusses the interpretation of the remains and lastly a 'History of Construction'. Having reviewed the evidence for the earliest castle, 'The Upper Ward' is then considered:

This part of the defences has had a fairly complex history, and it may not be easy to follow this at the time of reading, for the different types of mortar used at different stages, which supply the principal clue to the story may well be covered up by the pointing which forms an indispensable part of the consolidation work carried out by the Ministry of Public Building and Works to preserve the fabric ...²⁵

The details of the mortars that are then given include one with large quantities of seashells in it and another with red-sandstone stream gravel of small rounded pebbles. These differences are, it can be confirmed, no longer visible and there is now only the uniform conservation mortar.

Pentre Ifan cromlech

At the other extreme is the example of the neolithic megalithic tomb of Pentre Ifan.²⁶ This monument was scheduled and taken into state care as the first Ancient Monument in Wales. It was recognized as a 'romantic' monument in the nineteenth century.²⁷ In the twentieth century an early result of this state care was the erection of an unclimbable iron fence, 5ft (1.5m) high, with a locked iron gate for the 'proper protection of the monument' because 'we must be careful to prevent access by the public to the cromlech'. The monument stayed much as it was until 1933 when concern about its stability led to proposals for a wooden cradle to support the capstone (erected 1936) and excavations in and around the chamber which showed the extent of the original cairn. In 1949 the wooden cradle had shrunk and no longer supported the capstone. It seems that some in the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments were thinking of a concrete support but this solution was not in the end favoured. A concrete slab was, however, inserted across the full width of the portal in order to stabilize it.

Stonehenge

At Stonehenge the year 1900 was greeted by the collapse of one of the lintel stones on New Year's Day. It had long been known that many of the upright stones were not stable; indeed the Society of Antiquaries of London had in 1897 asked General Pitt-Rivers about the effects of military training on the stability of the stones. Pitt-Rivers thought it 'quite possible',

though he would not say ‘probable’, that the ‘firing of cannon close by might bring down some of the stones, especially those that are hanging to one another by the mortises at the top’.²⁸ The story of what happened to Stonehenge in the twentieth century has been set out elsewhere.²⁹ The wholesale nature of the treatment it received in the early years of the century can be illustrated by the handling of the outer circle with the surviving lintels. Of the eleven stones forming this outer circle only one was not ‘straightened’ between 1919 and 1964, six of them being treated between 1919 and 1920. There are arguments for ensuring that any existing stones that had not already fallen should remain upright. As can be clearly seen on any visit to the site, however, even from the distance to which most visitors are kept, there are some replaced stones which depend upon concrete to provide their support. The work to ensure that the other stones remained upright also involved significant excavation, not all of it archaeological.

Hardknott Roman Fort

And lastly there is Hardknott Roman fort, Cumbria: ‘the imperial Bird of Rome invokes departed ages’ and the ‘lone Camp on Hardknot’s height, whose Guardians bent the knee to Jove and Mars’.³⁰ The site of the fort was acquired, along with other land, by the Forestry Commission in 1934, and after a complex bureaucratic set of negotiations (not surprisingly) it finally came into the guardianship of the Ministry of Works in 1949. In 1952 consolidation work started, which – given the isolation of the monument – was not easy. However, ‘the methods of excavation and conservation seem by today’s standards to be unusual to say the least’.³¹ In order to dispose of cleared building debris the walls of the fort were rebuilt above a demarcating line of slate. Complaints about the methods of preservation were made but dismissed. An Inspector of Ancient Monuments nevertheless expressed concern that the foreman ‘might have been overzealous in some of his consolidation of the fort baths, in that he might have added stones and extra courses; and that the entrance to the circular *laconicum* had not been treated correctly; straight joints which she thought should have existed between it and the “adjoining passage wall” had not always been consolidated as found’.³²

The examples cited above are not special or unique in the amount of work which took place in order to maintain the monument in something like the form in which it was first approached. Almost any monument taken into the care of the state will have undergone interventions in its fabric on an equivalent scale.³³ The upshot is that I believe that we have to accept that the historic or archaeological value of the fabric for future study has been substantially reduced and that what might be said to survive is the ‘form’ of the monument rather than the ‘substance’.

Another important point is the ability, through the use of technology, apparently to ‘freeze’ the ruin in time, to stop the processes of decay. This often involves the use of ‘hidden’ methods to make inherently unstable structures stable. This control eliminates an important aspect of the experience of the monument, that is the opportunity to come to terms with the realities of change and decay. In the same way that death became a taboo subject in the twentieth century, decay as an expression of the organic nature of ruins seems not to be acceptable.

Although these conclusions might appear to be critical, it must be acknowledged that the standards of recording before and during preservation have greatly improved in more recent years and that the practitioners of the earlier parts of the twentieth century were doing their best according to their lights. There is also no doubt that there are ruins standing today, and

therefore still 'available', which would otherwise have undoubtedly fallen down. An alternative but more damaging approach to 'preserve as found' would have been the conversion of sites back into roofed buildings. Even so, the process of 'preservation' has caused a significant loss of information for the future study of sites.³⁴

THE EFFECT OF 'ACCESS'

The 1900 Ancient Monuments Act stated that the public *shall* have access to monuments in the care of the state. This is an early example of the concept of the use of public funds for preservation being 'rewarded' by public access as a form of public benefit, but it is also something that we have become more used to. In this context it is good to note that current government statements on the value of the remains of the past do, just, allow preservation of remains to be an aim in its own right, although economic benefit in terms of recreation and tourism still looms large.³⁵ The overwhelming practice of the twentieth century, however, was to encourage public access and this has more recently been expanded to cover perceptions and interpretation as well as physical access.

The needs of access have been defined in part by Thompson in his chapters on display and access.³⁶ In these he identifies the needs of the public, namely car parks, visitor/sales centres or offices, and lavatories. He then describes the large modern bridges, of varying degrees of sensitivity, that have been erected at Conisborough, Caerphilly, Harlech and Beeston castles. These are major physical and visual statements in the context of the ruins.

The last chapter of Thompson's book concentrates deliberately on the 'primary interpretation, in which someone has to confront a ruin and give an intelligible account of it' and leaves for others the 'popular transmission' of this data, because it 'is in part an educational function'. The latter part of the twentieth century saw English Heritage and others extend into this field.

The rise of a government response to the wish to have more public access is chronicled in part in the reports of the Ancient Monuments Boards for England and Scotland. In 1954, in the first of a new series of reports to the House of Commons, the Scottish Board took:

this opportunity of respectfully voicing an opinion which has frequently been expressed at its meetings, in 1954 and in previous years, that as our outstanding monuments are wasting assets the Ministry should not too rigidly regard them as showpieces upon which much money must be spent in order to make them agreeable to the tourist.³⁷

In 1960 the English Ancient Monuments Board made a longer statement on the matter. Under the title 'Presentation of Ancient Monuments', it stated: 'there has also been a vigorous intensification of your Department's activities designed to increase the public appeal of ancient monuments in your charge'.³⁸ It continued: 'you pointed out that interest in antiquities had grown enormously among a much wider public in recent years and, to meet this, an extension and amplification of the Ministry's presentation activities had become essential'. The Board was evidently assured about safeguards to 'guard against undesirable extremes' but 'were also concerned lest, as part of the policy of providing facilities for the public at monuments, new and incongruous buildings should be erected ... for example, tea rooms ...'. This concern found immediate expression the following year when the Board was concerned about the proposed new pavilion to be erected near Stonehenge!

Another stage in increasing public access was reached in November 1981 when a consultation took place on the 'Organisation of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings in England'. This considered the creation of an agency to be given responsibility for, amongst other matters, 'a lively and imaginative presentation of those monuments' in the care of the Secretary of State.³⁹ The report, at an early stage in the argument for change, stressed the commercial advantages of 'better and more effective presentation', including 'increasing revenue from admission charges and the sale of souvenirs at sites through a proper and responsible use of commercial and marketing expertise ...'.⁴⁰ This commercial approach was considered further and it was stated that a 'recent study of this commercial operation by management consultants has clearly identified simple business measures which could improve revenue'.

Chris Smith, when Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, took the unusual step of publishing a book, *Creative Britain*, in which he drew together certain key speeches and provided a kind of manifesto for 'culture'.⁴¹ Some of the work relates to the economic importance of the creative arts, but, following the victory of the Labour Party in May 1997, the newly named Department of Culture, Media and Sport (formerly known as the Department of National Heritage) was given the key themes of 'access, excellence, education and economic value'. These are further defined as:

Access, in ensuring that the greatest number of people have the opportunity to experience works of quality. Excellence, in ensuring that governmental support is used to underpin the best, and the most innovative, and the things that would not otherwise find a voice. Education, in ensuring that creativity is not extinguished by the formal education system and beyond.

The question of economic value is ever present and a major stimulus in how ruins are perceived and used.⁴² Smith continued: 'this is a profoundly democratic agenda, seeing cultural access as one of the egalitarian building blocks of society'. While this is all very fine, and the attempt to explore these themes should be appreciated, nowhere in Smith's Introduction is there any serious attempt to address the values of the past for contemporary society, although many other areas are explored. The 'heritage' does, however, warrant a whole chapter later in the book, a chapter that originally took the form of a speech delivered to a World Heritage Conference in October 1997. While much of the speech deals with the economic usefulness of heritage, Smith briefly attempts to identify why the past is important: 'heritage sites and buildings are not just important because of what they reveal about the past ... they are examples that we carry with us into the future ... In a very real sense, heritage is as much about the future as it is about the past'. He later returns to the reason why by adding the establishment of a sense of who we are as individuals and as a nation.

The more populist approach to presentation is well summarized in a book produced under the auspices of English Heritage, *Managing Historic Sites and Buildings: Reconciling Presentation and Preservation*. In his introduction to this work, David Baker considered the strains between preservation and presentation and set out the basic assumption that the 'fundamental purpose of the whole process is to communicate understanding about the human past'.⁴³ This is not the place to make a critique of the current presentation of historic sites. The important thing to note is a significant contemporary inclination to look at the visitor to a site as a consumer who has to be served with facilities and have a site made accessible in an understandable way, using whatever means are appropriate. While the possibility of refusing this treatment remains, the great majority of visitors will naturally accept it. This means that

the agenda for how the monument is experienced is still dictated by twentieth-century attitudes. With additional numbers there comes the problem not only of a growing demand for facilities and greater wear and tear but also of increasingly onerous Health and Safety regulations. Any surviving 'genius of the place' will find it hard to compete and the whole direction of contemporary presentation points away from that experience. Solitary contemplation, even of the 'tidy ruins', is unobtainable.

ET IN ARCADIA?

The 'picturesque' approach to ruins, which depends upon their continuing decay, is clearly limited in the lifespans of 'real' ruins. Nor does 'the Archaeological Ruin' approach promoted by the 1900 Act and Peers work fully if taken to its practical conclusions. The acts of intervention on a ruin almost always *have* to be of such an order as to change significantly the evidence that it contains. In effect a major new phase is introduced and the site ceases to be a 'ruin' and becomes a 'monument'.

It is interesting to see that in the preservation of ruins there has recently been the start of a return to a more precise interpretation of 'preserve as found' that involves minimal intervention in sites. This approach must also be of comfort to those who still hanker after the picturesque ruin and a degree of solitude in which to contemplate it. A wider view of the relationship of nature and the works of man is emerging. Two sites can be singled out in particular.

At Wigmore Castle in Herefordshire it was recognized that the aim should be to leave the monument as close to the state in which it was originally found, so long as this was also consistent with its long-term stabilization and public access.⁴⁴ The temptation to excavate and clear the remains archaeologically has been resisted. There has inevitably been a degree of intervention and the safety of a site open to the public has had to be a major consideration. At least the attempt is being made, however, and it is certainly recognized that this will not be a site that attracts large numbers of visitors.

The other site is that of Orford Ness, a shingle spit along the Suffolk coast now in the care of the National Trust.⁴⁵ From 1913 until the early 1970s this was a significant secret military experimental site, many of whose buildings still survive. These include major concrete structures used for testing the components of atomic weapons. These are very much monuments to the Cold War. The approach taken is, in most cases, to allow natural decay to take its course. The shingle spit is a very exposed environment and visitor numbers are restricted. The motto of the site, in the words of Marcus Aurelius, is to 'observe always that everything is the result of change and get used to thinking that there is nothing that nature loves so well as to change forms and make new ones like them'. This is probably the one set of ruins in the United Kingdom managed by a conservation organization that still fulfils the Gilpin test.

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NOTES

1. Watkin 1982, 45–66.
2. Cited in Watkin 1982, 64.
3. Watkin 1982, x.
4. This problem was recognized in the first part of the 1931 Ancient Monuments Act, which set up the procedures for *Schemes for Preserving Amenities of Ancient Monuments* through ‘preservation schemes’.
5. For example, Netley Abbey near Southampton, a ‘free’ English Heritage monument classified in the *English Heritage Visitors’ Handbook* as ‘Christian Heritage’ and a ‘Romantic Ruin’. See Chitty and Baker 1999, 131, for the eighteenth century and landscape background.
6. There seems to be a reasonable case for allowing ‘the Romantic Ruin’ to survive half-way into the nineteenth century. It is interesting that the rise of interest in historic buildings, as perceived by SPAB, comes as ‘the Ruin’ falters (see note 8) and the rise of historical architectural drawing occurs at the same time; see Pearson and Meeson 2001, 3–11.
7. The problem of the peak of preservationist activity around 1900 is considered by Michael Hunter in Hunter 1996, 7.
8. SPAB 1896.
9. The early history of SPAB and its uncompromising approach is set out in Miele 1996, 17–37.
10. SPAB 1881, 12.
11. SPAB 1887, 43.
12. SPAB 1898, 19.
13. SPAB 1883, 10ff; also SPAB 1887, 23; SPAB 1890, 27.
14. SPAB 1885, 36; SPAB 1888, 42.
15. SPAB 1900, 38.
16. SPAB 1900, 5.
17. SPAB 1901, 12.
18. HMSO 1911.
19. Saunders 1977, especially xvi–xviii.
20. Saunders 1983.
21. Thompson 1981.
22. Coppack 1999, 63.
23. Saunders 1989, 159.
24. This process is described in more detail in Robinson 1997.
25. King 1963, 20.
26. Turner 1992.
27. Evans 1994.
28. Jervis 1996, 9.
29. Lawson 1995, 346.
30. Quoted in Bidwell 1999, 1.
31. Sherlock 1999, 20.
32. Dorothy Charlesworth, quoted in Sherlock 1999, 21.
33. Emerick 1998 considers the cases of Whitby and Rievaulx abbeys.
34. Emerick 1998, 187, describes the ‘Peers approach, for want of a better name, as the aberration’.
35. HMSO 1994, *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15* (PPG 15), 2: ‘conservation and economic prosperity’.
36. Thompson 1981, 29ff and 77ff.
37. HMSO 1954, 12.
38. HMSO 1961, 7–8.
39. HMSO 1982, 1.
40. HMSO 1982, 82.
41. Smith 1998.
42. For example, by the tourist industry. See also Peacock 1995.
43. Chitty and Baker 1999, 2.
44. Coppack 1999.
45. See the National Trust website <<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/orfordness>> for details of the site and the approach taken to it.

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