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The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (*Tabulae Vindolandenses* IV, Part 1)

By A.K. BOWMAN, J.D. THOMAS and R.S.O. TOMLIN

ABSTRACT

This article contains full editions with commentaries of the first instalment of the approximately 37 ink writing-tablets from Vindolanda discovered in the excavation seasons of 2001, 2002 and 2003. The editions are numbered continuously from **854**, *following the sequence in A.K. Bowman and J.D. Thomas,* The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses III) *(2003), and are grouped in the following categories: Literary Texts, Military Documents, Accounts, Letters. The second instalment, to be published in 2011, will contain the remaining Letters and Descripta.*

I. INTRODUCTION

This article is the first of two in which we publish the ink writing-tablets from Vindolanda discovered in the excavation seasons 2001, 2002 and 2003.[1] Since we consider the texts in the present article to be, in effect, their *editio princeps*, we have described the article as

[1] For assistance of various kinds we are very grateful to the archaeologists at Vindolanda, Andrew Birley (now Director of Excavations) and Robin Birley; and to the journal's anonymous referees for suggesting improvements. The tablets have now joined their predecessors at the British Museum, where Ralph Jackson, Marianne Eve and James Peters have kindly facilitated our access to them. Charles Crowther, Ségolène Tarte and Myrto Malouta have at various times captured and processed digital scans of the tablets which have proved invaluable. The excavations, as previously, also yielded a number of stilus tablets which we do not attempt to discuss here. We continue to hope that the decipherment of these very difficult texts will benefit from advanced imaging technologies, particularly Polynomial Texture Mapping (see Bowman *et al.* 2009) and intend to devote further attention to them in the course of the next few years. It is our intention to publish the second and final instalment of the ink tablets here in 2011.

References in bold type are to the texts as numbered in *Tab. Vindol.* II (**118–572**) and *Tab. Vindol.* III (**573–853**). The following abbreviations are used:

AE	*L'Année épigraphique* (1888–)
BGU	*Berliner Griechische Urkunden* (1895–)
ChLA	A. Bruckner and R. Marichal, *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores* (1954–)
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (1863–)
ILS	H. Dessau, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (1892–1916)
PNRB	A.L.F. Rivet and C. Smith, *The Place-names of Roman Britain* (1979)
P.Tebt.	B.P. Grenfell, A.S. Hunt and J.G. Smyly (eds), *The Tebtunis Papyri* (1902–)
RIB I	R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain, I: Inscriptions on Stone* (1965)

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Tab. Vindol. IV, Part 1, and have numbered the texts continuously from those in *Tab. Vindol.* III, beginning at **854**. The texts are grouped in the same categories, namely, Literary Texts, Military Documents, Accounts, Letters, and Descripta. Preliminary accounts of the tablets, from which we have benefited, were provided by A.R. Birley in 2003 and 2005.[2] Birley has also republished in 2009 a selection of these preliminary versions, together with expanded commentaries, in a journal which is much more widely available.[3] This article requires some comment here, for although there are many places where Birley's readings will stand, there are also many which are palaeographically impossible. In our editions and commentaries which follow, we draw attention to such instances, at least where they are of significance. We must emphasise that even by Vindolanda standards, the 2001–3 tablets are extremely fragmentary and difficult, both palaeographically and in their state of preservation. This has to a significant extent affected our ability to achieve swift publication. We must also emphasise that we have had access to numerous scans, not accessible to Birley, the quality of which, together with our ability to process and manipulate them with the software now available, has, we believe, significantly enhanced the legibility of the texts in many cases. We would maintain that the non-expert who wants to use the evidence of the tablets cannot simply choose between different versions as being equally plausible. In a number of cases, as suggested above, Birley's readings can now be seen to be simply untenable.[4] This is not to say that we believe the readings we suggest are necessarily right. On the contrary, there are many places where we are unable to suggest a convincing reading and we recognise that there is still ample room for improvement.[5] It is our intention that, along with the material from *Tab. Vindol.* III, these texts will eventually be added to the Vindolanda Tablets

RIB II.7	S.S. Frere and R.S.O. Tomlin (eds), with contributions by M.W.C. Hassall, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain, II. Instrumentum Domesticum: Fasc. 7. Graffiti on Samian Ware (terra sigillata)* (1995)
RIB II.8	S.S. Frere and R.S.O. Tomlin (eds), with contributions by M.W.C. Hassall, *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain, II. Instrumentum Domesticum: Fasc. 8. Graffiti on Coarse Pottery Cut Before and After Firing; Stamp on Coarse Pottery* (1995)
RMR	R.O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus* (1971)
Tab.Luguval.	R.S.O. Tomlin, 'Roman manuscripts from Carlisle: the ink-written tablets', *Britannia* 29 (1998), 31–84
Tab.Sulis	R.S.O. Tomlin, 'The curse tablets', in B. Cunliffe (ed.), *The Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath, Volume 2: The Finds from the Sacred Spring,* Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph 16 (1988), 4–277
Tab. Vindol. II	A.K. Bowman and J.D. Thomas, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses II)* (1994)
Tab. Vindol. III	A.K. Bowman and J.D. Thomas, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses III)* (2003)
Tab. Vindon.	M.A. Speidel, *Die römischen Schreibtafeln von Vindonissa (Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft pro Vindonissa XII)* (1996)
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (1900–)

2 A.R. Birley 2003; 2005.

3 A.R. Birley 2009.

4 The same applies also to the article by Scappaticcio 2009, which is cited with approval by A.R. Birley (2009), but must be almost entirely discounted (individual points are dealt with in the commentaries to **854–6** below). One general point which is underlined by her mis-readings is the fact that on doubtful or controversial points one simply cannot place unquestioning confidence in the photographs or the scans alone, however good they may be. Sometimes, as in this case, one needs to examine the original to discover that marks which appear as ink on a photograph or a scan are in fact surface dirt or damage.

5 Just as we were ourselves able to suggest numerous improvements to the texts in *Tab. Vindol.* I–II in the Appendix to *Tab. Vindol.* III, pp. 155–61.

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On-line and incorporated in the proposed *Roman Inscriptions of Britain,* IV *(Romano-British Writing-Tablets).*

II. THE TABLETS AND THEIR CONTEXT

The total numbers of ink tablets with significant traces of writing recorded in the excavations are as follows: 2001: 11, inventoried under 9 numbers; 2002: 19; 2003: 7 (of 12 possible ink tablets).[6] Thus, approximately 37 ink tablets altogether.[7] In this instalment, we offer 16 texts in all: 3 literary or probably literary fragments; 7 military documents; 3 accounts; 3 letters. The second instalment will contain about 12 letters and a small handful of Descripta.

Images were obtained using a Canon EOS 350D (Digital Rebel XT) 8.2 megapixel (3,888 x 2,592) SLR camera (with Canon EF 50mm f/2.5 macro lens) converted for infra-red photography (by LDP LLC of Carlstadt, NJ) by replacing the internal camera infra-red cut-off filter and anti-aliasing filter assembly with a 715nm infra-red filter; the converted camera's sensitivity covers the range 715–1200nm in the infra-red spectrum. Images were captured at 550 dpi with and without a Wratten 87C filter attached to the camera lens and under tungsten lighting. RAW image files were processed in Apple Aperture and Canon Digital Photo Professional, and the resulting TIFF files further adjusted in Adobe Photoshop; for archival purposes the original RAW image captures were retained.[8]

For the circumstances of discovery and the archaeological context of the tablets we rely entirely on the excavation reports and related publications.[9] Since the detail is available in print we do not feel it necessary to repeat it at length here, but we provide basic references to chronological and locational attributions for each tablet, as in *Tab. Vindol.* II and III, to which we add the British Museum's Registration number. The archaeological information is indispensable for understanding the relationship between the documents and the various aspects of the history of occupation at Vindolanda between *c.* A.D. 85 and 130.[10] Since the detailed reports are perhaps not universally available and the evidence, like the history of the site, is very complex, it will perhaps be useful to offer a summary of the broader picture in so far as it relates to the tablets. Robin Birley has offered the following picture of the periods, dates, and garrisons of the fort to *c.* A.D. 130:[11]

> Period I: Primary fort, *c.* 3.5 acres, *c.* A.D. 85–95, *cohors I Tungrorum*
> Period II: Enlarged fort, *c.* 5 acres, A.D. 95–105, *cohors VIIII Batauorum*
> Period III: Renovated fort, A.D. 100–105, *cohors VIIII Batauorum*
> Period IV: Rebuilt fort with additional and probably legionary establishment to the west, *c.* A.D. 105–*c.* 120, *cohors I Tungrorum* and others
> Period V: Rebuilt fort, A.D. 120–*c.* 130, *cohors I Tungrorum*

[6] Summarised in A.R. Birley 2009, 266.

[7] The fact that there is not a precise number is attributable to uncertainty over whether fragments inventoried under one number belong to the same tablet or different ones. The number of texts published may also differ from the number of tablets counted, for we may have texts on back and front published separately with different publication numbers, as with **180** and **344**, and **854–6** and **867–8**, below.

[8] For enhancement techniques, see *Tab. Vindol.* III, p. 14.

[9] Mainly the reports of excavations published by Birley and Blake in 2005 and 2007, to which should be added R. Birley 2009. As A.R. Birley notes, the archaeological contexts of the 2001–2 tablets were omitted from the 2003 report by oversight, but they are given in his 2009 article for each tablet.

[10] Descriptions of the contexts of the Period III and IV tablets from 2003 can be found in Birley and Blake 2005, 248–9.

[11] In Birley and Blake 2007, 3.

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The evidence in the writing-tablets for the presence of the two main units is unequivocal. Birley's reference to 'others' in Period IV is certainly intended to accommodate the references in the tablets to *milites legionarii* (**180**.22) and the *equites Vardulli* (**181**.13). Evidently, these units or parts of units were probably present at some point, but given the fluidity of troop movements at this time, it would be a bold deduction to describe these as relatively permanent elements of the garrison. As the strength reports of *cohors I Tungrorum* (**154** and **857**) indicate, both large and small sections of a unit might be outposted to another fort or location. With two exceptions, all of the tablets discovered in 2001–3 are attributed to Period I, II, III or IV.[12] The texts do not add anything certain to the identity of the possible garrison units, or parts of units, at Vindolanda during these periods. It is, however, worth signalling the possibility that in **860** we may have a fragment of a strength report of *cohors III Batauorum*, which has already cropped up in the tablets (**263**.ii.5, **311** back.2). If this is correct, the number of troops mentioned would seem to indicate that it was milliary at Vindolanda, as it certainly was by A.D. 107 when it was in Raetia.[13] We note, however, that **263** and **311** are both attributed to Period III, the former being guaranteed by virtue of being a letter to Flauius Cerialis, whereas **860** is attributed (though with some uncertainty) to Period IV.[14]

We remain committed to the view that confidence can be placed in the chronological framework of the periods of occupation and the different phases of fort construction, but that a number of anomalies in the attribution of individual tablets to particular periods or structures means that we should be cautious about basing interpretations of any particular text solely on archaeological data. Where the archaeological and the textual evidence is apparently inconsistent, the issue becomes one of balance of probability. In the case of a number of documents which clearly belong to the archive of a single individual, but are attributed to different periods, we balance the potential fragility of the attribution against the possibility that the individual was in fact stationed at Vindolanda during more than one of the periods.[15]

Of further interest is the location of the tablet deposit in the sector designated as 'Area A' in the excavation plans.[16] Within this area, the tablets lay to the south of the corner of the later Severan *praetorium* and at a deeper and, therefore, earlier level. The tablets attributed to Period I are in the area of the outermost ditch of the Period I fort. The buildings of Period II/III in this area have been identified as (probably) barracks and the Period IV structures as the south-western rooms of the Period IV *praetorium*. The tablets discovered in 2001–2 come from an area about 30 m north-west of the north-west corner of the Period III *praetorium* and those of 2003 at least 55 m north-north-west of the Period II *praetorium*.[17] In fact, **860** was found in a drain below a 'stable or workshop' of Period IV, 'running in the southern end of a barrack building'.[18]

[12] The exceptions are T02.57A ('probably Period VIA'), A.R. Birley 2009, 266; T03.24A (Period IV/V), A.R. Birley 2005, 82. Note that the only tablet from a significantly later period in the previous discoveries is **670** (Period VIA).

[13] *CIL* XVI, 55; *Tab.Vindol.* II, p. 24. A.R. Birley 2002, 54 conjectures that the unit might have been stationed at *Ulucium* (=Newbrough?), but there is no firm evidence either for the identification of the place or the connection of the unit with *Ulucium*. Nor is there any certain evidence for a Stanegate-period fort at Newbrough, see Breeze 2006, 428; see further **860** note.

[14] A.R. Birley 2005, 83. See further below.

[15] See *Tab.Vindol.* III, p. 12.

[16] Its position in relation to the plans of the pre-Hadrianic and the later buildings can be seen in Birley and Blake 2005, figs 1, 32, 42 and 60.

[17] A.R. Birley 2009, 265–7. He also notes (2005, 82) that the most significant Period IV tablets come from an area further away, well over 150 m, from the deposits of the 1970s–1990s, in a drain below what was possibly a stable-block or workshop. The addition of 'A', common to all of the Vindolanda site inventory numbers, refers to 'Area A' and we have omitted it in the headings to the individual tablets.

[18] Birley and Blake 2005, 249 and A.R. Birley 2009, 82.

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Be that as it may, in the broader context, this places them at a significant distance from the large deposits of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and the *praetorium* and barrack buildings of Periods II, III and IV which lay to the south-east and hard up against the west wall of the later stone fort. This is worth emphasising because of the connection between the Period III *praetorium* and the occupation by *cohors VIIII Batauorum* and its prefect, Flauius Cerialis, which generated more of our documentation than any other unit or individual. The tablets of 2001–3 offer no evidence that we have so far found of a direct link with Flauius Cerialis and his household. In fact, apart from the occurrence of names which are too common to allow identification (e.g. Verecundus), the only direct links between the new tablets in the present editions and the earlier ones are: the strength report of *cohors I Tungrorum* (**857** and **154**), the possible reference to *cohors III Batauorum* (see above), and the *uexillarius* Tagomas or Tagamas (**861**.25 and note, **181**.14–15).[19]

III. THE TEXTS

NB For editorial conventions used in the editions below, see *Tab.Vindol.* III, p. 19. The arrows indicate the direction of the text in relation to the grain of the wood. In the headings, we record the dimensions in the form '(width) x (height)'.

LITERARY AND SUB-LITERARY TEXTS (NOS **854–856**)

These three texts were found together (Inv.no. 02.38), and like **118**, the first Virgilian fragment to be identified, they were written on discarded correspondence. The two sides of a letter addressed to Iustus were used for **854** and **855**, but there is no indication of which side was used first. They were found with part of another letter (**868**) also addressed to Iustus, in a similar 'address script' but by another hand, suggesting that correspondence had been saved for re-use as writing material.

Each of the three texts is written in a different hand, but all the hands are of a 'literary' type bearing some resemblance to the hand of **118**, though none is the same. In all three, the attempt to make a distinction between thick and thin strokes, and the regular use of hooks, serifs and finials on the uprights, serve to emphasise the literary style of writing; but features of Old Roman Cursive (ORC) are to be found in them all. We transcribe them in lower case, but the following remarks should be borne in mind.

In **854** *b*, *r* and *s* are pure ORC, as is *e* in *subigebant* (but not in *iouem*); while *a*, *c*, *g* and *l* are much closer to the ORC than to the Capital script. Long *I*, found in *iouem* and *coloni*, is sometimes found in both ORC and Capital script. Worth noting is the hook at the foot of the left-hand diagonal of *a*, especially noticeable in *subigebant*. In this analysis we agree with Scappaticcio (2009, 62).

The hand of **855** appears less elegant, possibly because the strokes are thicker. It is difficult to analyse the individual letters, since the tops are often missing, and the antepenultimate letter is baffling. *r* is pure ORC, and so is *f*. On the other hand, *h* is clearly a capital (although such a form does occur in ORC). Noteworthy is *a* (the penultimate letter), since it has the extra stroke between the two main strokes sometimes considered to be a residual cross-bar. *e* is close to the capital form, though somewhat rounded.

The hand of **856** is the most elegant of the three, being strictly bilinear. This is true even of *r*, the form of which is not that of Capital script, which would be much like a modern capital R; it is essentially in the form of ORC, but has been truncated to fit into the bilinear pattern. Similarly

[19] In T02-33 (cf. Birley 2003, 109), which will be published in *Tab.Vindol.* IV, Part II, Vitalis *seplasiarius* occurs (see also **586**.i.7).

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a, though basically in the ORC form, is kept within the two-line pattern. The first *a*, but not the second, has the extra stroke between the diagonals discussed above. The other surviving letters, *l*, *r*, *t*, are pure capitals. Scappaticcio (2009, 65) also notes the forms of *a* and *r*, but we disagree with her judgement that this is the hand of a pupil.

854

Inv.no. T02.38 (one fragment of six). BM Registration no. 2004,0501.71. Dimensions: 91 x 21 mm. Period: II/III. Location: V02.19, below Rooms I and II of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 110, fragment (d); 2009, no. 6 (d). Scappaticcio 2009, esp. 61–3.

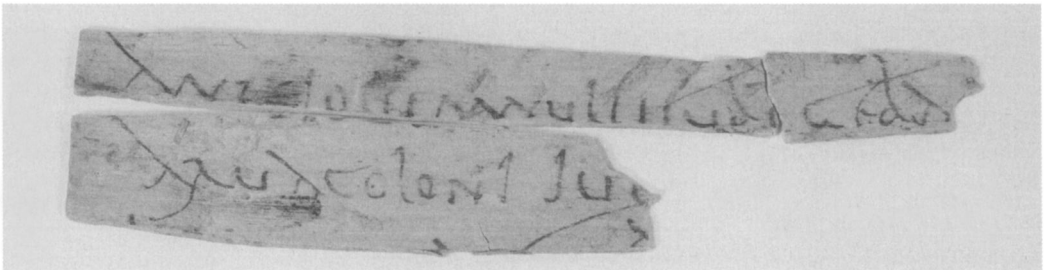

FIG. 1. **854**. 91 x 21 mm. Virgil, *Georgics* 1.125.

Three joining fragments of a tablet, with three edges broken; only the left edge is original. **855** is on the other side. Inscribed along the grain in the 'literary' hand described above.

→
. . . . . .
ante iouem nulli subigeba[nt]
arua coloni iu.[...]
....[*c.* 5].[.]ṣ [*c.* 2]
. . . . . .

The marks between the upper edge and the text itself are not ink. The tips of letters survive in the bottom edge, but they are so slight as to be illegible; we cannot even say whether they are by the same hand or not. They should certainly not be read (with Scappaticcio) as *s[e]g(niter)*, a tutor's comment (cf. **118**.2).

As Birley has recognised, this is Virgil, *Georgics* 1.125. But the three letters after *coloni*, although by the same hand in darker ink, as if the pen had just been dipped, do not continue the quotation (since 126 would begin *ne signare quidem*). The first two letters are certainly *iu*, after which there is only the angle of a downstroke curving to the right. Birley suggests it is *p*, for *Iup[piter]*, which is possible in the sense that we do not know how *p* was made in this hand. (In ORC, but not in Capital, it would have had a curving foot.) But Scappaticcio, to enlarge her untenable theory about *iusto* (see **855** introduction), reads *s* for *ius[to]*, which is impossible, since the letter curves below the line to the right, and not to the left for *s*. In this respect it closely resembles the *l* of *coloni*, which raises the possibility that the writer was writing another line of Virgil, the only candidates being *Georgics* 2.163, which begins with *Iulia*, or *Aeneid* 1.288, which begins with *Iulius*.

Lines of Virgil are used for writing practice in Latin papyri from Egypt, no doubt in a military milieu; instances are noted in *Tab. Vindol.* II, p. 66. Noteworthy is *P.Tebt.* II 686 = *ChLA* V 304, in which *Georgics* 4.1–2 has been written six times in Capital over a discarded account in ORC. **854** is now the first evidence of the *Georgics* in Roman Britain.

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855

Inv.no. T02.38 (one fragment of six). BM Registration no. 2004,0501.71. Dimensions: 91 x 21 mm. Period: II/III. Location: V02.19, below Rooms I and II of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 110, fragment (d); 2009, no. 6 (d) 'back'. Scappaticcio 2009, esp. 63–5.

FIG. 2. **855**. 91 x 21 mm. Literary composition (?).

Three joining fragments of a tablet, with three edges broken; only the right edge is original. **854** is the other side. Inscribed along the grain in two different hands (reading downwards): (a) the 'literary' hand described above; (b) consisting of large, elongated letters, i.e. address script. Since (b) was inscribed first, we begin with it.

(b)
→
. . .
] [[...]]
[[Iusto]]
. . .

'… to Iustus' (*erased*)

The hand is typical of the 'address script' used on the back of a letter to name the recipient (*Tab.Vindol.* II, pp. 43, 52–3) and, as already noted, identifies the tablet used for **854** and **855** as a discarded letter addressed to Iustus, like the other fragment found with them (**868**). Two fine lines have been drawn across his name to erase it. Between them, and more or less above the *o*, is a short diagonal stroke which Scappaticcio takes to be an apex, but is more likely to be owing to the return of the writer's pen before he drew the second line. There are two more such lines on the joining fragments above, where the tips of letters survive in the broken edge. The letter-tip to the right is probably the long *I* of *iusto*, but the others are illegible, and we see no merit in Scappaticcio's suggestion (63), although it is accepted by A.R. Birley (2009, 277) that they read *s[egnite]r* (cf. **118**.2). Possibly they are the end of a place-name, erased.

We should also mention, if only as a curiosity, that Scappaticcio understands *iusto* throughout as an adverb, as if a comment meaning 'justly' has been added to writing-exercises by a tutor. She admits that this ablative with adverbial force would be unparalleled (69, n. 54), and that she has not convinced Birley who even told her about 'address script' (69, n. 51); he has since justly observed (loc. cit.) that such a comment would be inappropriate to 'the wildly inaccurate rendering of the Virgilian line' in her reconstruction of **855**. But let us turn to this hand (a), the 'literary' hand described above.

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(a)
→
. . . . . .
[...]ut fefellit immerentem the.ae

The tops of most letters have been lost in the broken edge. The tails of *f* (twice) and *r* descend below the line, but the other marks there, except for the two lines of erasure already mentioned, are not ink. The text presents difficulties of reading and interpretation, owing to damage and because it is 'literary' but unmetrical.

Scappaticcio interprets the text as a blundered attempt at Virgil, *Aeneid* 10.860–1, '*adloquitur maerentem et talibus infit:* | *"Rhaebe"* ...' (Mezentius' address to his weeping horse Rhaebus). She reads it as *]iṭ res cuiṭur merentem [[t]]ṛhebae*, which is accepted by A.R. Birley 2009, 277, and has the merit of connecting *merentem* with *Thebae* by positing a complex sequence of mistakes and corrections, so it deserves careful consideration. We conclude, however, that it depends on readings which are impossible or perverse. After the first two letters, she accepts Birley's *res* with misgivings; justified, since he reads two identical letters as *r* and *s*, although neither of them resembles the *r* in *merentem*. Fortunately, *res* plays no part in her reconstruction, since she regards it as corrected in tiny letters below to *all[o]*, which is her reading of the marks there which are not ink. After *res*, she reads the lower half of *e* as a diminutive *c*, double *l* as *u*, *i* and *t* correctly, and finally *ur*, despite there being one diagonal too many (part of the bold *m*) and no downstroke at all for *r*, but only two specks of damage. This **all[o]cuitur* is taken to be Vindolanda's attempt at Virgil's *adloquitur*.

Next *merentem* is certain, and easily understood as *maerentem* written by ear. The omission of *et talibus infit* then requires explanation, and Scappaticcio notes (64, n. 31) that the phrase is also omitted here by two Virgilian MSS, *e* and *c*, but does not add that they read *ac talia fatur* instead. The last word in the line is also difficult. The antepenultimate letter is essentially a downstroke curving left, with something above it. It is perhaps a defective *b*, too defective to be determinate whether ORC or Capital. The word *The[b]ae*, 'Thebes' (whether in Egypt or Boeotia), must be literary, but Scappaticcio sees it as a mistake corrected by a second hand, the tutor's, to *Rhebae*, the vocative *Rhaebe* written by ear. Whatever the merits of a 'correction' which left two Vulgarisms uncorrected (*e* for *ae*, and *ae* for *e*), it must be emphasised that there is no evidence of an *r* written over the *t*. There is neither downstroke, nor the diagonal, only a speck of ink high up between *t* and *h* which might belong to either letter.

We reject Scappaticcio's interpretation, therefore, not for its tortuous series of hypotheses, but for having no foundation in palaeography. Instead we have wondered whether this text may not be something more interesting than a blundered line of Virgil, at least as regards intellectual life at Vindolanda: a piece of free literary composition. There is a good instance of this in the Latin papyrus already cited (*P.Tebt.* II 686 = *ChLA* V 304). Not only were *Georgics* 4.1–2 and some non-literary tags used for writing practice in Capital, but from the same hand apparently, there are some lines in ORC about the mythological labours of Hercules.

We have certainly sought in vain for **855** in the prose canon. The initial *ut* is followed, not by the subjunctive, but by the perfect indicative; we should therefore understand *ita*, or restore *[sic]ut*. The sense would be the same in either case. If the subject of *fefellit* has not been lost, it must be *The[b]ae*, an easy mis-spelling of *Thebe*. This lady was the estranged wife of Alexander of Pherae who procured his murder in 358 B.C., '... just as Thebe deceived her innocent (husband)'. It will be objected that the tyrant Alexander, even if innocent of the adultery she suspected, was hardly 'innocent' in the general sense; and no echo can be heard of Cicero's treatment of the murder in *De Off.* 2.7.25 and *Inv.* 2.49.144. But tyrannicide was a favourite topic for rhetorical exercises on a law-court theme (*controversiae*), and perhaps this is a fragment from

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the prosecution of Thebe, or a woman like her, for murder. Or even a sarcastic remark by the defence.

856

Inv.no. T02.38 (one fragment of six). BM Registration no. 2004,0501.71. Dimensions: 43 x 11 mm. Period: II/III. Location: V02.19, below Rooms I and II of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 110, fragment (b) 'front'; 2009, no. 6 (b) 'front'. Scappaticcio 2009, esp. 65–7.

FIG. 3. **856**. 43 x 11 mm. Appendix Vergiliana, *Copa* 28 (?).

Fragment of a tablet, three edges broken. The top edge is original, since the other side is part of the heading of a letter to Verecundus (**867**). Inscribed along the grain in the 'literary' hand described above.

→
]çerta latę[
m² traces of tops of letters
. . . . . .

Birley has identified the text as Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.373, '*[his ubi nequiquam dictis ex]perta Lati[num]*', but this attractive idea is excluded by the two (fragmentary) letters we have dotted. All that remains of the first is an upward-curving line of ink above the break, which cannot be part of *p*. In ORC the top stroke of *p* almost invariably slopes downwards, but is occasionally horizontal; it never curves upward. In Capital, which is what we would expect in this hand, *p* would much resemble modern capital P and so have a loop in the top half, part of which ought to be visible on the tablet. This letter can only be *c*, *g* or *s*. The other is now a vertical downstroke turning rightward at the foot, marked as *e* rather than *i* by the beginning of a medial stroke. Its top has disappeared in a loss of surface towards the edge.

The text, by ascending gently towards the top edge and then descending, seems to respect the traces below, which are written in a different, cursive, hand. This would imply that they belong to the discarded letter on the other side, perhaps as part of the place-name in the 'address', an implication likely in itself, and strengthened by what may be another two lines of erasure (cf.

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855). We certainly share A.R. Birley's doubts (2009, 277) about reading the adverbial *iusto* with Scappaticcio (see **855** introduction).

In trying to identify the text, we have considered the possibility of free composition again (cf. **855**), supposing Virgil's *[spes in]certa* (*Aeneid* 8.580) were completed by *latet*, but as it happens, there is a known line which would fit exactly: *Copa*, 28, '*nunc uaria in gelida sede lacerta latet*' ('the spotted lizard now lurks in its chilly home'). Despite Servius' attribution of this short poem to Virgil, modern scholars prefer an unknown follower who knew Propertius but not yet Ovid, writing very soon after Virgil's death in 19 B.C. (cf. for example Iodice 2002, 182–3 for a *terminus post quem* of *c.* 16 B.C.). It would thus have been available to students at Vindolanda a century later and, like **854**, would imply an interest in Virgil which extended beyond the *Aeneid*.

MILITARY DOCUMENTS (NOS **857–860**)

857

Inv.no. T01.15. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.14. Dimensions: 39 x 105 mm. Period: I. Location: the outermost ditch. A.R. Birley 2003, 90; 2009, no. 1.

FIG. 4. **857.** 39 x 105 mm. Strength report.

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Three joining fragments of a leaf, complete at the top and part of the bottom, although this was presumably only the top half of a diptych with a text running over into the lower half. There are remains of two v-shaped notches and two tie-holes at the top. The surviving left edge coincides with the left-hand notch and tie-hole, which suggests that about one-third of the width has been lost entirely at the left; and with it, almost all of the entries below line 5, except for some of their numerals. The text is written across the grain and parallel to the short edge. The back is blank. It is a fragment of a strength report very similar to **154** and probably very close in date, which fits the archaeological evidence. What survives of the name of the unit and of the prefect in lines 2 and 3 shows that this is also a report of the *cohors I Tungrorum* and it could well be the work of the same hand (see note to line 6). **154** suggests the readings offered in lines 2–5 and these are mutually supportive in indicating a loss of some nine or ten letters at the left in **857**. Since the dates of the two reports are different, there is no reason to assume that the entries of the various dispositions of groups and individuals, though broadly similar in character, are identical. We take the opportunity in the notes below to offer some further comments and observations on some of the readings in **154**.

↓
].ạṣ Ịạnuạṛịạṣ n̄(umerus) p̄(urus)
coh(ortis) i Tungr]orum cuị prạẹ<e>ṣ[t]
Iulius Ver]ecundus praef(ectus)
] in is (centuriones) vi
5 ex eis absen]ṭes
]. xlṿị in is (centurio) ị
].ọ (centurio) i
] *traces*
] *traces*
10].. ii
]..ạ viii.
]ṣ (centurio) i
] *one line lost*
] x̣xxi
15]um iii
] xxxi
] *traces*
. . . . . .

'4 January (?). Net number of the First Cohort of Tungrians of which the commander is Iulius Verecundus the prefect, [number of men] including centurions, 6. Of those, there are absent: … 46, including centurion, 1. … centurion, 1. … 2 … 8 … centurion 1 … 31 … 3 … 31 …'

1. *Ịạnuạṛịạṣ*. The reading is uncertain, but we must surely begin with a date and since *nu* looks good, January seems inevitable. Before it, A.R. Birley (2009) reads *K(alendas)* but we cannot see *k*, though we do not find *as* at all easy. We cannot suppose that the first line was indented but it is difficult to envisage a date clause long enough to fill the gap. Perhaps *Pridie No]ṇạṣ*, though *pridie* is normally abbreviated to *pr*. What follows the date is badly smudged and could be compatible with almost anything. The parallel in **154** suggests *n(umerus) p(urus)*, what is identifiable here amounting to little more than the two bold downstrokes of the putative *n*.
3. For the prefect Iulius Verecundus, see **154**.2–3 and **210**–12. The latter group of tablets is archaeologically assigned to Period II and we must reckon with the possibility that the First Tungrian cohort was at Vindolanda in Period I and part of Period II (see R. Birley 2009, 183).

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4. The numeral for total strength (in **154**, probably 752 men) has presumably been lost at the beginning of the line, which concludes with the same total of centurions: *in is (centuriones) vi.* As in **154**, the heading of 'those absent' follows in the next line.
5. *[ex eis absen]ṭes*. This is apparently a heading for the entries which follow, as implied by the gap below it. Judging by **154**, it was not followed by a numeral at the end of the line. This sub-total (*summa eorum*) would naturally be added after all the entries had been totted up, towards the foot of the diptych; but this would have been on the second, now lost, leaf (see below, note to 15).
6. The only surviving letter — two bold horizontals — could be several things, but is compatible with *g* by analogy with **154**.1, 5, 22; if correct, this form is distinctive and would strengthen our impression that **154** and **857** were written by the same hand. The diagonal above it is probably not ink. Therefore restore *[singulares le]g(ati)*; and it is apparently followed by the same numeral as in **154** (46), which implies that this report is reasonably close in date to **154** (but with a minimum gap of about five months between January and June). There are traces of letters after the numeral, as A.R. Birley notes, and these suggest a reference to one centurion. The scan of **154** suggests that there are faint traces there too after the numeral *xlvi* and they would fit *in is (centurio) i* , as in **857**.6. If that is correct, we need to 'lose' one of the other centurions in **154**, most probably in line 8, where we should read *(centurio) i* rather than *iị*. There are also possible traces of a numeral at the right in **154**.6, suggesting that this entry (*officio Ferocis*) should be understood as separate from what precedes and follows.
7. There is an indeterminate trace before a probable *o*. By analogy with **154**, we might expect this to be the *Londinio* entry (one centurion absent), but we are unlikely to have had *[Londin]io* here since the restoration is too short (we expect about ten letters lost). From this point on, A.R. Birley's transcript has an extra line (9), we think wrongly; so hereafter our line numbering does not match his.
8. Perhaps a numeral under a patch of surface dirt.
10. Traces of two letters, perhaps the end of a word; perhaps we could even read *]is*, then two digits looking most like *ii*.
11. The scan of **154**.12 suggests that *in Gallia* is correct there, though we are now more doubtful about *prof]ecti*. Here we seem to have *viii* with a broad *v*, and just possibly a long *i* thereafter, which would strengthen the idea that this is the same entry as **154**.12 where the number is *viiii*. A centurion would certainly be expected to accompany them, but it is hard to read *[in is] (centurio) i* in line 12, which seems to end with a *v*.
13. The line is lost, but there is a possible trace of a digit towards the right.
14. The trace of the first digit would suit *x*.
15. The digits are fairly well preserved; the third one apparently trails leftward below the line, but we think this is because it was the last digit; it is too slight and too close to the others to be a centurial sign (which in any case one would expect to have a line to itself and be preceded by *in is*). The numeral *iii* is much too small to be a *[summa eo]rum* sub-total (so A.R. Birley, his line 16, which we therefore reject), and we understand *]um* as the end of a gerund, or more likely, a supine like *ṣtipendiatum* in **154**.14 (*Tab.Vindol.* III, App. **154**).

858

Inv.no. T01.19. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.18. Dimensions: 26 x 53 mm. Period: I. Location: the outermost ditch. A.R. Birley 2003, 92.

A fragment of a tablet with writing across the grain, presumably one half (the lower?) of a diptych. It appears to be complete at the left and perhaps also at the bottom. If it is complete at the left, the narrowness of the surviving fragment ensures that there must have been a sizeable portion lost at the right, although that does not necessarily mean that we have lost a lot of writing.

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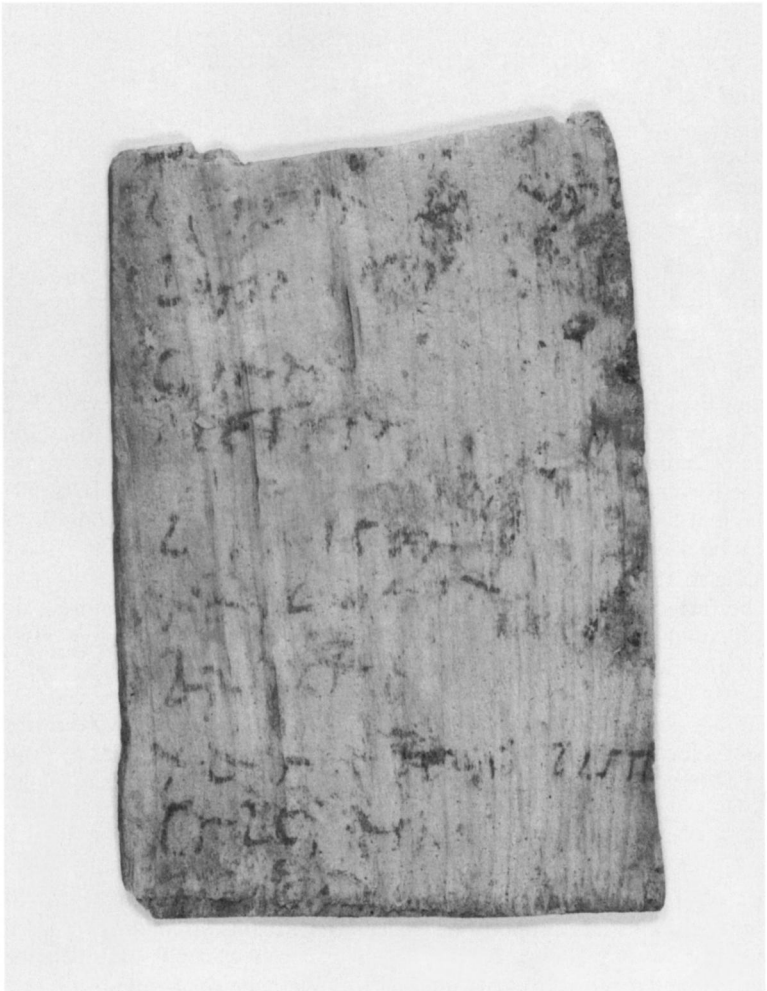

FIG. 5. **858**. 26 x 53 mm. Fragment of a strength report (?).

The lettering is worn and incomplete, and there are dark discolorations which are not ink. The back is blank. In format it is a list of places and special duties to which men and (possibly) centurions have apparently been detached. Compare *RMR* 63 ('Hunt's *pridianum*'), especially 31ff. (detachments '*ad*' this and that). It is not clear from what survives whether each line represents a separate entry, or whether some entries (for example 5–6 and 7–9, and perhaps 3–4) consist of a place-name followed by identification of the detachment; we could, of course, have a mixture of both kinds of entry (lines 1 and 2 and perhaps 7 being single-line entries). In several respects the text resembles a strength report like **154** and **857**, which raises the question of whether **858** is a missing fragment of **857**. But examination of the originals established that they do not match, and here there are no particular palaeographical features which suggest the same hand. There must have been many of these documents, and they would have been dumped *en bloc* when obsolete, so the shared provenance and similar appearance are far from decisive. We have not attempted to translate this lacunose text.

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↓
. . . . . .
ḅ..g̣ia ṿịị[
Londịṇio . [
g̣.aṃ[
..estra[
....icoṇio [
ad ṣç...ia [
Brigae
ad a.....ṣ ịuṣṣ[
calcari.
traces of c. 6 letters

1. There may be faint traces at the edge above, but nothing that is certainly ink. The first letter might be *l* rather than *b*, the second could be *e*; the word certainly ends with *ia*. This suggests *Belgia vii[* . An unknown place-name, apparently, but possibly a slip for *Belgica*; the pre-Conquest name is *Belgium*, but the only authority for (*Gallia*) *Belgia* is a variant reading or slip of the pen in the Ravenna Cosmographer (see *TLL* II 1803.50 = *Itin.Rom.* II, p. 59).
2. *Londịṇio*: the first four letters are reasonably clear, but what follows is complicated by surface dirt. There may be a centurial symbol at the right edge, with a digit (*i*) to follow; this would match the spacing in **154**.9.
3. There may be further traces after *m*, perhaps one or two letters lost before a trace of *i*, thus *g̣.aṃ[..]ị*, which could yield a locative place-name, though we cannot suggest anything suitable. There may be a trace at the right edge which could be a broken digit (*v*?), but not if lines 3 and 4 are a single entry (see above).
4. *..estra[*: there are possible traces following, but nothing clear. If this were a single-line entry we would expect a locative place-name. If a two-line entry, perhaps a word analogous to that in line 9; it would be possible to imagine, for example, *..estra[ri(i)]*, but we have no suggestion for anything suitable.
5. This looks like an *-iconio* place-ending, preceded by the faint trace of *r*, even perhaps of *ir*. The first letter could well be *u/v* with the right-hand side lost. This would give us *Viriconio*, an attested variant of 'Viroconium' in the Antonine Itinerary, which Rivet and Smith (*PNRB*, 505) even suggest 'might more properly be *Viriconium*'. If this strength report is to be dated *c.* A.D. 85–95 (Period I), as the archaeology suggests, it might just fall in the period when there was a legion at Wroxeter: the fortress is thought to have been dismantled in *c.* A.D. 90, having been redundant since the Twentieth Legion was relocated at the end of Agricola's campaigns (White and Barker 1998, 50; Hassall 2000, 51–67). But the place was still an important centre of communications.
6. This must be an *ad* entry (purpose or function for which detached); compare line 8. It is not clear whether these entries are explanatory of the previous (place-name) entry, or independent when, as here, there are no clear traces of numerals at the right edge. What follows *ad* is very uncertain.
7. *Brigae*. For this place-name, see **190**.c.38; **292**.c.2; **581**.33 (note). There is no firm evidence for its identity, cf. A.R. Birley 2002, 135–8 (Kirkbride?). Just possibly traces of numerals at the right edge, in which case this will be a single-line entry.
8. Certainly an *ad* entry. The first letter after *ad* is a good *a*, unless the first element of *m*. Slight traces thereafter, and a bold horizontal in the area of discoloration, most resembling *t*, although *n* is also possible. The word might end *–tos* or *–tus*. At the right *iuss[u* (see **862**.5 and note), followed by a name in the genitive, is possible if the amount lost would accommodate this. Otherwise, we would have to understand this as a number (*lvii[*) and assume it is a separate entry from what follows in lines 9 and 10.

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9. The sequence *calcar-* is a good reading, and the last two letters are perhaps to be read as *is* rather than *ii*, though the latter is defensible. If we read *calcarii*, it presumably means 'lime-burners'; if *calcaris*, it could be the locative of the place-name *Calcaria* (Tadcaster, see *PNRB*, 288–9) and can be taken with what follows in line 10 as a two-line entry. This would better suit the pattern of other entries. There is no sign of any writing at the right-hand edge in line 9. Lime was available close to Vindolanda, see **156**.4, **314**.2 and cf. R. Birley 2009, 61; there is an early-modern lime-kiln a mile away.

859

Inv.no. T02.41. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.72. Dimensions: 6 x 70 mm. Period: II or III. Location: V02.19A, remains of buildings below Rooms 1 and 2 of Period IV structure.

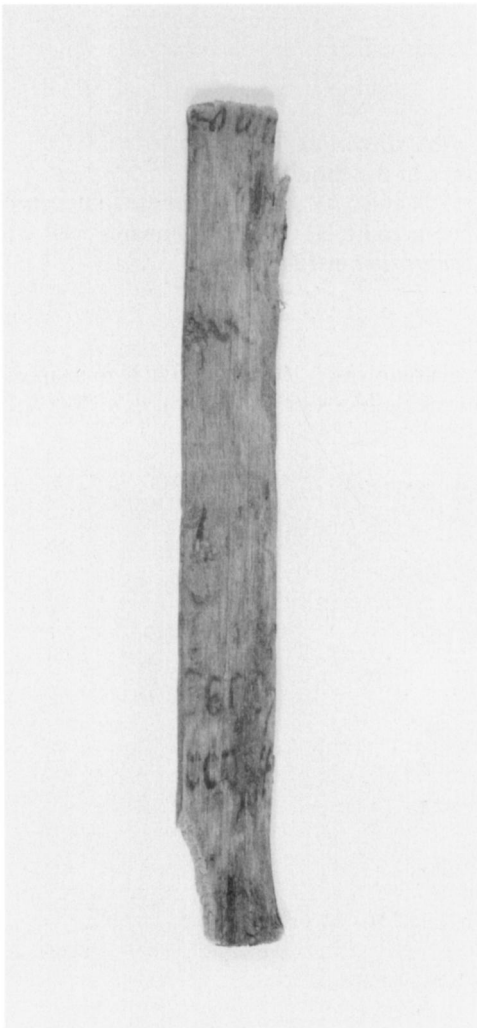

FIG. 6. **859**. 6 x 70 mm. Fragment of a strength report (?).

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A small fragment of a tablet with writing across the grain. The exiguous content which survives, particularly the large numbers in lines 9 and 10, suggests that this is quite likely to be part of a strength report.

↓
. . . . . .
]rouiṇ[
] *traces of 3 ? lines*[
5]am [
] *vacat ?*
]. [
] *traces ?* [
].ṣ ṿii[
]ccclx̣
10]ccclx̣x[
] *traces of 2 lines* [
. . . . . .

1. Presumably *[intra* (or *extra*) *p]rovin[ciam*, cf. **154**.10.
5. Perhaps the end of an entry of the form *ad ...]am* .
9–10. Very large sub-totals, 360 and 370+, are appropriate to the end of a strength report, i.e. the *praesentes* and *absentes*. The grand total of 730+ compares well with the total strength of 752 recorded for the *cohors I Tungrorum* in **154**.3.

860

Inv.no. T03.16(2). BM Registration no. 2004,0501.57. Dimensions: 13 x 21 mm. Period: IV. Location: V38 (drain below stable-block or workshop). A.R. Birley 2005, 92, fig. 136.

FIG. 7. **860**, Side B. 13 x 21 mm. Fragment of a strength report (?).

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A small fragment with writing, probably by the same hand, on both sides (it is not known which is the front and which is the back). The writing on Side A is across the grain and on Side B along the grain. It is possible that the text on Side A is part of an account (see A.R. Birley 2005, 92) but in view of the magnitude of the numbers (see further the note to line 3), we wonder whether it might refer to the size of a military unit and thus be part of a strength report or similar document. The letters have been jotted hastily, without always completing them, to judge by the *m* and *o* on Side B (if that is what they are): this haste and imprecision would be consistent with the scribbled identification of a familiar type of document, in which only the date would really be important. Complementary to this, though equally tentative and uncertain, is the possibility that the text on Side B might be read as a reference to the *cohors III Batauorum*, already attested in the tablets (see above and note 14, but those derive from Period III whereas **860** is attributed to Period IV (and the cohort was in Raetia by A.D. 107)).

Side A:
↓
. . . . .
].[
]am *vacat*
].ḍccx[[i̱i̱i̱]]`iv´ [
. . . . .

Side B:
→
. . . .
] *traces ?* [
]m̱cọhiii[
] *traces ?* [

Side A.3. The *d* appears to be written as a correction over something else, or vice versa. It might have been a denarius symbol, or the first traces at the left, which only partially survive, might be the remains of a denarius symbol. If that is the case, this will be part of an account rather than a strength report, but the figure of 764 denarii, if that is what it is, is abnormally large for a Vindolanda account. On the other hand, 764 is appropriate to the strength of a milliary cohort (see **154**.3).

Side B.2. *m* is broken by the edge and has lost its first stroke; as often in stilus texts, the third of the four conventional diagonal strokes was omitted; *o* is also rather like a stilus-tablet letter, being a hooked stroke followed by a straighter one, which do not actually join. Before that, *c* looks good, but the first stroke of *h* descends in a way not seen elsewhere in the tablets; following that, *iii* with a bar over it looks good. If this is correct we presumably expand/restore it as *[...u]m coh(ortis) iii [Batauorum]*. We do not know what they called their 'strength reports' at Vindolanda: see the commentary to **154** (*Tab.Vindol.* II, p. 91) for the unlikelihood of the document being a *pridianum*. This fragment implies a neuter in *–um* (e.g. *diurnum*?), which would not be surprising (cf. *renuntium*, **574–9** etc.).

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ACCOUNTS AND LISTS (NOS **861–866**)

861

Inv.no. T01.39. BM Registration no. 2004, 0501.35. Dimensions: 210 x 80 mm. Period: IV. Location: V42, Room 4 of a building adjacent to the Period IV *praetorium*. A.R. Birley 2003, 95–9; 2009, no. 7.

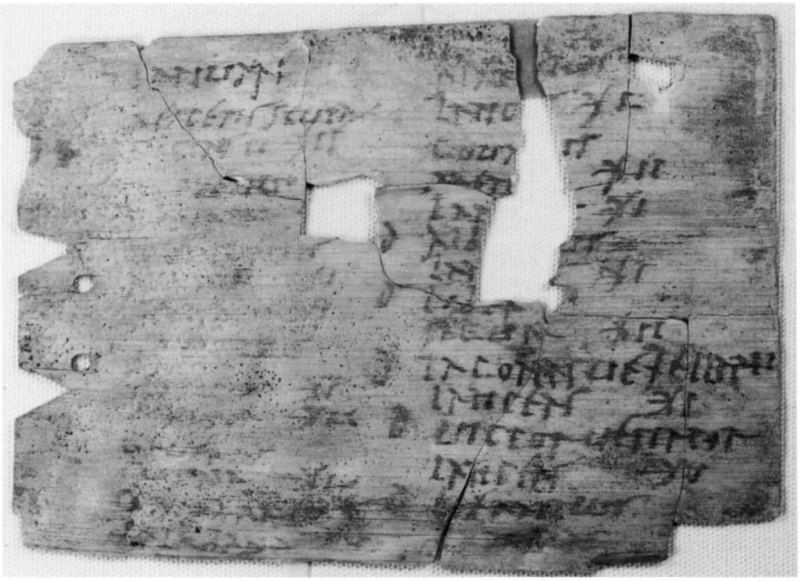

Fig. 8 i (left)

Fig. 8 ii (right)

FIG. 8. **861**. 210 x 80 mm. Account: (i) Left-hand side; (ii) Right-hand side (the small fragment placed at the top of the lower leaf in A.R. Birley 2009, plate on p. 292, does not fit there and is omitted from our plate).

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Double leaf (diptych) now fragmented, with a few pieces missing. The edges survive almost entire, with double tie-holes and notches to left and right. The account consists of 37 lines of text arranged in three columns, a format only paralleled by **184**, except that Cols i and ii are written on the first leaf, and Col. iii on the left half only of the second leaf; the right half is blank. Col. i is badly worn, and largely illegible after i.2. Like **184**, the account is headed by the name of a century and records names, each followed in the next line by a commodity with its cost, but the latter are not indented. Six names and one commodity are annotated with *d*, meaning apparently that they were still 'owing', an annotation comparable with the check marks found in **184**. The heading 'century of Ianuarius' indicates that the men are infantry soldiers, despite the problem of Tagomas the *uexellarius* (see below, 25 note), and raises the same question as **184** of whether this account is 'official'; they both probably represent transactions between soldiers and a civilian entrepreneur.

i

→

1 (centuria) Ianuari
[C]ṛescens scuta(rius)
...aṛiạ (denarios) i s(emissem)
.....aṭo
5 *traces* (denarios) [
traces s
traces (denarios) i s(emissem)
traces
traces
10 *traces* ṣ
traces (denarios) i =
Ẹẹu...us
.u.riạ (denarios) i s(emissem)
Ẹ.....ṣ
15 .ạlaḅra. (denarios) ..

ii

A.ṃ[..]ṭus
lanc[ea]ṣ (denarios) i =
Goua[..]us
men[ ] (denarios) ii
20 lan[cea]s (denarium) i
d Alb[...(.)]us
laṇ[cea]ṣ (denarium) i
d Liber
sagum (denarios) ii
25 d Tagomas uexellarius
lanceas (denarium) i
d Victor uenator
lanceas (denarios) v
d Ẹẹrriṇus
30 [la]ṇçẹạṣ (denarium) [

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iii

Ṇ.ḍṛ...s
sagellụm (denarios) ii
d Ṇeso
lancea[s] (denarium) i
35 Tullio
d sudariu[m] (denarium) i
uacat
sum(ma) (denarios) xxix s(emissem)

(i.1–15)

'Century of Ianuarius
Crescens the shield-maker
towels (?), denarii 1½
[ ]ato
5 ... denarii ...
[ ]s
... denarii 1½
...
...
10 [ ]s
... denarius 1, asses 2
Geu[ ]us
... denarii 1½
C[ ]s
15 axe (?), denarii ['

(ii.16–30)

'A.m[ ]tus
spears, denarius 1, asses 2
Goua[ ]us
table (?), denarii 2
20 spears, denarius 1
d Alb[ ]us
spears, denarius 1
d Liber
cloak, denarii 2
25 *d* Tagomas the *uexellarius*
spears, denarius 1
d Victor the huntsman
spears, denarii 5
d Verrinus
30 spears (?), denarius ['

(iii.31–7)

'N.dr[ ]s
small cloak, denarii 2
d Neso

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spears, denarius 1
35 Tullio
d towel, denarius 1

total, denarii 29½'

1. There is slight but sufficient trace of the centurial sign, which would resemble a modern '7' as in **862**.3. The men were thus infantry soldiers; there is no sign of another heading. Their purchase of 'spears' (*lanceae*) does not contradict this, despite the contemporary letter from Carlisle (*Tab. Luguval.* 16 = *Britannia* 29 (1998), 55–63) which details the two types of *lancea* 'lost' by members of a cavalry *ala*. Infantry also used *lanceae*, notably Catiline's improvised legionaries in 62 B.C. (Sallust, *Cat.* 56.3) and the Third Legion combating the mounted Rhoxolani in A.D. 69 (Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.79; cf. Josephus, *BJ* 3.95). But the presence of Tagomas the *uexellarius* remains a problem, since he was a cavalryman (line 25, see further below).
2. *scuta* is complete (the diagonal stroke belongs to the line below), and must be *scutarius* ('shield-maker') abbreviated. It cannot be a commodity ('shields'), since Crescens' purchase is entered in the next line with its cost, the format used throughout. *scutarii* are not included in the *Digest*'s list of *immunes* (50.6.7), but are well attested at Vindolanda (**160**.4, *[sc]utarius*, and **184**.21, *Lucius scutarius*), and at Vindonissa (*Tab.Vindon.* 168, no. 35, *Valerio scutario*). The term *scuta(rius)* was probably added for identification, like *uexellarius* in 25 and *uenator* in 27: the names *Crescens* and *Victor* are common, and already attested at Vindolanda; *Tagomas* is much less common, but there was another man of this name here, the *faber* in **862**.11.
3. The traces are compatible with the word-ending *-aria* (a neuter plural commodity), and there is space for three or four letters before it; to judge by the spacing of *sudariu[m]* in 36, *[sud]aria* is a possible restoration.
4. The termination of this name is unusual, apparently *-ato* or even *-aio*, if the seeming cross-stroke of *t* is only discoloration along the fibre.
5–11. These lines are so badly worn as to be illegible except for the end of the name in 8 (perhaps *-as*) and traces of cost at the ends of 5, 7 and 11. Names evidently alternated with costed commodities, as in the rest of the account, but it is not possible to see whether any of these names was preceded by the annotation *d* (see note to 21).
11. The denarius-symbol is followed by two strokes which are slightly different from each other, but the traces are compatible with the same reading as 17. Since four asses would be only one-quarter of a denarius, and the total (37) ends in half a denarius, another four asses are missing; the end of a lost entry, presumably, or of two which both ended in '2 asses'.
12. The name is otherwise unattested.
13. Another neuter plural commodity in *-ria* costing 1½ denarii like line 3, but there does not seem to be enough space to restore *[s]u[da]ria*. We agree with Birley that the first letter might be *c*, but not that *cu[cum]a[m]* ('kettle') is a possible restoration.
14. An illegible name.
15. The trace of the first letter is compatible with *d*, but the second letter looks like *a*, not *o*. Birley's restoration of *[do]labra[m]* ('axe') is attractive, but would require a difficult mis-spelling, **dalabram*.
16. Another difficult name. Birley reads the well-attested *Atrectus*, but his *r* is not possible: it is either *a* or (as the second diagonal suggests) *m*. The marks between this line and the upper edge are casual discoloration, not ink.
17. The digit after the denarius-symbol is followed by two short horizontal strokes for asses, of which there were 16 to the denarius. Examples are also found in *Tab.Vindol.* III, **596**, **764**, App. **182**, **184**; see further **596** introduction.
18. An unattested name, presumably German.

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19. The only feasible restoration seems to be *men[sam]* or *men[sas]*, 'table' or 'tables'. Furniture is out of place among these commodities of personal use or wear, so this may be an unknown technical term. Vitruvius (10.11.6) applies *mensa* to the 'bed' of a catapult, which is also out of place here, but the joking reference to slices of bread as *mensas* in Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.116, suggests that it might be applied to any flat, 'tray'-like item.

21. The first surviving annotation of *d* to the left of a name, as also in 23, 25, 27, 29 and 33. In 36 it is placed against a commodity, *sudariu[m]*, but this is presumably a slip at the very end of the list; Birley notes as 'a curious coincidence' that its only occurrence in **184** (37) is also before *sudar(ium)* rather than a name.

Here in **861**, Birley understands *d* as 'a rather drastic abbreviation' for *duplicarius*, but recognises that it is almost unparalleled. He cites *CIL* III, 1189 and might have added *AE* 1955, 67, but in both it is conjectural. Better would have been M.P. Speidel 1994, nos 524 and 556, which are two probable instances among the inscriptions of the imperial mounted guards (*equites singulares Augusti*) at Rome; but even this collection offers many instances of the abbreviation *dup(licarius)* or *dupl(icarius)*, which is standard not only in stone inscriptions, but also in military documents (*RMR*, pp. 540 and 557) including Vindolanda (**312**.back 3). We cannot see the need to note that some of the soldiers charged were on double pay; if identification were needed, as for Crescens, Tagomas and Victor, it would have been added after their name. But there was obvious need to note any sums outstanding, so we suggest that *d* is for *debet* ('he owes'). *debent* ('they owe') is explicit in **181**.10, and the abbreviated *deb(et)* is part of a marginal annotation to **586**. *d* is found as a one-letter abbreviation in an account (**808**) where the context is too slight to establish its meaning, but it certainly forms part of longer epigraphic formulas such as *d(are) d(ebebit)*. Its use here should be compared with the practice in **184**, where some commodities have check marks before them, corresponding to the *d* already noted before *sudar(ium)* (**184**.37). This entry, like three others in **184**, was then crossed out by a horizontal line indicating that it had subsequently been paid. Similar crossings-out are also found in **182**.

The names *Albanus* and *Albinus* both occur in Vindolanda ink-texts, and are popular in Gaul, but would not fill the space available; 3–4 letters have been lost. This must be a derived name such as *Alb[ian]us*.

23. Birley tentatively reads *Liber[iu]s*, but there is a clear space after *Liber*, and no further writing on this line, so the name is complete.

24. The *sagum* is the standard military cloak, explicitly 'military' in *Tab. Luguval.* 24 (*Britannia* 29 (1998), 66), and well attested at Vindolanda. Unfortunately the cost of the *sagum* in **192**.8 is lost, since '2 denarii' in 24 (the reading is certain) seems rather cheap: it is the same as a *sagellum* (32), and only twice the price of a *sudarium* (36); contrast 5 denarii, 3 asses, for a *sagaciam* (**184**.20) and 11½ denarii for a *(sagum) infiblatorium* (**596**.i.3).

25. This is the only line which continues on to the right leaf. Tagomas is amply annotated by Birley, who identifies him with the *uexsillarius* Tagamas in **181**.14–15, where he is named immediately after the *equites Vardulli*, cavalry seconded from the part-mounted *cohors I fida Vardullorum*, of whom he was surely one. He is unlikely to have been their commander, unless the detachment was very small, since this would have been a post for a decurion. Without being aware of **862**.11 and **864**.5, which provide further evidence, Birley deduces from the inscribed amphora handle found in the same building (*Britannia* 34 (2003), 377, no. 37) that *Tagomas* was the preferred form of the name. He also reads the annotation to the left as a barred *u* for *u(e)x(illarius)*, but this is not an attested symbol. The graffito to which he refers (now *Britannia* 36 (2005), 493, no. 48) does not really read TAGO; the excavators originally read TAPEO, and there is a more nuanced account in A.R. Birley 2005, 96 with fig. 138.4. After TA, there is C with a small scratch, perhaps casual; then a tiny hook, not necessarily a letter; and finally a triangle, one line extended, which if it were a letter would be O or D. Even admitting the identification with Tagomas, and the interpretation of the triangle as a barred *u* for *u(e)x(illarius)*, we cannot

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see why it should be used here to annotate his name, since this was immediately followed by *uexellarius* in full. Instead, we read a slightly angular *d* for *d(ebet)* (compare 21, with note).

The term *uexillarius* derives from *uexillum*, the 'flag' borne by cavalry units as well as by detachments (*uexillationes*) of infantry or cavalry. It is used collectively of the members of a detachment (Saxer 1967, *passim*), but in the singular a *uexillarius* was specifically a 'flag-bearer'. This would be an infantry post if the detachment were infantry, notably legionary veterans (*CIL* V, 4903, *uexillarius ueteranorum legionis*) and by extension the centuries of Vigiles at Rome (for example *ILS* 2169). For this reason, perhaps, inscriptions often specify that a *uexillarius* was 'of cavalry' (*equitum*). In general it was a cavalry post; the evidence is incomplete, but the modern consensus (after Cheesman 1914, 39–40; and see note to *RIB* II.7, 2501.14) is that there was only one *uexillarius* in an *ala*, but eight in a part-mounted cohort, one to each troop (*turma*). However, judging by the cohort at Dura, where there were four *uexillarii* in a single troop (*RMR* 1, xxxviii.23, xxxix.9, 13 and 17), the duty might also have been shared. More surprisingly, two troops there contained a *uex(illarius) (centuriae)* (*RMR* 2, xxxviii.8 and xl.9), perhaps in imitation of legions, where a cavalry *uexillarius* did indeed belong to a century (*BGU* II, 600, with M.P. Speidel 1986, 165–7), but it would be difficult to extend this anomaly to Vindolanda.

To conclude, therefore, although Tagomas might have been an infantryman, this would be unlikely, even if there were no reason to associate him with the *equites Vardulli*. Birley recognises the difficulty, and in his note to i.1 suggests that *equites Vardulli* were perhaps listed 'from about line 9'. But there is no sign of this, and the presence of a cavalry NCO remains a problem.

27. Victor, like Crescens and Tagomas, is distinguished from homonyms. *uenatores* are included in the *Digest*'s list of *immunes* (50.6, 7), and *CIL* III, 7449 explicitly refers to *im(m)unes uen(atores)* of *legio XI Claudia*. At Birdoswald, the *uenatores Banniess(es)* formed a distinctive group (*RIB* I, 1905). At Vindolanda the prefect Cerialis refers to 'his' huntsmen (**615**, *uenatores mei*), and there are other allusions to hunting (**594** introduction).

28. The numeral is rather cramped in contrast to the wide *u* elsewhere, but there is sufficient trace of the initial downstroke and diagonal before the bold final stroke. This is much higher than the other charges for *lanceas*, '1' in 20, 22, 26 and 34; and '1¼' in 17. (The numeral in 30 is lost.)

29. Birley reads the well-attested name *Exomnius*, but the first letter is nothing like *e*; it looks rather like *u* written twice; then *x* is possible, but looks more like *e*. There is no sign of *o*. Next *m* is possible, but would be unlike the well-preserved *m* in *Tagomas* (25); a better reading is *rr*. *Verrinus* is only attested once as a Latin cognomen (*CIL* II, 4242), but in the present context may rather be related to the Frisian name *Verritus* (Tacitus, *Ann.* 13.54).

30. The traces are rather slight, but compatible with another *lanceas* entry.

31. Birley's *Necalamęs* is attractive in view of *RIB* I, 1793 and 1794 (Carvoran), but requires some forced readings such as the stubby downstroke and long horizontal stroke as *l*, although they are nothing like the tall narrow *l* everywhere else in this tablet; *me* cannot be read at all.

32. The reading *sagellu* is straightforward, after which two short downstrokes, each accompanied by slight trace of a cross-stroke, provide the expected *m*. *sagellum* must be a diminutive of *sagum* alternative to the usual form *sagulum*, and (as *sacellum*) is also found in *Tab. Sulis* 33. Since it costs the same as a *sagum* (24), it was presumably finer in some way.

33. The name is not attested. Birley reads *Atepo*, a well attested Celtic name, but the initial *n* cannot be read as *at*: contrast the *t* of *Tullio* (35), and *ag* in *sagum* (24) and *Tagomas* (25), where the diagonal of *a* is completed before the next downstroke is made. But we endorse his previous (2003) reading of *s*, instead of *p*, in view of the letter's upward second stroke which excludes *p* (see **856** note).

35. The name is well attested at Vindolanda (**184**, two instances, one a centurion; **185**), but it was not thought necessary to identify him further.

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36. *sudarium* is a frequent entry in **184**, where it is noted that it was a towel or napkin, perhaps for use in the baths, which could be worn around the neck like a scarf (cf. Suetonius, *Nero* 51); it was worn thus to catch sweat (*sudum*), perhaps also to prevent armour from chafing. It also occurs in *Tab. Vindol.* III, App. **440**.3.
37. The total is separated from 36 by space for four or five lines, and may have been added later, perhaps by another hand: the angular *u* is quite unlike the flat-bottomed *u* in previous lines. The total of '29½ denarii' for eighteen commodities accords with the surviving figures. If we exclude the '5 denarii' in line 28 as exceptional, the other thirteen figures total 17¾ denarii, leaving 6¾ denarii for the four lost figures in total. The average cost is much the same throughout.

862

Inv.no. T02.25. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.64. Dimensions: 93 x 113 mm. Period: II or III. Location: V02-19A, remains of buildings below Rooms 1 and 2 of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 107–8; 2009, no. 5.

FIG. 9. **862**. 93 x 113 mm. List of *fabri*.

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A leaf with eleven lines of text written across the grain. Two tie-holes and notches at the top end. The top right corner is lost, and with it the end of line 1. A small part of the left edge is lost, and with it part of the first letter of line 4 and the first letter of line 6. Otherwise it is almost complete, but now fragmented into four pieces. Unusually the wood is oak, and special difficulty is caused by broken vertical 'lines' which look like ink, but must be grain, although sometimes it seems that ink has also run into the fibres. We do not agree with Birley that 'most of the surviving lettering is particularly difficult to read', since we have had the benefit of improved scans; but since his own reading is little more than 'traces' and disconnected letters except in lines 1–2 and *faber* in 7, we have not thought it necessary to indicate where it diverges from our own. The hand is idiosyncratic. Most striking is *t*, with its extended cross-stroke and sometimes exaggerated size, especially when it is the first letter of 8 and 11. The upper diagonal of *a* is often prolonged to the left, cutting the previous letter and extending still further. *r* has a long sinuous descender, and like *t* is sometimes exaggerated in size, notably as the second letter of 8. As in **160** (see below), there is occasional use of interpunct.

The text is a note of work done in the *fabrica* by the century of Firmus, dated 20 April. The heading may refer explicitly to *fabri*, and it is certain that three men are named and identified as *faber*, preceded by two items for the first *faber* and two for the second pair of *fabri*. They were hardly the actual workmen (since there must have been many more from a century), but rather the qualified craftsmen in charge of each project. The best parallel for the tablet as a whole is an Egyptian papyrus, *P. Berlin* 6765 = *ChLA* X, 409, which records work in a legionary *fabrica* over two successive days. Each of its two columns is headed by the date (18 and 19 April), and itemises objects made or rather processed (for example shields 'flattened'); but personnel are not named, only entered collectively by military status (*immunes*, *cohortales* etc.). At Vindolanda the best parallel is **160**, too fragmentary for full interpretation, which appears to record names in the nominative, followed by their trade and century; it too refers to *faber* (A12, B4, B9) and probably to *[fe]rrum* ('iron', A13). *Tab.Vindol.* III, App. **155** may also be noted; it too is dated (24 April), and records the numbers of men *in officis*, engaged in various duties relating to building-work.

↓
Xii K(alendas) Maiạ[s] fa.[ ]
[o]pus · fabricae
· (centuria)· Firmị
.ocridem · ḟactam ad uetu-
5 ram · iussu Musụruni (centurionis)
[c]ịrcolas factas at.ṣ.ạs n(umero) viii
Huenṇius faber
trauersaṛia facta n(umero) v
item ferruṃ [p]ṛọḍuctụṃ
10 Anḍạuer faḅẹṛ
T- *vacat*
-agomas faber
vacat

'20 April, craftsmen for (?)
the work of the workshop,
century of Firmus.
A *uocris* made for a vehicle,
by order of Musurunus, centurion.
[c]ircolas made … to the number of 8.

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Huennius(?) craftsman.
Cross-bars made, to the number of 5.
Also, iron drawn out.
Andauer craftsman,
Tagomas craftsman.'

1. After *ma* there is a vertical streak coinciding with the grain, better suited to *i* than *r*, perhaps followed by the edge of *a*; thus a date in April, not February.

After the date, between the second tie-hole and the broken edge, are two downstrokes, the second curving left, both cut by a diagonal; part of a loop follows. They cannot be *Batau[orum?]* as Birley suggests, but a truncated *fab[...]* resembling that in *fabricae* (2) is perfectly possible; the diagonal of *a* would be elongated, but not so acute, as usual. The word was hardly *fab[rica]*, in view of line 2, but reference to *fab[ri]* here would anticipate *faber* nicely in 7, 10 and 12. After it there would be space for *ad*, as the preposition before *opus*, of which there is no sign in 2; the latter was evidently centred to complete the heading.

3. The centurial sign (resembling a modern '7') is unmistakable, with its descender reaching the foot of the line below. The bold *i* which terminates *Firmi* overlaps with the descender of *r* from the line above, to the right of which are two vertical streaks in the fibre, but they are not in alignment with 3, and are probably not letters. A 'century of Firmus' is not attested, but in **180** one Firmus gives orders; he is evidently an officer, and the phrase *iussu Firmi* there (**180**.23, and perhaps also 12) is reminiscent of *iussu Musuruni (centurionis)* here in 5.

4. The first word presents problems of reading and interpretation. Only a curved stroke remains of the first letter, which is most likely *u*; then *o*, and *c* (like that in *fabricae*) rather than *p*; finally *-ridem*, the *i* being reduced to a streak in the fibre. Hence *u̯ocridem*, the accusative of **uocris*, a noun not attested. In response to our enquiry, Dr Paul Russell (University of Cambridge) kindly supplied the following note which we reproduce verbatim:

> This is likely to be a Latinisation of a Celtic word. Assuming that the first letter is *u-*, then the stem *uocrid-* is probably to be identified with the stem of the Old Irish verb *fo-cridigedar*, parts of which are used to gloss compounds of the Latin verb *cingere* 'bind' in the Milan glosses on the Pauline epistles; see *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus. A Collection of Old-Irish Glosses, Scholia, Prose and Verse*, ed. W. Stokes and J. Strachan, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3), I.55 (fol. 27c5), I.70 (fol. 31c7), etc. The formation of verbs in *-(a)igidir* is usually denominative, and so the stem is probably nominal or adjectival. The same stem can also be found in the word for a belt, Old Cornish *grugis* (glossing *cingulum*), Old Breton *guecrissou*, Welsh *gwregys*, Middle Irish *fochrus* < **wo-kris* (< **-krid-tu-*), and the simple uncompounded stem in Old Cornish *kreis* (glossing *camisia*), Middle Welsh *crys* 'shirt', Old Irish *criss* (*u*-stem) 'belt, binding' < **krid-tu-* (and perhaps also, as suggested by Schrijver, in the Cornish and Breton words for 'middle', Middle Cornish *kreys* and Breton *kreiz*). For the linguistic details, see J. Vendryes, *Lexique Étymologique de l'Irlandais Ancien C*, ed. E. Bachellery and P.-Y. Lambert (Dublin/Paris, 1987), C-236, s.v. cridig-, C-238, s.v. cris; for a different view, which may require modification if this analysis of *uocridem* is correct, see P. Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology* (Amsterdam, 1995), 321. The prefix **wo-* in such forms probably means 'under' (< **upo-*) and so semantically it has a similar structure to Latin *succingulum*, *succinctus*, etc. Thus, we would have stem meaning literally 'under-binding'; in the insular Celtic languages it is used most often of clothing, but there is no reason why it should not be used in other semantically similar contexts. In reference to a part of a wagon, it may be some kind of binding which holds the framework of the wagon together, or perhaps some kind of tarpaulin which covers the load and ties underneath.

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The next word ends in *actam* or *aptam* (but the letter before the obvious *t* looks more like *c* in *fabricae* than *p*), and the upward stroke of *f* can just be distinguished from the cross-stroke of *t* and the downstroke of *i* at the end of *Firmi* (3). This reading is supported by *factas* (6) and *facta* (8) in the corresponding entries below. Although *uecturam* / *uecturas* means 'transport (costs)' in **615**.A.2 and **649**.ii.12 and 14, as Russell's note suggests, the sense here is more likely to be concrete, 'a vehicle (for transport)', as in **600**.ii.2, *ad capsum ueturae*, 'for the body of the carriage'; the loss of *c* is a trivial Vulgarism (Adams 2003, 558–9).

5. For *iussu* with the name of the originating officer in the genitive, cf. **180**.5, 12 and 23, **858**.8 (?); *RMR* 63, ii 4 and 5. The centurion's name is not attested, but the name *Musuri[us?]* occurs on a military diploma found at Lyon (*CIL* XVI, 147). The reading is certain except for the second vowel, which has been damaged in the break; but the traces and the spacing suit *u* better than *i*.

6. Like **uocris*, this seems to be another technical term, perhaps **[c]ircolas* for *circulos*, 'circular' objects apparently connected with transport. In view also of the *fabri* (7, 10, 12) and *ferrum* (9), we conjecture that they are iron hoops, 'tyres' made for wheels. According to Quintilian (1.5.8), *cantus* was the word for 'the iron-binding of wheels' ('*ferrum quo rotae uinciuntur*'), but he regards it as not Latin; certainly it is rare, and there may have been a more homely synonym. Diocletian's Prices Edict (15.31–40) quotes for wheeled vehicles 'without iron' (*sine ferro*); the Latin of this chapter is defective, but the Greek translation shows that iron fittings as well as tyres are meant: note especially 15.36, '*u[ehicula cum canthis et ferr]aturis*'. The adjective(?) after *factas* may refer to the fitting of these tyres, but we cannot decipher it.

The first digit of the numeral is cut by the descender of the centurial sign (5), and is certainly *v*, not *x*. A little after *viii*, and running at a different angle, there is apparently a fine diagonal stroke descending below the line; but we do not think it is part of the numeral, and are not even sure it is ink.

7. The name begins with *Hue-* and ends in *-us*, with five digits in between. There is some indication that they fall into two pairs each linked by a cross-stroke, followed by *i*, which makes *Huennius* an attractive reading, but not certain since the name is unattested (see, however, the nomen *Vennia* in Alföldy 1968, 52, no. 134). The aspirated *u* identifies it as German, and perhaps it should also be read in **184**.27. Huennius(?), like Andauer (10) and Tagomas (11), is identified as a *faber*, which does not mean simply a workman in a *fabrica* (that would be *fabricensis*), but a specialist craftsman, an 'engineer' or 'smith', one of the many *immunes* listed by the *Digest* (50.6, 7). Evidently they were supervisors in charge of the various projects.

8. Initial *t* is exaggerated (as in 11), and the descender of *r* reaches the foot of 10 and the leaf-edge. The noun *transuersaria* (neuter plural) is used by Vitruvius (10.14.1) for the cross-beams under a *testudo*, a strongly-built siege engine on wheels. In this context of transport and iron-working, *tra(ns)uersaria* would be iron braces 'across' a vehicle to hold it together, one of the iron fittings to which the Prices Edict refers (see above, note to 6). *trauersaria* is an alternative form with reflexes in Romance (e.g. Fr. *travers*); the grammarian Velius Longus notes that *trans* was sometimes reduced to *tra-* in compounds (Keil, *Grammatici Latini* VII, p. 66).

There is a horizontal line above *n(umero) viii*, but this is not to mark the numeral; it extends from the *t* of *facta*. There is another just below, which belongs to the *t* of *[p]roductum*.

9. *item* is frequent in lists and accounts (at Vindolanda **180**.10, 31, 34 and 37; **182** i.7) to introduce a new entry. *ferrum* (which in association with *faber* should probably be restored in **160**.13) is qualified here by a compound of *ductum*, for which there is sufficient trace of the prepositional *[p]ro*. This technical sense is omitted from standard dictionaries, but is evident in Juvenal, *Sat.* 15.165–6, who uses *produxisse* (with the synonym *extendere*) in the sense of forging 'deadly iron' into weapons; and it is well illustrated by Cyprian, *Ep.* 69.8, '*turibula quoque ipsa ... conflata atque igne purgata in laminas ductiles producuntur*' ('[pagan] censers are melted and purified by fire, before being drawn out into metal sheets'). But dictionaries do recognise the

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derived adjective *productilis*, frequent in the Vulgate in the sense 'of beaten work, of highly wrought metal' (to quote Lewis and Short).
10. The name is not attested. The prefix *ande-* and the element *uero-s* are frequent in Celtic personal names, but in the circumstances this is more likely to be a German name.
11–12. Initial *t* is greatly exaggerated so as to fill half a line, the rest of which is blank; the name was completed on the line below. Tagomas is not the *uexillarius* (**861**.25 note) since he is identified as *faber*.

863

Inv.no. T02.24. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.63. Dimensions: 14 x 107 mm. Period: II or III. Location: V02-19A, remains of buildings below Rooms 1 and 2 of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 107.

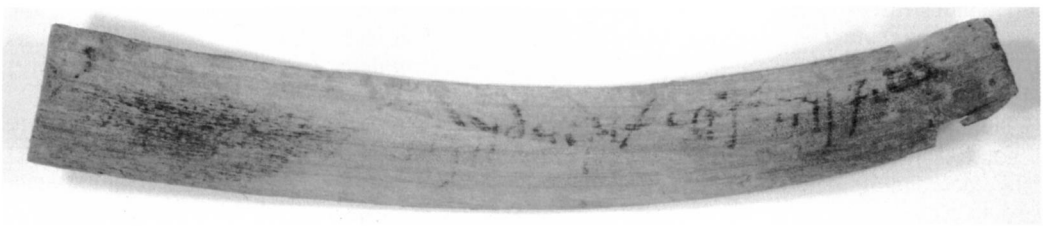

FIG. 10. **863**. Side B. 14 x 107 mm. Name-tag (?).

Fragment of a leaf preserving the whole width but now warped into a curve. The short edges are original. Both long edges are broken and notched towards one end, probably by the tie-holes, but perhaps for re-use as a label (see below). Inscribed both sides, A across the grain with part of an account(?), B along the grain with a personal name.

A
↑
]ṣo
].xxxụṣ
traces
traces
5 *traces*
traces
]mand..
].r..

2. Perhaps a numeral ending in '35½'.
7. In an account, we would expect *mandata* or similar (cf. **610**.19 note), but in view of B, this might be the name *Manduorix*. We cannot tell whether A is related to B (the latter identifying the purchaser) or not related (but re-used as a label).

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B
→
[[*traces*]] Ṃanduo̩rix Vastini filia

'… Manduorix, daughter of Vastinus'

The 'traces' are very smudged, and may be an erasure of an earlier attempt to write the same name, *Manduorix*. This is not attested, but both elements are frequent in Celtic names. Some names in *–rix* are feminine, for example *Tancorix mulier* at Old Carlisle (*RIB* 908). Dr Paul Russell kindly observes that *mandu-* ('concerned with') is the interpretation offered by Holder, *Altceltische Sprachschatz* (1896–1913), and noted secondarily in D. Ellis Evans, *Gaulish Personal Names* (1967), 223; more recent interpretations tend to prefer the sense of 'pony', see P. Russell and A. Mullen, *Celtic Personal Names of Roman Britain* at http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/personalnames/search.php?s_element=mandu-, X. Delamarre, *Noms de personnes celtiques dans l'épigraphie classique* (2007), 226. For the patronym, *Vassinus* might have been expected (cf. *RIB* 215), but there is no trace of a second *s*; instead the letter is *c* or more likely *t*. *Vastus* is found as a cognomen in Narbonensis (*CIL* XII 537; 2463), and it is the name of a potter at La Graufesenque (Marichal (1988), No. 77, cf. 203, No. 98). Russell notes that *Vastinus* would be a Latin derivative of a stem *vasto-*; this is the linguistically earlier form of *vasso-* 'slave, servant', a common name-element (cf. also Old Irish *foss*, Middle Welsh *gwas* 'servant', all of which < **wo-sto-* (lit. 'standing under')); see Russell and Mullen at http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/personalnames/search.php?s_element=uasso-; Delamarre, op. cit., 235; M. E. Raybould and P. Sims-Williams, *Introduction and Supplement to the Corpus of Latin Inscriptions of the Roman Empire containing Celtic Personal Names* (2009), 175, 238.

864

Inv.no. T02.16. BM Registration no. 2994, 0501.57. Dimensions: 67 x 20 mm. Period II or III. Location: V02-19A, remains of buildings below Rooms 1 and 2 of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 104–6; 2009, no. 4.

FIG. 11. **864**. 67 x 20 mm. Account.

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Fragment with part of two columns of personal names. The right edge is original, with a tie-hole and notch. The top edge might be original. The others are broken. The complete name in line 3 locates the width of Col. i, and implies that no letter has been lost entirely in 1 and 2. The original leaf would have been wide enough for a third column to the left of Col. i. The remains of the denarius-symbol in 8 suggest that the text is some sort of account, and not just a list of names (cf. **161** introduction), but there is no annotation against individual names as in **609**, so the format is unparalleled.

→
i
Medragus
Aceptus
Proculus
traces
. . . . .
ii
5 Tagomas
Secundus
Mansuetus
(denarios) ..
. . . . .

1. The name is not attested, but the reading is certain. In this hand, final *-us* is run together, with *u* reduced almost to a dash (as seen most clearly in 7), so the previous little stroke is part of *g* (compare that in 5).
2. The end of this name is difficult, and we conjecture that *ts* has been corrected to *tus*. Before it, *acep* is possible by understanding the defective first letter as the end of *a*. **Aceptus* would be a mis-spelling of the well attested *Acceptus* due to failure to geminate the first consonant; this is rare, but there are two examples in Noricum (*CIL* III, 5131; Weber 1969, no. 355).
5. The initial *t* has lost its cross-stroke, but otherwise the reading is certain. There is no indication whether this is the *uexillarius* (**861**.25 note) or the *faber* (**862**.11–12).
7. Birley offers *Attius Iustus*, 'but it must be conceded that the postulated *-us* of *Attius* is difficult'. We endorse this comment, and would be surprised to find nomen and cognomen in what appears to be a list of cognomina. But the reading of *Mansuetus* is straightforward. The name is already attested at Vindolanda (**580**.6 note), and like *Proculus* and *Secundus* is very common.
8. Two large diagonals intersect at the broken edge, and we take them to be the top of a denarius-symbol. To the right, trace of two strokes, an illegible numeral.

865

Inv.no. T02.45. BM Registration no. 2005,0501.75. Dimensions: 40 x 85 mm. Period: III. Location: V02-27A, dividing wall between Period III structures, below wall and drain to east of Period IV building. A.R. Birley 2003, 113–14.
Six joining fragments of an account written across the grain, the edges all broken except perhaps for the bottom. It was not possible to reassemble the fragments completely for photography, and there is a seventh, the sliver with trace of denarius-symbols not transcribed, which could only be placed somewhere to the right. The format is best seen at the bottom (12–14), but can be recognised in the lines above: a list of commodities, each numbered or quantified, with a note of its cost. Since the left margin is unknown, it is hard to guess what they were.

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↓
] *trace*
] *trace*
].aẹ *trace*
] *traces*
5] *traces* ççcl
]b *traces* (denarios) [
]ḥunes *traces* (denarios) [
].ucis *traces* (denarios) [
]bal. *traces* (denarios) [
10][[.est. *traces*]][
]..a *traces* (denarios) [
].rcariạ *traces* (denarios) [
].ides *traces* (denarios) [
].ae cclxiii (denarios) [
. . . . . .

3. Perhaps a word ending in *-cae*.
5. *cl* is plain, so this is a numeral; *l* is extended right, as if to mark it as the final digit. This would suggest a round number, perhaps '350' items. Compare 14 (below).
6–10. All that survives of the denarius-symbols in these lines is the horizontal stroke left, and part of one diagonal in 8, but they can be restored from 11–14.
8. Possibly *[n]ucis*, 'nuts', with the variety specified; the 'traces' which follow are compatible with *m(odium) i*, 'one bushel', but this is conjectural. Hazelnuts have been found at Vindolanda, and cf. **591**.a.2, *nucul(a)e*. For nuts in the military diet, see Davies 1989, 198.
11. This entry has been crossed out by a horizontal line, perhaps meaning that it has been paid (see note to **861**.21).
12. *paria* cannot be read (with Birley), not only because it is preceded by *r*, but because the first letter's second stroke trends upward for *c*, not *p*. The word-ending *-aria* (for a neuter-plural commodity) is attractive, but would mean that *a* has an extra stroke to the right (cf. **855** introduction) which it does not have elsewhere in this text.
13. *ides* is preceded by a faint horizontal stroke, perhaps for *s*. There is no sign of a succeeding *t*, which excludes Birley's reading of *id est*, which in any case would be redundant before the denarius-symbol and is not found before any of the others. He rejects the idea of *[parop]sides* ('side-plates', cf. **194**.A.3), but this is a possibility.
14. This commodity was worth numbering exactly ('263'), unlike the rounded figure in line 5; but at Vindolanda even coriander seeds were counted, to the number of '1,884' (*RIB* II.8, 2503.1).

866

Inv.no. T02.57. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.86. Dimensions: 22 x 66 mm. Period: VIA (probably). Location: V02-40A, a ditch cutting through an Antonine causeway. A.R. Birley 2003, 115; 2009, no. 11 (one fragment only).
Three joining fragments of an account or list, inscribed across the grain. Part of the bottom edge survives, but the others are broken. Found with other small fragments, three of them inscribed, which it has not been possible to place.

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FIG. 12. **866**. 22 x 66 mm. Fragment of an account.

↓
. . . . .
] *traces* [
] *traces* [
] *traces* m̅o̅ *traces* [
trace
5]ur.[
] *traces* ra [
]masṣuṃ[
]i̩is *vacat*
]çura *vacat*
10]..us

3. There is a superscript line over both letters, which are written in compressed form but acceptable as the abbreviation *mo(dios)*.
5. After *ur*, perhaps *u* again; *ia* cannot be read (with Birley), since the diagonal is set too low, and there is no sign of the second stroke.
7. Birley reads *brassicas*, 'cabbages', but his diminutive *c* is clearly the second stroke of *u*, just as in 9 and 10. Before it, *mass* is certain, and neither *b* nor *r* can be read. Final *m* is difficult since it is incomplete, and just below it are two diagonal downstrokes of unknown purpose; they are not a barred numeral.

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9. The first letter might be *l*.
10. Birley's tentative *[fa]ecis* is not possible, since it makes *ci* out of *u* just like that in 7 (which he reads inconsistently as *ic*).

LETTERS (NOS **867–869**)

867

Inv.no. T02.38 (one fragment of six). BM Registration no. 2004,0501.71. Dimensions: 43 x 11 mm. Period: II/III. Location: V02-19, below Rooms I and II of Period IV structure.
A.R. Birley 2003, 110, fragment (b); 2009, no. 6 (b). Scappaticcio 2009, esp. 65–6.

FIG. 13. **867**. 43 x 11 mm. Fragment of a letter.

A fragment of a tablet which is incomplete at the left, right and foot. The text on the back is published as **856**. The text on the front is the heading of a letter *to* Verecundus, as is guaranteed by the position of *salu[tem* in line 2. A.R. Birley (2009) erroneously sees this as the name of the writer or sender on the back of a letter and accepts the reading *]pṛạef[*, which is incorrect. This recipient is not necessarily Iulius Verecundus, the prefect of the First Cohort of Tungrians who receives **210–12** and perhaps **745**, see also **154** and **857**. This cognomen is very common at Vindolanda (see *Tab.Vindol.* II and III, indexes svv.) and elsewhere in the North-West, see Lefebvre 2001. The hand is a fairly stylish cursive.

→
] Verecund[o suo
] *vacat* salu[tem
] *traces* [
. . . . .

'... to his Verecundus, greetings ...'

2. There may be a trace of *t* at the right. The way in which *sal* is so elongated as to foul the letters in the line above is remarkable.
3. There are traces of writing at the left which should belong to line 3, the first line of the letter proper.

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868

Inv.no. T02.38 (one fragment of six). BM Registration no. 2004,0501.71. Dimensions: 50 x 15 mm. Period: II/III. Location: V02-19, below Rooms I and II of Period IV structure. A.R. Birley 2003, 110, fragment (a); 2009, no. 6 (a).

Fig. 14 i (front)

Fig. 14 ii (back)

FIG. 14. **868**. 50 x 15 mm. (i) Front: fragment of a letter. (ii) Back: part of an address.

A small fragment incomplete at the top and foot and probably at the left and right margins, containing part of a letter and an address on the back. Like **854**, **855** and **856**, which were found with it, this seems to be a letter saved for re-use as writing material, but the small fragment which survives shows no sign of re-use. At first sight this appears to be the start of the letter proper after the salutation, i.e. the left-hand column. It was not uncommon for the first line to be in ecthesis in respect of the lines following; and some letters do begin with *misi tibi (frater)*, e.g. **259**, **309**, **697**. But in that case, we would not expect an address on the back since it is normally on the back of the right-hand column. If this fragment is part of the right-hand column, it would be unusual, though not quite unique, that the first line of the right-hand column is in ecthesis (see **215**, and the introduction thereto). We have considered the possibility that this is the end of the letter, assuming that *Sanctum* is not the object of *missi* and restoring line 2 as *Sanctum [a me saluta* or similar, but think this less attractive; the two lines are probably the work of the same hand but this is not decisive either way.

Front:
→

. . . . . .
missi tibi fra[ter
Sanctum [
. . . . . .

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Back:
→

. . .
] Iusto
. . .

'... I have sent to you, brother, Sanctus ... (Back) to ... (?) Iustus ...'

Front. 1. *missi*: for the gemination, see Adams 1995, 88–9.
2. The common cognomen *Sanctus* occurs at Vindolanda in **182** and **650**.
Back. The hand is much like that of **855b**, but 'address' scripts tend to be in very similar elongated letters and the hands of the two documents are probably different. Iustus must also be the recipient of **868**, but should not be identified with the senders of **345** and **614A**. It is quite a common cognomen. There may be space for a lost nomen before it.

869

Inv.no. T01.33. BM Registration no. 2004,0501.32. Dimensions: 90 x 45 mm. Period: II/III. Location: V42, below corridor between Rooms 3 and 4 of Period IV building. A.R. Birley 2003, 93; 2009, no. 2.

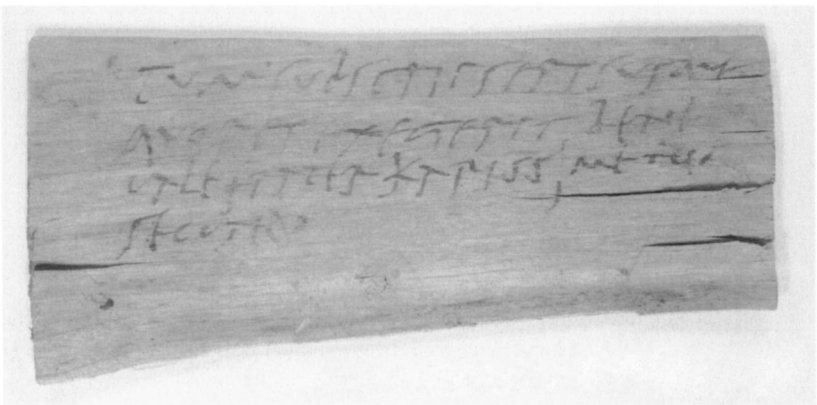

Fig. 15 i (front)

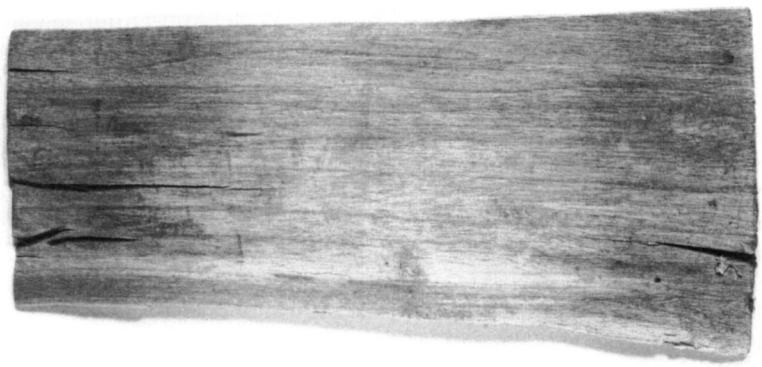

Fig. 15 ii (back)

FIG. 15. **869**. 90 x 45 mm. (i) Front: fragment of a letter. (ii) Back: part of an address.

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A fragment consisting of part of the right-hand leaf of a diptych, probably incomplete at the top, with remains of the ends of lines of the left-hand column of a letter and four lines of the right-hand column, including the closing greeting, with an unusual wording. There are no certain traces above the visible text (*pace* Birley, the digital scan strongly suggests that remains of an apparent descender are not ink). The back has traces of the name of the addressee and possibly also of the place of destination above it and the name of the sender, Secundus, below. The content suggests we are dealing with a legal transaction of some kind.

Front:
→
i
. . . . . .
salut]ẹm
2 lines missing
].s
. . . . . .

ii
tum subscripseris usque
quo res exegerit. (m^2) bene
uale frater karissime tuo
Secundo
vacat

Back:
→
Traces
... io *traces* [
p̣ṛạẹf̣ c̣ọḥ(ortis)
traces [

'(Col. i) ... greetings ... (Col. ii) ... you (will?) have subscribed to the extent which the business required. (Second hand) Farewell, brother, most dear to your Secundus. (Back) (Place-name). To ...ius ..., prefect of the cohort, [from Secundus.]'

Front ii.1. Birley hesitates between *tum* and *cum* but *tum* is certain and must be the end of a word which began at the foot of the preceding column (see introduction). It is followed by a mark which could be an interpunct, but since there are no other occurrences in this text it should probably be ignored. Birley understands the verb as perfect subjunctive (as also in line 2) but we could have future perfect in both cases, depending on what preceded.
2–3. The PHÍ disk shows that *usque quo* occurs in Hyginus, *De Munit.Castr.* 54 ('*usque quo linea exteriores comprehenderit*'), *Digest* 5.2.29.2 ('*et ideo datae in eo libertates atque legata, usque quo Falcidia permittit*') and cf. 23.3.13 *pr.* , Pliny, *HN* 6.13; 17.175 and 208, and Servius, *Aen.* 12.147. There is no difference in meaning between *usque quo* and *quousque*; according to Szantyr 1965, p. 655, §357a, *usque quo* belongs to 'late Latin' and is 'more vulgar' than *quousque* (we are indebted to Dr J.N. Adams for this reference). Frontinus, *De Arte Mensoria* 18 has '*transposito ferramento respicere priores oporteat, et perpenso coeptum quo usque res exegerit*'. *res exegerit* is found three times in the *Digest*: 4.6.21.2; 10.2.5 *pr.*; 11.4.3 *pr.*
4–5. We should expect the closing greeting *bene ... Secundo* to be in a second hand and this seems to be the case here, although the two hands are quite similar. This common cognomen had not hitherto appeared in the Vindolanda tablets (see also **864**.ii.6) . There is no problem with

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reading *tuo* | *Secundo* (despite Birley's remarks *ad loc.*). He rightly observes that the form of greeting is unique in the tablets and rare elsewhere, the only examples apparently being those from Fronto which he quotes.

Back.1. Even if the top edge of the tablet is not fully preserved, as remarked above, we think this first line is part of a place-name in the upper part of the leaf. We could imagine, rather than read, *uindol* (so abbreviated in **338** and **343**).

2. The traces are compatible with a short nomen, e.g. *Iulio* (there is not room for *Flauio*), but very faint traces thereafter, if that is what they are, cannot be read.

3. The reading is very tentative: *r* is reasonably good, and the other traces do not conflict with *praef*; more traces further to the right suggest *coh*.

4. Faint traces where the name of sender, which must be *Secundus*, would be expected. We could imagine *ạ ....ṇḍ[* (i.e. *ạ Ṣẹçụṇḍ[o]*) and there is a vertical mark further to the right which may or may not be ink. But it is also possible that we have a nomen with all or most of *Secundo* lost.

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