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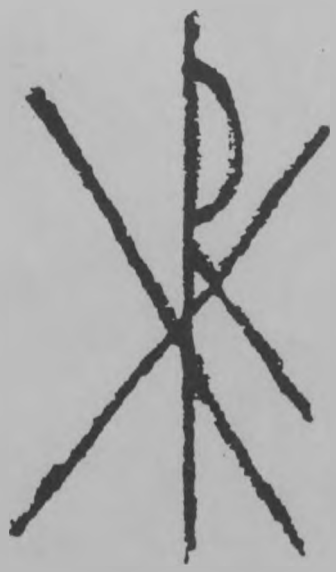

Edited by DAVID H. WILLIAMS

VOLUME VIII (1992)

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The illustration reproduced on the cover is a Chi-Rho monogram found at Caerwent on the base of a late-fourth century pewter bowl.

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE ANTIQUARY

Vol. VIII 1992

ROMAN GLASS VESSELS FROM CAERLEON: EXCAVATIONS AT THE LEGIONARY MUSEUM SITE, 1983-5

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Fragmentary glass is common on Roman sites both military and civil, and as often represents tableware as it does the purely functional container-bottles which abounded. Much was imported from the great production centre at Cologne[2], if not from further afield, and despite the apparent perils of long-distance transport by sea and land, vessels of considerable delicacy and sophistication, and sometimes even of great beauty, were available to a wide cross-section of the population.

Of vessel-glass from the legionary fortress at Caerleon-*Isca,* where the soldiery and their dependent civilians had both an appetite for, and access to such wares, little has yet been published. Dr Allen's report on the important assemblage from the Fortress Baths stands alone as a comprehensive study from a single site[3], and provides a sequence of chronologically-arranged groups which are illustrative of the specialised range of vessels which were in daily use there from *c.* A.D. 75-230. Crucial also to glass studies at Caerleon is the large and rich collection from excavations (1954-63) to the south-west of the fortress; G. C. Boon's unpublished report on this material is a great lack[4]. In addition to the glass from the Baths and civil settlement, the collection of the National Museum of Wales (at the Roman Legionary Museum) includes several more fragmentary assemblages from past excavations, but of these only a few individual pieces have been published[5].

In anticipation of the complete re-building of the Legionary Museum, excavations on its site (1983-5) explored a plot of the *scamnum tribunorum*[6] at the angle of the two principal streets of the fortress, which, in its successive timber and stone phases, almost certainly housed the camp prefect (*praefectus castrorum*). Those excavations are reported in detail elsewhere[7], and only the barest outline of the sequence of construction and occupation there is necessary to provide a context for the glass assemblage. The primary (*phase I*) buildings, of earthfast timber construction, were raised *c.*A.D.75. As part of a general programme of rebuilding at the fortress, which began perhaps *c.*86/7, the officer's house was replaced by a permanent structure raised on stone footings; the extended process of construction of that building (in *phase IIIa,* completed probably before A.D.100) required the provision there of temporary timber-built accommodation (*phase II*). Following a period of 'normal' occupation (*phase IIIb,* Trajan-Hadrian), the stone building was only once modified (*phase IVa,* perhaps *c.*130/140) before its final and deliberate demolition (*phase V,* perhaps *c.*200). On coin evidence, frequentation of the site appears to have continued down to A.D.346 or after.

Presented here is a selection of fragmentary glass vessels representative of a minimum of about 100 individual vessels which could be identified from all phases of the Museum site. Glass deposited during the period of occupation of the buildings for which stratified horizons were preserved (i.e. phases I-IVb, Flavian to mid-Antonine) is illustrated in fig.1;

fig.2 presents glass which was incorporated in the debris of the demolition of *c.*200, and which may be taken to relate to the very latest occupation of the building generally. Introduced with each figure are a few unstratified pieces of appropriate date. Vessels nos. 1-3, 7-8, 11-12 and 14-17 are from the essentially Flavian phases I and II, and are representative of the earliest glass in use at Caerleon; other 'phase groups' can be reassembled from the catalogue entries.

The collection as a whole is illustrative of the varied techniques and some of the general trends of Roman glass production. Few, if any, of these vessels need be earlier than Flavian in origin, and, with the exceptions only of the emerald-green bowl no.6 and the amber-brown 'pillar-moulded' bowls noted at no.1, the brightly-coloured metals of earlier date are lacking[8]. Inflated vessels of naturally-coloured blue, or blue-green, glass predominate in the first and second century groups, and it is these groups alone which have produced vessels which are, instead, cast and wheel-ground to shape (as nos. 1-6)—a laborious technique which had all but disappeared by Trajanic times; fragments of blue-green container-bottles, cylindrical or square-sectioned, also occur in large numbers. By the time of the demolition, late-Antonine or Severan, the character of the assemblage had changed profoundly, with blown vessels of colourless (i.e. deliberately decolourised) glass then dominating to the almost total exclusion of 'natural' blue-green glass. This latest group may be compared with a broadly contemporary deposit in the *frigidarium* drain at the baths (*c.*A.D. 160-230)[9], but there a very large number of oil-flasks is to be explained by the particular function of the building.

But at the Museum site, too, we are dealing with a building of known and very specific function—the residence of a legionary tribune or camp prefect, an individual whose status and wealth (as an equestrian or senator) would have permitted him access to the very best of tableware, had he so desired. That there is nothing in this collection which would be out of place in lowlier context (for instance in the civil settlement assemblage, or at Caerwent) tells us something, perhaps, of the relative value of vessel-glass: it was, after all, no more than an everyday substitute for the more robust and highly treasured metal vessels which but rarely come down to us.[10] On the whole, vessels tend to correspond to a relatively limited range of standard forms and, unlike much pottery, can but rarely be attributed to a definite source or independently dated with any great precision.

Summary of the Site Phases

Phase Ia	*c.*A.D.74/5-80
Phase Ib	*c.*A.D.80-85/90
Phase II	*c.*A.D.85/90-90/100
Phase IIIa	*c.*A.D.90/100
Phase IIIb	*c.*A.D.90/100-130/140
Phase IVa	*c.*A.D.130/140
Phase IVb	*c.*A.D.130/140—200
Phase V	*c.*A.D.200
Phase VI	*c.*A.D.200-346 +

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1. 'Pillar-moulded' bowl in natural pale blue glass. Fire-polished externally, wheel-ground inside and at rim. Rim diam. *c.* 140mm. (phase II; context *244*)

Contexts of the Flavian phases I and II produced fragments representative of a minimum of five (and perhaps as many as eight) monochrome 'pillar-moulded' bowls (Isings form 3),[12] of which two are of amber or dark smoky-brown glass and three of natural blue-green glass. 'Pillar-moulded' bowls in polychrome and brightly-coloured glass, which occasionally appear in early levels at Caerleon,[13] were not produced beyond the middle of the first century, and production even in naturally-coloured glass had ceased by the end of the Flavian period;[14] the form does not appear, for instance, among much glass from phase IIIa onwards. The precise method of manufacture of these bowls is not known, although Cummings[15] (and latterly Grose[16]) suggests that they were formed first by impressing a disc of glass and then allowing it to sag in the kiln, ribs uppermost, over an inverted hemispherical former, with subsequent wheel-polishing internally and at the rim to remove irregularities.

2. Rim, body and base fragments (not joining) of a carinated bowl or cup; 'colourless' glass with greenish tinge. Cast, in a distinctive metal entirely free from air-bubbles and impurities; rim knocked-off and ground flat, body wheel-ground inside and out. A single wheel-cut circle to underside defines a flat facet for stability; pairs of wheel-cut lines at rim and above carination. Rim diam. *c.* 120mm. (II/IIIa; *fill of Well 2*)

No precise parallels can be offered for this bowl (perhaps in imitation of samian form Dr 29), which belongs to a family of fine, cast and wheel-ground beakers and cups popular from *c.* A.D. 70 (see no. 10, below).

3. Rim fragment of a dish or plate; colourless glass with a greenish tinge, clear metal as no. 2. Cast, and wheel-ground inside and out. Rim diam. *c.* 220mm. (II; *112*). Also rim fragments from a second bowl, almost identical (not illustrated); rim diam. *c.* 200mm. (IVb; *41*)

Such shallow bowls and plates, raised on foot-rings as no. 4, below, and imitating fine metalware, are of wide distribution and predominantly Flavian-Trajanic occurrence;[17] sometimes elaborated with wheel-cut decoration,[18] these vessels are discussed e.g. by Charlesworth[19] and Price.[20] Caerleon examples, both unpublished, come from the civil settlement and the Jenkins' Field site.

4. Fragment of flat base and high foot-ring of a shallow bowl or plate; colourless glass with slight greenish tinge, metal as nos. 2-3. Cast, and wheel-ground on all surfaces. Diam. foot-ring 140mm. (*unstratified*)

This foot-ring belongs to a vessel of the same general class as no. 3; British parallels are too numerous to cite.[21]

5. Fragment of lower body of a bowl; colourless glass with slight greenish tinge, metal as nos. 2-4. Interior retains a high gloss (and the vessel is blown, not cast, therefore); exterior wheel-ground to produce a single raised cordon. (*unstratified*)

Although it is probably of similar date to the vessels nos. 2-4, which it superficially resembles, this deep bowl has been inflated, and is ground only on its exterior. Several body-forms are possible, and the raised cordon in this position is matched e.g. on fragments (also ground externally) from *Conimbriga*[22] and Caerwent.[23]

6. Rim fragment with profile to base or to intermediate angle of an open dish or bowl; pale emerald glass with many small air-bubbles, some opened to surface in polishing. Outsplayed wall terminates in a delicate cornice-rim enhanced by a single wheel-cut line. Cast, and wheel-ground inside and out. Rim diam. *c.* 190mm; height (if angle is basal) *c.* 22mm. (IVb; *41*)

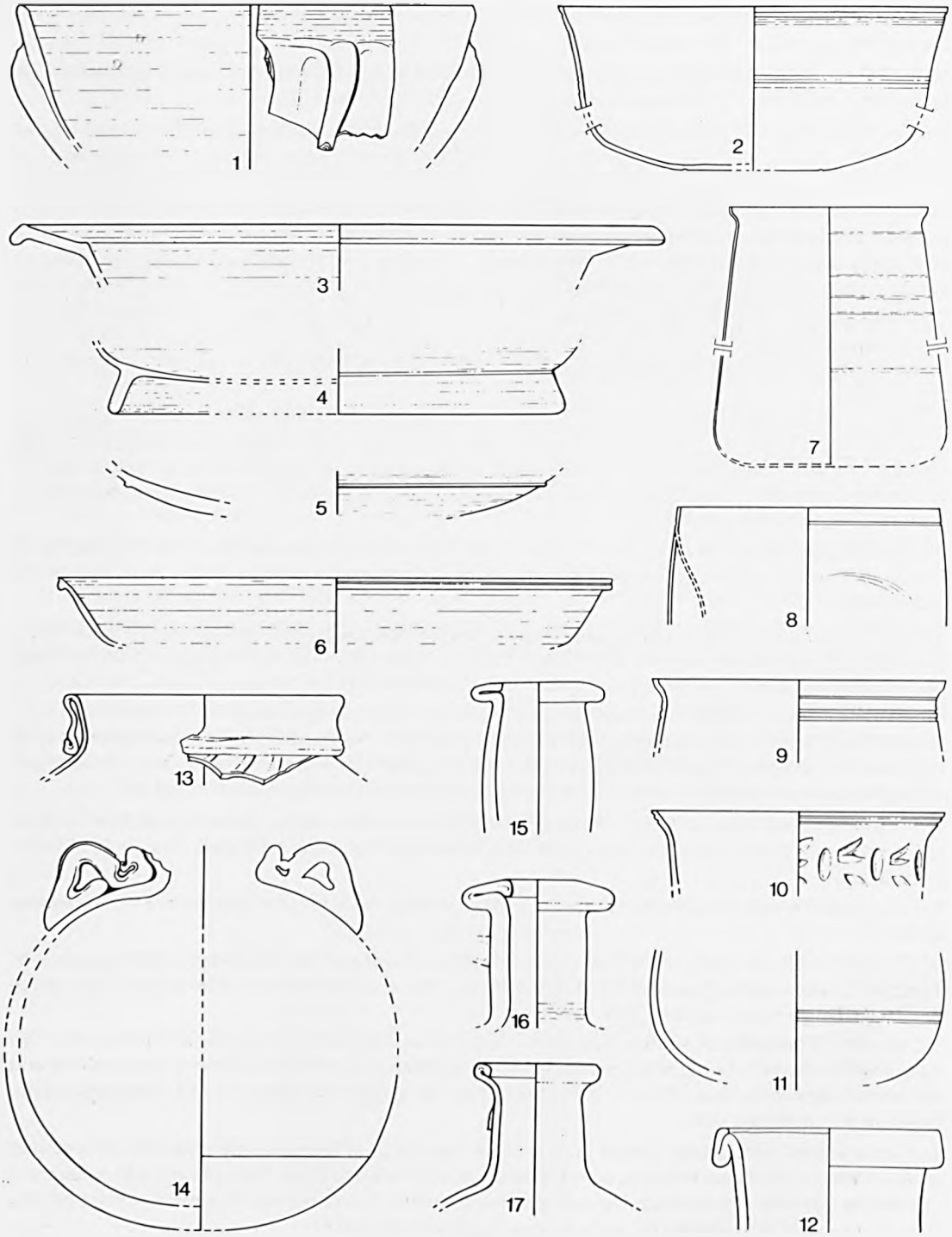


Fig. 1.

(The rim form of no.6 is unusual, and although no close parallels have occurred to the author, the vessel may be compared e.g. to a simple, shallow and flat-bottomed polychrome dish from *Vindonissa);*[24] but it might equally have been of a broad campanulate form, as samian form Dr 27, which also occurs in emerald glass.[25] An early to mid-first century date, however, is not in doubt for this brightly-coloured piece, and a Mediterranean origin is likely.

7. Rim, body and base fragments of a cylindrical beaker; clear, natural pale blue glass. Blown. Rim knocked-off and ground flat. Externally, four sets of very fine wheel-cut lines; one below rim, three further down body. Rim diam. 60mm; height (restored) 60mm; walls only 0.4mm thick. (Ib; *171*)

Beakers with everted, ground rims of this form (Isings form 30, occurring at Pompeii)[26] are common from the Flavian period onwards.[27] Similar vessels (with a wheel-cut line below the rim, and in natural glass) come, e.g., from a mainly Flavian-Trajanic deposit at Nijmegen[28] where they occur with many of the Hofheim cups (as no. 11, below) which this general type was ultimately to replace. Locally the form appears at Caerwent,[29] and related Caerleon vessels are noted by Allen.[30]

8. Two fragments (not joining) of an indented beaker or cup; colourless glass with greenish tinge and numerous air-bubbles. Blown. Rim knocked-off and ground flat; one fragment preserves a broad indent; single wheel-cut line just below the rim. Rim diam. c.80mm. (Ia; *268*)

The convex wall and simple rim are unusual, and the vessel may be a variant of the more typical indented beaker (as Isings form 32)[31] with everted rim, as no.7. A simple indented base (phase Ia; *258*), not illustrated, may belong to the same vessel; and such beakers are well represented in Flavian-Trajanic context, e.g. at Nijmegen.[32]

9. Rim fragment of a beaker or cup; colourless glass with a yellowish tinge. Blown. Rim outsplayed, knocked-off and ground; wheel-cut lines at top of wall. Rim diam. 64mm. (IIIb; *139*)

The general form is as no.7, *q.v.*

10. Rim fragment of a facet-cut beaker or cup; completely colourless and clear glass. Blown. Rim knocked-off and ground; two fine wheel-cut lines to exterior at rim. The surviving upper part of the body is decorated in a frieze with a repeated arrangement of single, broad wheel-cut facets. Rim diam. *c.*86mm. (IVa; *45)*

*(*Probably a cup of truncated conical form, related to the all-over facet-cut beakers of which several examples are known from Flavian and later contexts at Caerleon.)[33] A late first-/early second-century type.

11. Two body fragments (not joining) of an hemispherical cup; natural pale blue glass. Blown. Two fine wheel-cut lines externally. Body diam. (est.) 100mm. (I/II; *242*)

An hemispherical drinking-cup, the so-called 'Hofheim' cup, as Isings form 12,[34] and as recently discussed by Price in respect of finds from Inchtuthil:[35] the type, common in Claudian and Neronian contexts, is rare on sites of Flavian foundation.

12. Rim fragment of a jug (or amphorisk, if two-handled); natural pale blue glass. Outsplayed neck turned down then up and rolled flat externally to provide a strong collar at rim. Blown. Rim diam 72mm. (I/II; *285*)

The distinctive rim-form identifies this as a flagon or amphorisk, probably two-handled, as Isings form 15.[36] The type originated in the Tiberian-Claudian period and enjoyed popularity until the end of the first century, occurring e.g. at *Vindonissa*[37] and (pre-Boudiccan) at the Sheepen site, Colchester.[38]

13. Two rim fragments (not joining) of an open-mouthed, bulbous jar; natural blue-green glass. Hollow tubular collar-rim formed by folding outwards and downwards, then pushed in: body ribbed. Blown. Rim diam. *c.*84mm. (IIIb; *95*)

Bulbous jars with distinctive pushed-in tubular rim (Isings form 67c),[39] often with body-ribbing as here, are common site-finds at least from the mid-first to second century (and principally Flavian-

Hadrian).[40] One, in natural blue-green glass, occurs *c.* 75-85 at the Fortress Baths,[41] and e.g., many are included in Flavian-Trajanic cullet at Nijmegen.[42] Numerous ribbed body fragments, all of naturally coloured glass, may belong equally to this form or to the related bulbous jug (Isings form 52b);[43] and both types share a cut-out, hollow base-ring as examples (not illustrated) from contexts *177* and *267* (both phase I/II).

14. Body and handle fragments (not joining) of a large flask; natural blue-green glass. One fragment retains a heavy, trailed 'dolphin'-handle at junction of body and neck. Blown, with many flattened air-bubbles. Body diam. *c.* 100mm; wall thickness up to 9mm. (II: *155*)

Spherical flasks of this form were employed as containers for bath-oil (*aryballoi*; Isings form 61),[44] and, in natural glass, are common from the pre-Flavian period[45] to the later second century. At the Fortress Baths, such flasks appeared in context dated *c.* A.D. 80-100/110, and in greatest profusion in deposits of the mid-second century and later.[46] This example, however, is of unusually large size and may have served some other purpose.

15. Rim and neck of a bottle; natural pale blue-green glass. Blown; rim turned out, up and in, and flattened to a 'mushroom' shape. Internal diam. at opening *c.* 20mm. (II; *225*)

The robust bottles nos. 15 and 16 are representative of a large number of fragments of square-sectioned and cylindrical container-bottles which appeared in contexts of phases I-IVb (i.e. Flavian-Antonine). The types (Isings 50 and 51)[47] were current from the Claudian period to the mid or late second century,[48] and were the commonest glass container-vessels then in use for the transport of liquid commodities (although perhaps not exclusively for wine). Prismatic and square-sectioned bottles were blown into a body-mould and their bases frequently bear raised designs (imparted, probably, by a separate base-piece to the mould) which often served as trade-marks;[49] several fragments of such bases occurred, along with many fragments of the broad, angular and sharply-rilled carrying-handles which distinguish the type (none illustrated). The evidence of the present site indicates that whilst such bottles were still much in use in Hadrianic-early Antonine times (i.e. to phase IVa), very few were still available, even for re-use or to provide cullet for the local manufacture of window-glass, by the very end of the second century (i.e. in site phase V).

16. Rim and neck of a bottle; natural pale blue glass. Blown; rim formed as last; neck retains scar of a single handle and angle to shoulder. Rim diam. (internal) 19mm. (II; *85*)

Of ten bottle-rims from all phases of the site, seven have internal diameters between 18 and 20mm (the others measure 15mm, 30mm and 36mm). Here there may be some hint of standardisation, perhaps so as to allow the concomitant mass-production of stoppers of an appropriate size.

17. Rim, squat neck and shoulder of a bottle; natural pale blue glass. Blown; rim outsplayed, then folded up, in and over in a simple roll. Short, cylindrical neck retains scar of a single trailed handle. Rim diam. (external) 39mm. (I/II; *181*)

This single-handled vessel is much less robust than the container-bottles nos. 15-16, above, to which general class it may, nevertheless, belong.

18. Fragment at rim and wall of a cylindrical cup; colourless glass with a greenish tinge. Blown; vertical walls swell to thickened, fire-rounded rim. Body diam. *c.* 110mm; height more that 49mm. (V; *79*)

Vessels nos. 18-20 belong to a series of blown cylindrical cups and bowls, standing on applied basal rings, which come to dominate site collections of the period *c.* A.D. 160-250.[50] These are the so-called 'Airlie' cups, as Isings form 85b,[51] of which seven occurred *c.* 160-230 at the Fortress Baths,[52] and 28 fragments (unpublished) from *c.* 130-230 in the civil settlement.

19. Fragment at rim and wall of a cylindrical cup, as no. 18, *q.v.*; colourless glass with a greenish tinge. Body diam. *c.* 92mm; height more that 53mm. (V; *78*)

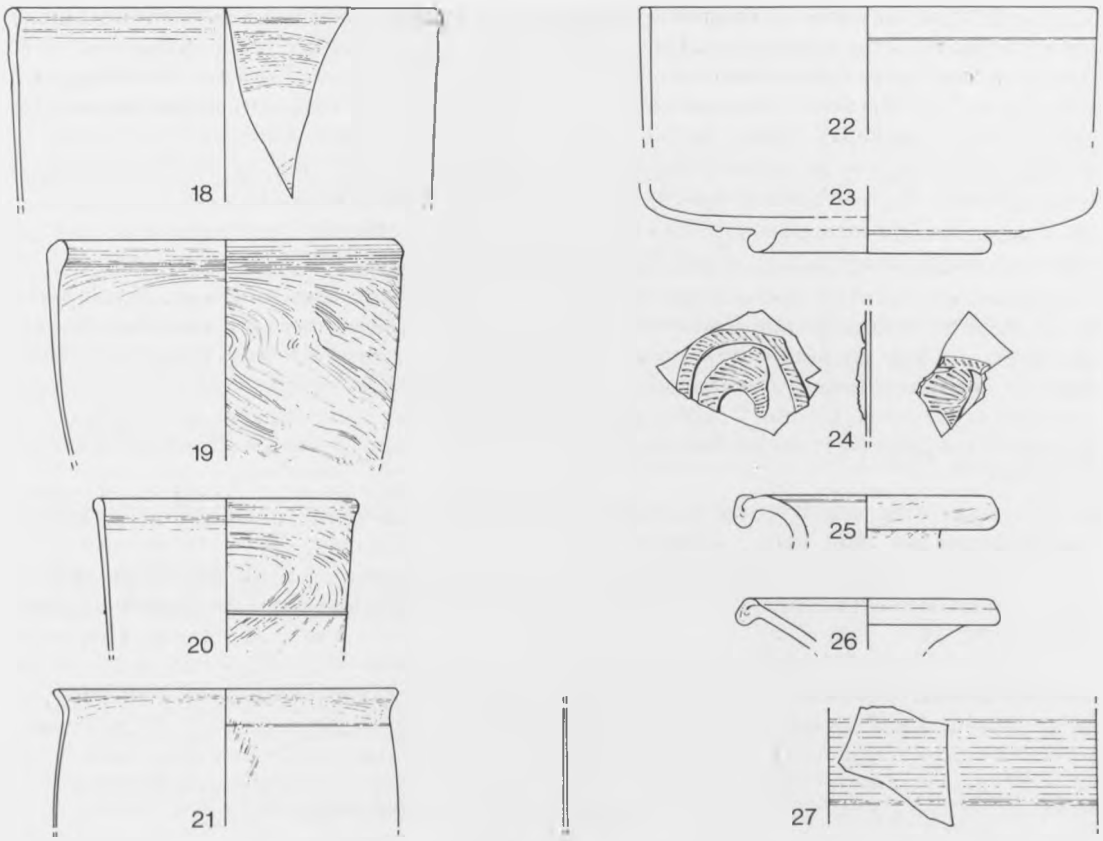


Fig. 2.

20. Fragment at rim and wall of a cylindrical cup, as nos. 18-19; colourless glass with slight yellowish tinge. Externally, a single applied trail. Body diam. *c.*70mm; height more than 40mm. (*unstratified*)

See no. 18, above. The applied trail is paralleled, e.g. at *Verulamium.*[53]

21. Fragment at rim and wall of a cylindrical cup; colourless glass. Blown. Convex wall splays out to a thickened, fire-rounded rim; externally, a single wheel-cut line below rim. Rim diam. 90mm. (*unstratified*)

Uncertain form, not Isings form 85, as nos. 18-20 also with fire-rounded rims, but of similar date; late second to mid-third century.

22. Fragment at rim and wall of a cylindrical cup; colourless glass. Blown; rim knocked off and ground flat; externally, a single wheel-cut line. Body diam. 100mm. (V; *79*)

Uncertain form, not Isings form 85 as nos. 18-20.

23. Base of a cup or bowl; colourless glass. Blown; with foot-ring and a single external cordon. Diam. overall *c.*118mm; diam. base-ring *c.*60mm. (V; *5*)

Probably the base of a cup or bowl of Isings form 85, as nos. 18-20 (*q.v.*) with trailed decoration.

24. Two small body-fragments (not joining) of a beaker or flask; clear, colourless glass. Blown; cylindrical vessel with applied 'snake-thread' trails (also colourless) with tooled cross-hatching. A single zoomorphic trail-terminal is preserved on each fragment. Body diam. *c.*75mm. (V; *79*)

This vessel could be either an ovoid or cylindrical flask (Isings form 93)[54] or a tall-stemmed beaker (Isings form 86);[55] the body is curved in one sense only, and this, perhaps, suggests the latter form. 'Snake-thread' glasses date to the later second and early third centuries, and have been discussed recently, e.g., by Harden;[56] they commonly incorporate zoomorphic trail-terminals of this form (?as snakes' heads, perhaps). 'Snake-thread' glasses are not uncommon at Caerleon, with colourless trailing occurring less frequently than brightly coloured decoration, e.g. at the civil settlement (unpublished *c.* A.D.130-230, and at the Fortress Baths in context dated *c.* 160-230.[57]

25. Fragment of the out-splayed rim of a bottle; colourless glass. Blown. Rim turned down, out, up and over, and flattened on top, to give thickened, overhanging collar. Rim diam. *c.*70mm. (V; *78*)

The rims nos. 25 and 26, and the body-fragment no.27 belong to a form of cylindrical container-bottle made in good colourless glass, with out-splayed rim and either one or two handles, the very thin walls of which are frequently decorated with bands of fine wheel-cut lines. These bottles date from the late second to early third centuries, and a complete specimen comes from a grave (dated *c.* 150-250) at Hauxton, Cambs.[58] About eight similar bottles are represented at the Caerleon civil settlement (unpublished), and of these several occur in context dated *c.* 130-230; fragments also from Caerwent.[59]

26. Fragment of the outsplayed rim of a bottle, as last; colourless glass with a yellowish tinge. Brown; rim formed as last. Rim diam. *c.*60mm. (V; *69*)

27. Body fragment of a fine-walled cylindrical bottle, probably as nos. 25-6; colourless glass. Blown; exterior decorated with a zone (22mm deep) of closely-set and very fine wheel-cut lines. Body diam. 120mm. (V; *5*)

The Association is indebted to the National Museum of Wales for a grant in aid of publication of this article.

NOTES

[1] I am grateful to Mr G. C. Boon and to Dr Jennifer Price for helpful comment and discussion on an early draft of this report; any errors which appear, however, are the author's own.

[2] Some glass-ware, and probably much window-glass, was locally-produced, however. Debris of Flavian-Trajanic glass-blowing has been discovered, for example, in excavations by the author at Great Bulmore, barely a mile from the fortress (1984; D. Allen, *forthcoming*), and table-vessels were certainly amongst the products of that workshop.

[3] D. Allen, in J. D. Zienkiewicz, *The Legionary Fortress Baths at Caerleon* (Cardiff 1986), II, 98-116.

[4] 'Civil settlement' parallels cited here refer to the typescript of this report, held at the Roman Legionary Museum; I am grateful to Mr G. C. Boon for allowing free access to his unpublished work.

[5] For published Caerleon glassware from excavations 1926-1969, mainly individual vessels, see: *Archaeologia* 78 (1928), 170, pl. XXXIV, nos. 1-6 (*Amphitheatre*); *Arch. Camb.* 84 (1929), 257-8, fig. 18, nos. 1-6 (*Jenkins' Field*), *Arch. Camb.* 87 (1932), 87, fig. 35, nos. 51-4 (*Prysg Field*); *Arch. Camb.* 113 (1964), 25, fig. 5, no.12 (*minor sites*); *Arch. Camb.* 116 (1967), 48, and fig. 5, no. 13 (*the Croft*); *Arch. Camb.* 119 (1970), 59, and fig. 17, no.8 (*basilica principiorum*). See also G. C. Boon, 'Roman glass in Wales', ref. cited at note 48 below.

[6] I.e. the range of building-plots, running to the full width of the fortress to south-east of the *via principalis*, which accommodated the staff-officers of the legion.

[7] J. D. Zienkiewicz, 'Excavations in the *Scamnum Tribunorum* at Caerleon: The Legionary Museum site 1983-5', *Britannia*, *forthcoming*; summary reports appear in *Britannia* 15 (1984), 269 and 271, fig. 2, and *Britannia* 16 (1985), 257-8.

[8] As exemplified, for instance, at Fishbourne, where colourless glass comes to dominate from *c.* A.D. 65/70; D. B. Harden and J. Price in B. Cunliffe, *Excavations at Fishbourne 1961-1969* (1971), II, 321-2.

[9] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 104-113, nos. 29-78.

[10] For the comparatively low value of glass, see comments by G. C. Boon in *Journ. Glass Studies* 7 (1985), 14. For a small group of utilitarian and plain ware from the commandant's house at Housesteads, probably later second century, see D. Charlesworth in *Journ. Glass Studies*, 13 (1971), 34-7.

[11] The line-drawings are the work of Mrs. A. Leaver, to whom my thanks.

[12] C. Isings, *Roman Glass from Dated Finds*, *Archaeologica Traiectina* II (Groningen 1957), 17-21.

[13] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 99-100 for reference to other Caerleon examples which include one, amber-brown, from the Jenkins' Field site (*Arch. Camb.* 84 (1929), 257 and fig. 18, no.3).

[14] J. Price, in L. F. Pitts and J. K. St. Joseph, *Inchtuthil: The Roman Legionary Fortress* (London 1985), 304-5, for recent discussion.

[15] K. Cummings, *The Technique of Glass Forming* (1980), 26-9.

[16] *Journ. Glass Studies* 26 (1984), 28-9.

[17] E.g. at *Verulamium*, D. Charlesworth in S. Frere, *Verulamium Excavations III* (1984), 149, no. 17 and fig. 146, 11 (Flavian): Fishbourne, Harden and Price, *op. cit.* (note 8), 332 and fig. 138, no. 26 (*c.* A.D. 75-100); for Caerwent glass generally, see G. C. Boon in *Mon. Antiq.* 3 (1970-8), 111-123, and for this piece, *ibid.*, 116 and fig. 2, no. 19.

[18] As a plate from Wroxeter, D. Charlesworth in *Antiq. Journ.* 55 (1975), 404-6.

[19] D. Charlesworth, 'The Xanten Glass', *Rheinische Ausgrabungen* 23 (1984), 286-7.

[20] J. Price, in *Annales du 10e Congrès de l'Association International pour l'Histoire du Verre, 1985* (1987), 72-80.

[21] E.g. Charlesworth, *op. cit.* (note 17), 149, nos. 26-7 (= fig. 61, nos. 12-13).

[22] J. de Alarcao and R. Etienne, *Fouilles de Conimbriga: IV—Céramiques diverses et Verres* (1976), 174 and pl.38, no. 107.

[23] Boon, *op. cit.* (note 17), 119 and fig. 3, nos. 29 and 30c.

[24] L. Berger, *Römische Gläser aus Vindonissa, Veroffentlichungen der Gesellschaft pro Vindonissa* IV (1960), Taf.1 and p.14, no. 13.

[25] D. B. Harden, *Glass of the Caesars* (1987), 44-5, nos. 20-21.

[26] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 45.

[27] Harden and Price (*op. cit.* (note 8), 346) discuss these with reference to Fishbourne specimens, *ibid.*, fig. 140, nos. 55-8.

[28] C. Isings, 'Glass from the *Canabae Legionis* at Nijmegen', *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Outheidkundig Bodemonderzoek* 30 (1980), 295, nos. 36-45 (= fig. 8, nos. 12-17, and fig. 9, nos. 1-4).

[29] Boon, *op. cit.* (note 17), 121 and fig. 4, no. 43.

[30] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 104, under no. 28.

[31] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 46.

[32] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 28), fig. 9, nos. 26 etc.

[33] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 101, no. 17 for refs.

[34] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 27-30.

[35] Price, *op. cit.* (note 14), 305 (citing unpublished Caerleon examples from the civil settlement and the Alstone Cottage site).

[36] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 32-4.

[37] Berger, *op. cit.* (note 24), 41, Taf. 5, and 20, no. 86.

[38] R. Niblett, *Sheepen. An Early Roman Industrial Site at Camulodunum* (1985), fig. 81, no. 54; fig. 82, nos. 55-6, and fig. 83, no. 85.

[39] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 88.

[40] J. Price in J. du Plat Taylor and H. Cleere (eds.), *Roman Shipping and Trade: Britain and the Rhine Provinces* (1978), 74 and fig. 57.

[41] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 99 and fig. 40, no. 4.

[42] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 28), 288 and fig. 25, nos. 15-32.

[43] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 70.

[44] *Ibid.*, 78-81.

[45] Appearing in the fortress period at Usk, for example (J. Price, pers. comm.).

[46] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 100-101.

[47] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 63-9.

[48] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 100 for other Caerleon examples; and see, e.g., Price, *op. cit.* (note 40), 75-8; G. C. Boon, in *Annales du 4e congrès des Journées Internationales du Verre* (1967), 93-102; and D. Charlesworth, in *Journ. Glass Studies* 8 (1966), 26-40.

[49] E.g. J. de Alarcao, 'Bouteilles carrées a fonde décoré du Portugal Romain', *Journ. Glass Studies* 17 (1975), 47-53.

[50] E.g. Charlesworth, *op. cit.* (note 17), 156-7 and fig. 64; and Fishbourne, Harden and Price, *op. cit.* (note 8), 352.

[51] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 102-3.

[52] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 111 and fig. 43, nos. 68-74 (n.b. no. 68 is mistakenly numbered as 67 in the illustration).

[53] Charlesworth, *op. cit.* (note 17), fig. 65, nos. 70-5.

[54] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 110-111; compare e.g. the vessel at F. Fremersdorf, *Römische Gläser mit Fadenauflage in Köln: Die Denkmäler des römischen Köln*, V (1959), Taf. 13.

[55] Isings, *op. cit.* (note 12), 103; compare vessel at Fremersdorf, *op. cit.* (note 54), Taf. 15; see also J. Price, in M. G. Jarrett and S. Wrathmell, *Whitton: An Iron Age and Roman Farmstead in South Glamorgan* (1981), 154-5 and fig. 66, no. 8, for fragments of a vessel of similar form (but with blue and white trails) and references to other British occurrences.

[56] Harden, *op. cit.* (note 25), 105-8; and *ibid.*, 130-1, nos. 59-60 for similar terminals in colourless trail.

[57] Allen, *op. cit.* (note 3), 108-9 and fig. 43, no. 59.

[58] D. B. Harden in *Proc. Camb. Ant. Soc.* 51 (1958), 12, fig. 6 and pl. IIIb; *ibid.*, 14-15 for discussion of the type.

[59] Boon, *op. cit.* (note 17), 112 and fig. 1, no. 3.

THE EARLY CHURCH IN GWENT, I: THE ROMANO-BRITISH CHURCH

By GEORGE C. BOON, F.S.A.

A revised and shortened version of the Association's Public Lecture, given at Caerleon on October 27, 1990.

'Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you, for I trust to see you and to be brought on thither by you.' These words of St. Paul, written from Corinth to the Christian community at Rome about the same time as the Roman army was establishing itself in south-east Wales, show how early Christian groups, doubtless connected by trade with Asia Minor where mother-churches had arisen, were taking root around the Mediterranean. The determination and vitality of the movement make it one of the most remarkable of all time. Active proselytism in North Africa, by Jews and Christians alike, was, within a century and a half, forbidden by a government always suspicious of association; but a century later again the appeal of Christianity—its monotheism, its high ethical ideals, its promise of salvation, could all be found in the pagan cults, but never together—had won the day.[1] However, if archaeological proof of a Christian presence beyond the Mediterranean rim and the Rhône valley much before Constantine's edict of toleration—the so-called Peace of the Church, A.D.313—is demanded, there is little to show. And even when Christianity had become engrafted into the machinery of the Roman state (and was indeed basing its own administration upon that model), with the Christogram appearing virtually as a government badge on a provincial sealing found at Silchester or on the coinage, its devotees had to contend with a continuing vitality among native cults, where healing (as at Lydney) or the righting of wrongs (as so often at Bath) were available to the simple. This was chiefly in the countryside; but the temple next to the forum at Caerwent was not even built until after *c.*330, and forty years later was being refurbished.[2]

The deficiency of material evidence before Constantine is not repeated in the literary record. Tertullian and Origen, *c.*200 and *c.*240, claim Christians in Britain;[3] and however rhetorical their language, the fact would hardly be surprising 150 years after St. Paul. *Midrashim* claim as much for the presence of Jews, again without hard evidence in support;[4] but scanty, likewise, is the evidence (for instance) of the worship of Isis in Britain as early as the first century: it is only a jug from some neighbouring tavern, bearing its address *Londini ad fanum Isidis,* that tells of it.[5] Indeed, evidence for one of the major antique cults is slight throughout the length and breadth and period of the Roman occupation of Britain.

At Caerleon, the memory of two of the three named protomartyrs of Britain, Julius and Aaron, is authentically preserved. They fitly form the first subject of these pages. We may then pass to Caerwent, where there are archaeological indications of fourth-century Christianity.

The Caerleon Martyrs

Alban, Julius and Aaron are commemorated by Gildas, writing in the west *c.*540. He conjectured—his word—that they and many others perished in the Great Persecution,[6] meaning that unleashed by Diocletian and Maximian in the year 303. But in Eusebius, the church-historian of Constantine's day, and in his contemporary Lactantius, we read that

the Caesar or junior emperor, Constantius, Constantine's father who ruled Britain, Gaul and Spain, did not fully embark on this pogrom. At most, churches were closed;[7] of course there may have been isolated incidents beyond that; but the choice of historians has generally fallen on the severe persecution under Trajan Decius and his successor Valerian in the 250's—the first to have been instigated by imperial decree.[8] However, the late John Morris made out a strong case for Alban's martyrdom in the context of Severus' British expedition of 208-11, when he and his elder son Antoninus were campaigning in the north, and his younger son, Geta, was placed in charge of the civil administration in the south.[9] As so often with such delicate evidence, certainty is elusive. We can, however, be sure that Julius and Aaron are properly associated with Caerleon rather than Chester or even York—the other legionary bases—for Gildas' only detail names them as *legionum urbis cives*, 'citizens of the city of the legions', and a ninth-century charter in the *Book of Llandaff* preserves mention of their memorial chapel and the land appropriated to its maintenance, opposite Caerleon.[10] It will have been tradition, or even epigraphic evidence, that vouchsafed Gildas his detail. Further, the British routes of the *Antonine Itinerary* may have been established in connexion with the journeys undertaken by Severus and his two sons; and Caerleon figures in three, and saw rebuilding at this time.[11] Geta may have visited it, and may have presided over the court that sentenced our two men, quite apart from the question of a general Severan persecution.[12] However, as G. R. Stephens pointed out in his study of the Caerleon martyrs, the emperor's power of the death-penalty was delegated to provincial governors, and might by them be delegated to legionary commandants, who were able to deputize for them.[13] With this, the slender link with the Severan period must fail. Indeed the details of Alban's martyrdom, as discussed by Morris, could as well belong in the late third-early fourth century series,[14] leaving only the topographical matter, and of course an early and tenacious tradition, to attest Verulamium as the setting. The statement that 'the most impious Caesar ordered a cessation concerning the persecution without the [senior] emperors' command'[15] seems in particular to reflect the known attitude of the junior Constantius; and if this is so, the narrative would appear to have been reworked against a Great Persecution background, having itself concerned some earlier, but undatable, tragedy.

Caerleon was not an *urbs* (city), and civil settlement in the vicinity, beside the Afon Lwyd and to a lesser extent beyond the Amphitheatre, was of modest extent; and a roadside *vicus* at Bulmore, two miles away on the left bank of the Usk, will most probably have belonged to the *Civitas Silurum*. Nevertheless, it is surely the fortress itself, impressive even six centuries later as we know from Giraldus,[16] that Gildas had in mind. Julius and Aaron may have been serving soldiers; and this is perhaps the most natural interpretation. A repudiation of their military oath, remarks outrageous to authority, an obstinate refusal to recant, and a glad acceptance of the sword, are found in more than one recorded martyrdom when soldiers were condemned not particularly for their Christianity—there were Christians in the Imperial Guard, as one despairing governor tried to point out[17]—but from publicly disgracing themselves and so the service. The story of Marcellus, a centurion of *Legio VII* Gemina, based at Léon in Spain in 298, is good instance.[18] But if the Caerleon pair (and the constant pairing of their names must argue for death on a single occasion) were soldiers, their martyrdom must have occurred before *c.* 290, when the Second Augustan Legion at last gave up its fortress;[19] but we are not necessarily back to the persecution of Decius or Valerian, because the type of case on record in the early *Acta* did not depend on

a general pogrom but might have arisen at any time in the third century, when voluntary martyrdom, to the distaste of many pagans and indeed Christians too, was all the rage.[20] If indeed soldiers, their condemnation either at Caerwent (if Stephens is right in suggesting that this was the 'assize town' where the governor or his deputy would hear cases)[21] or at Caerleon itself, would have been followed very swiftly by execution, as Roman citizens, by the sword, not the beasts or the gladiators[22] of the arena. At Caerleon they would have been led out of the shameful *porta decumana* or rear gate—here the north-west—and would have been put to death near the ditch outside. That was the procedure;[23] their bodies would have been recovered and taken for burial.[24]

If they were not soldiers but civilians, then they may well have perished in the amphitheatre, again before *c.* 290, and very probably in the course of a general persecution. The late Sir Ian Richmond wondered whether 'the ruined cell on the short axis' had not been converted to a 'tiny apsidal shrine,' a commemorative chapel where the existing brick niche, he thought, was inserted at a date when the arena was filled high above its original level, perhaps connected with the beginnings of Welsh Christianity rather than the end of its Romano-British phase. He doubtless had in mind the identified oratories in a similar position at the Salona amphitheatre in Dalmatia, with their sixth-century paintings;[25] but to accept this attractive notion, the Wheelers' understanding of the structural history of Caerleon amphitheatre and the associated stratification would have to be rejected, and on any reading of their report the niche must remain third-century.[26] That is not to say that the chamber was not so used, but no evidence whatever bears and, as in the case of St. Peter at Rome, one can but say that such a use would mark what was *believed* to have happened in that arena, rather than what had demonstrably occurred.[27]

From the names a little information can be extracted. Julius was one of the commonest Roman family-names; indeed it was Caesar's, and it was Caesar who extended the Roman franchise to a mass of provincials, all of whom thereupon adopted their benefactor's family-name as their own, according to custom. Multiplying over the years, Julii spread everywhere, and several are named on legionary epitaphs at Caerleon, notably our centenarian of a generation earlier than the martyr's, Julius Valens.[28] Aaron is more interesting. He is usually explained as a convert from Judaism, perhaps a merchant trading in the civil settlement. Applebaum has shown that the name is exceedingly rare, with only one or two instances in either a Jewish or a Christian antique context.[29] But supposing it was not a given but an adopted name? That of Moses' elder brother and the first high priest of Israel would have been a suitable baptismal name, replacing within a local Christian circle an unsuitable—pagan—given name. This was the case of poor little Elpis ('Hope'), named originally after a Syrian goddess, who perished in the Lyons persecution of 177:[30] and the learned Benedictine, Dom Quentin, has further suggested that a certain Vettius Epagathus, who spoke up for the Christians on that occasion and was himself Christian and martyred with them, was identical with the Zacharias of the same list: the name of a minor Prophet, of the son of Jehoiada the Priest who protected against the sins of the Jews (*Chronicles* ii, xxiv, 20) and was brought to mind by Jesus in reproving the Pharisees (*Luke,* xi, 51), and of the father of John the Baptist. The two names, Graeco-Roman and Jewish, are juxtaposed not only in the earliest form of the list of Lyons martyrs, but also in Eusebius.[31] He, indeed, reports a parallel case of Christian convicts on their way through Palestine to the penal settlements in Cilicia: they refused to give their names to the governor at Caesarea, because

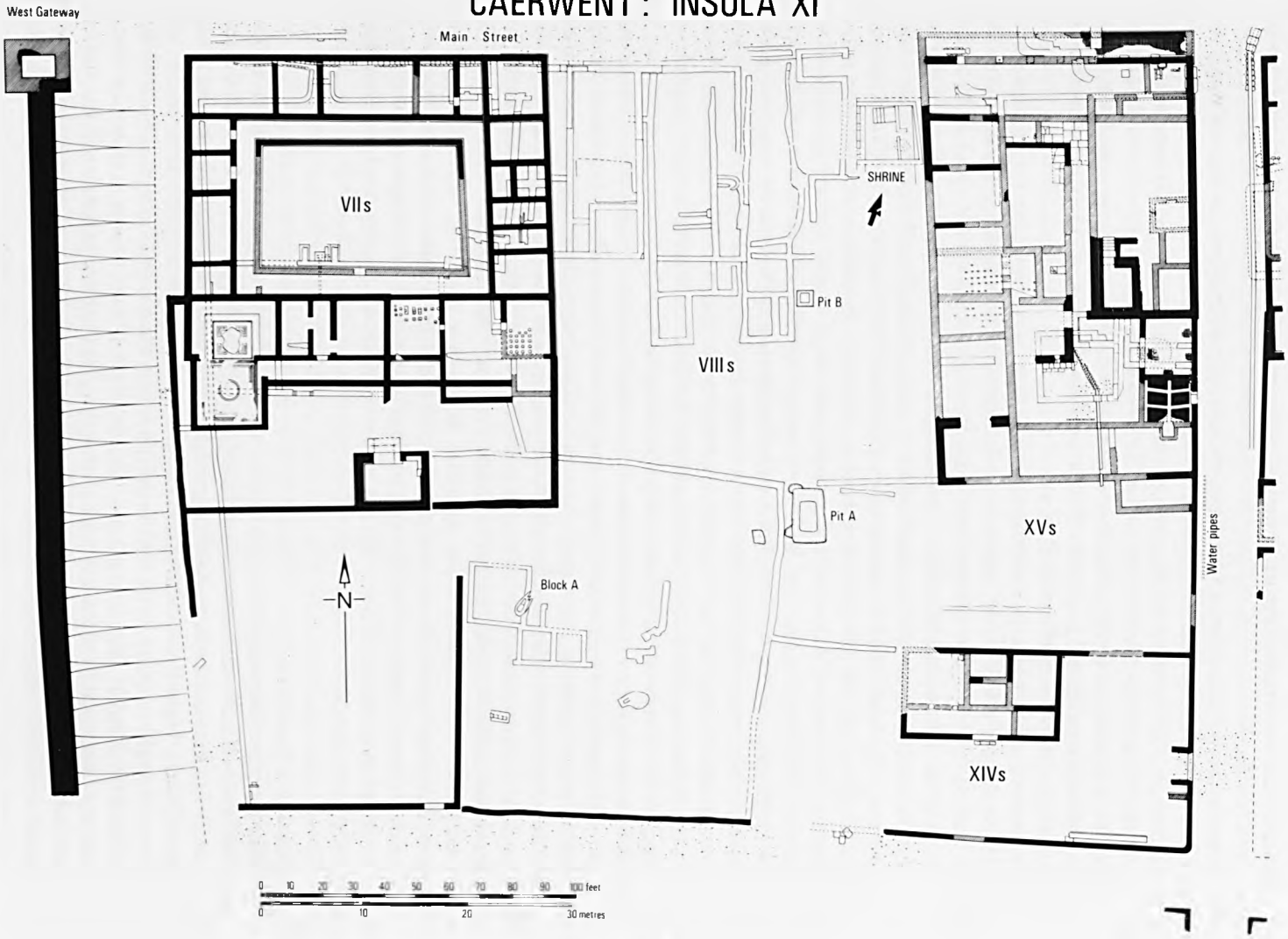

CAERWENT: INSULA XI
West Gateway
Main Street
VIIs
VIIIs
SHRINE
Pit B
Pit A
XVs
XIVs
Block A
Water pipes
N
0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 feet
0 10 20 30 metres

Fig. 1.

they recalled pagan deities; 'instead, they called themselves Elijah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Samuel and Daniel.'[32]

No archaeological relics relate to Romano-British Christianity at Caerleon,[3] which was evacuated by its legion over twenty years before the Peace of the Church. But once granted official tolerance and recognition, the faith had no longer to be practised with circumspection; and everywhere Christian symbolism—some of it overt like the 'Constantinian monogram' of Chi-Rho, some of it presented in pagan mythological dress,[34] some again 'Christian, if need be'—became apparent and, as we have noted, used even by Government. In the early fourth century, it was a minor, urban cult, with rural outliers as yet only, one suspects, in the villas of the rich, a Hinton St. Mary, a Frampton, a Lullingstone. Here the faith was practised against the background of Romanized Celtic religiosity among the ordinary populace; but far from all the great houses show adherence to it. We may note the partly Christian character of some of the rich finds of silver-plate: while Water Newton seems to be entirely church-treasure, and in Frend's view to include the earliest eucharistic vessels known from Roman times anywhere,[36] both Mildenhall and especially Thetford reveal Christianity rubbing shoulders with paganism.[37] The curious resurgence at Thetford of an ancient Italian nature-deity, Faunus, cannot well be taken at face-value, and his myth, in the form Plutarch records, has a very dark side: A. A. Barb included 'neopaganism' with other religious -isms against which the later emperors tried to act. They were 'thrown on the refuse-heap, a heavy bulk far more virulent and dangerous to spiritual health than the bones, by now rather dry, of the defunct religions of remote antiquity.'[38] That stage was not to be reached in Britain for a very long time, as the continuing frequentation of pagan temples demonstrates. The most that we can say, in Gwent, is that the simple east-west interments found in such masses adjacent to the present church and also outside the east gate, certainly began in late or sub-Roman times and are of a character known widely elsewhere. One such, a cist-grave excavated in 1990 at Shepton Mallet (Som.), yielded a remarkable silver pendant-amulet bearing a pointillé monogrammatic cross, but such a find is unique.[39] Suffice it to note, however, the heterogeneous quality of fourth-century religious life as exemplified at Bath, where a leaden tablet from the sacred pool of Sulis-Minerva invokes vengeance on a thief, naming suspects and adding 'whether Christian or gentile.'[40] Christians, though not immune to infringements of the eighth Commandment, were, we judge, regarded as a community set somewhat apart from the friendly mix of non-exclusive pagan deities, an element—no more—of the social scene.

Discoveries at Caerwent

We may approach the archaeological side of the picture with due respect for the fragility of the evidence.[41] The first discovery concerns Insula XI, House VIIS.; the second, Insula IX, House VIIN.; and the third, a building (Insula V, House XXIIN.) which, on the basis of its plan, may be claimed as a church.[42]

The first subject was explored in my contribution to the Festschrift for H.N. Savory.[43] Briefly, House VIIS. is a large, courtyard structure of several dates, in the main fourth-century as we see it on plan (fig.1), near the west gate. At the back and to the side are walled yards which suggest that this was a home farm with extensive lands outside the defences. On the east, the holding extended over ruined walling ('House VIII') towards another substantial dwelling, House XVS., also rebuilt in the fourth century. On the eastern edge

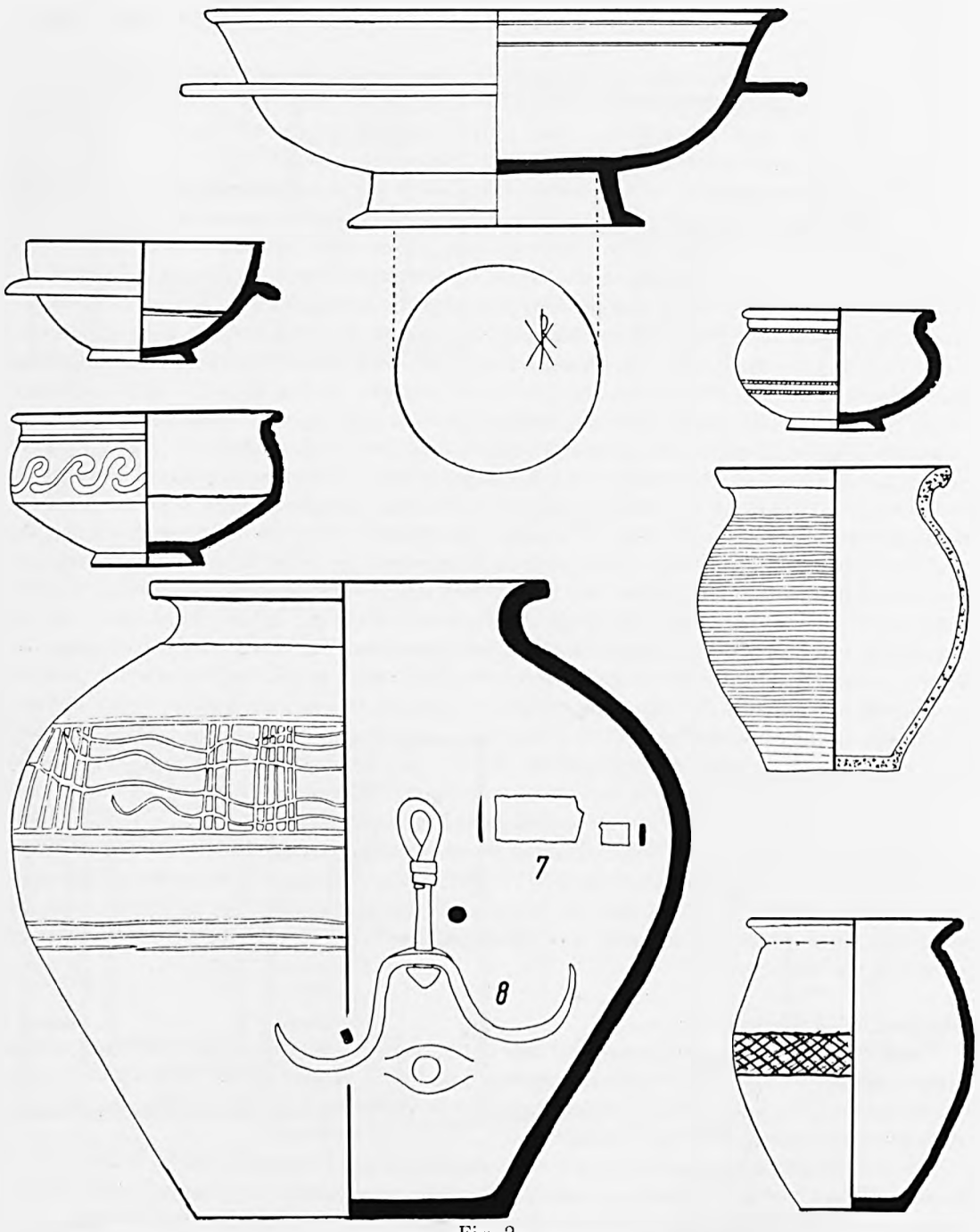


Fig. 2.

Caerwent, Insula IX, House VIIN. Urn and contents: pewter bowl (restored) with Christian monogram (1:2)—remains of pewter plate omitted; urn, cooking-pots and red colour-coated tableware, fragment of knife and swivel-hook (all 1:4).

of the grounds of VIIS. was a building some 18ft. square internally, having an open balustrated front, and containing a stepped platform against a flimsy partition which closed off a small chamber at the back. This building was evidently a shrine or chapel, and was erected on the stumps of walls of 'VIIIS.' It is matched in design by a structure in the Springhead (Kent) temple-group.[44]

There is nothing overtly Christian about House VIIS, where the main mosaic is too damaged for its Seasons imagery to be totally apparent.[45] There is indeed a hint that the family might at one time have had an Isiac connexion, for part of an alabaster bottle for purifying Nile-water was found not far from the house.[46] But there is more than a hint of a native cult in the form of the austerely-carved sandstone head found on the platform in the shrine.[47] To the Celts, the head was the seat of the soul;[48] and here, however it may have been mounted—it is flat beneath, a true *tête coupée*—it must have been exhibited in this open-fronted building, where offerings could be made and prayers offered up to a family protector.[49]

No doubt at one time this head would have occupied a place of honour in the main house. Its relocation at the furthest corner of the grounds, as the structural history of the area entitles us to believe was the case, is a matter of considerable interest in the light of one of the decisions of the Council of Elvira in southern Spain, *c.* 309. The church was still very weak and rather on the defensive in the west; its adherents, as already observed, were mostly among the upper classes as yet. The Council minute runs 'masters should as far as possible prohibit their slaves from having idols in the house; if they feared the consequences, they were to keep themselves strictly apart.'[50] This pronouncement could well explain the siting of a chapel which the pagan *familia* of a Christian master—the workmen both slave and free, and their immediate families, not merely the master's own blood-relations who would have shared his religion—might very well be allowed to frequent.

The second discovery was made in Room 17 of a large and much-altered house (Insula IX, House VIIN.) along the northern side of the same insula that contained the temple recently re-excavated by Mr. R. J. Brewer.[51] A large urn had been buried level with the floor, and covered over with an inverted bowl. This kind of storage-place is not uncommon. In the urn were several other pots dating to the final quarter of the fourth century, the remains of a flanged pewter bowl, those of a pewter plate, a knife, a double swivel-hook, and some scraps of a woollen twill cloth. On the bottom of the bowl was a Chi-Rho (or rather, Chi-R) monogram, devoting the vessel to sacred Christian use (fig.2). The graffito was not observed until by chance I noticed it when working in the reserve collection at Newport Museum in 1961. The careful segregation of these articles calls for explanation, and it seems reasonable to claim that they were used in the Early Christian supper known as the *agapé* ('friendly affection'), held after Eucharist at the invitation of some well-to-do member of the community at his own house, for his poorer fellows.[52] This was as custom had directed from an early period; and by the fourth century its domestic setting had been encouraged, because the linking of Eucharist and *agapé* in church had led to the risk of unseemly behaviour there all too reminiscent, Augustine felt, to the feasts and potations of the pagans at their shrines; of course, after the Peace of the Church numbers of pagans joined it, and somewhat naturally held on to the more enjoyable customs of their previous ignorance.[53] Since the *agapé* ritual, as illustrated on paintings in the Roman catacombs, shows guests calling for mulled or mixed wine to the accompaniment of shouts of *Irene* ('Peace') and *Agapé*

('Love'), there was no doubt good reason to make the change to a domestic setting as the first step on the long and hard road to abolition.[54]

This is the first occasion on which an *agapé* service of vessels has been indentified, though the 32 pewter vessels carefully buried near the Appleshaw (Hants.) villa may constitute another, with various isolated finds as parts of such services: the key is the dedicatory Christogram.[55] Christians, accustomed as they were to interpret and make use of pagan imagery in art as already indicated, felt that the food needed for their ritual meals—and indeed their general sustenance—must be uncontaminated by even the slightest pagan link—a legacy of the powerful early Jewish influence, and one still strong in North Africa especially. There is a letter to Augustine which reveals anxiety about the consumption of foods of which parts had been offered in pagan sacrifice, especially meat which the temple-authorities had sold off to butchers or even, in the case of corn and vegetables, the produce of temple-land. Of course Augustine answered commonsensically.[56] At Caerwent, we see this 'kosher' attitude in practice, so that in the urn we would have two cooking-pots, three food-bowls, the common-cup and the pewter plate,[57] these probably once wrapped in the cloth; a knife never used but for cutting the *agapé* food, and a hook from which only uncontaminated meat had hung. The guests, presumably, were expected to provide their own spoons.

Now for the third and last subject. If we examine the Roman town-plan, it is difficult to see anything resembling a church, like the Silchester building, perhaps, or others that have been suggested.[58] Indeed the Silchester church cannot well ante-date the fifth century.[59] A more searching look at Roman Caerwent, however, fastens on the north-east corner of the town, where Insula V, House XXII N. offers peculiarities of plan on which the excavators of 1909 might well have based a more positive interpretation than they did (fig.3).[60] The building has manifestly been altered, or rather adapted, from an ordinary dwelling; and we are reminded that until the fourth century—and well into it—the normal meeting-place for Christian communities was domestic, just as in New Testament times. It is small wonder that so very few earlier places of Christian worship have been identified.

In particular, the group of chambers at the north end of the complex, on the far side of a courtyard (which, though not axial, one might claim served the purposes of an *atrium*), centres on Room 7, in which a massive easterly apse has been inserted, giving a hall 23ft. long and 13ft. wide, dimensions comparing with the 30ft. and 10ft. of Silchester. The floor was of plain red mosaic, but as at Silchester there had been a panel of finer, coloured work in the apse. Fragments of the wall-decoration indicated a plain, marbled scheme as again at Silchester.[61] The surrounding chambers include Room 2, which occupies the position of a narthex where, on a Christian interpretation, the catechumens might watch the first part of the service (which ended with a sermon; after which the doors of the nave were closed for the Eucharist proper).[62] Room 1 with a rough stone floor or floor-foundation might have served as a baptistery; the others—Rooms 6, 10 and 11, perhaps also the northern part of it—would have been vestries and store-rooms. The group on the south side of the *atrium,* or court, 3, might have been the residence of a sacristan or the priest. There are strong affinities of layout in point of Rooms 7 and 2 with arrangements at garrison-churches in the Rhineland, Kaiseraugst among them;[63] they are late, and in the Caerwent building coins ranged down to Valentinian I (364-75), being mostly Constantinian, and said to be worn.

In Room 1, the suggested baptistery, no structure resembling a font was recorded, and its identification rests on the parallel plans in which built fonts appear, notably at

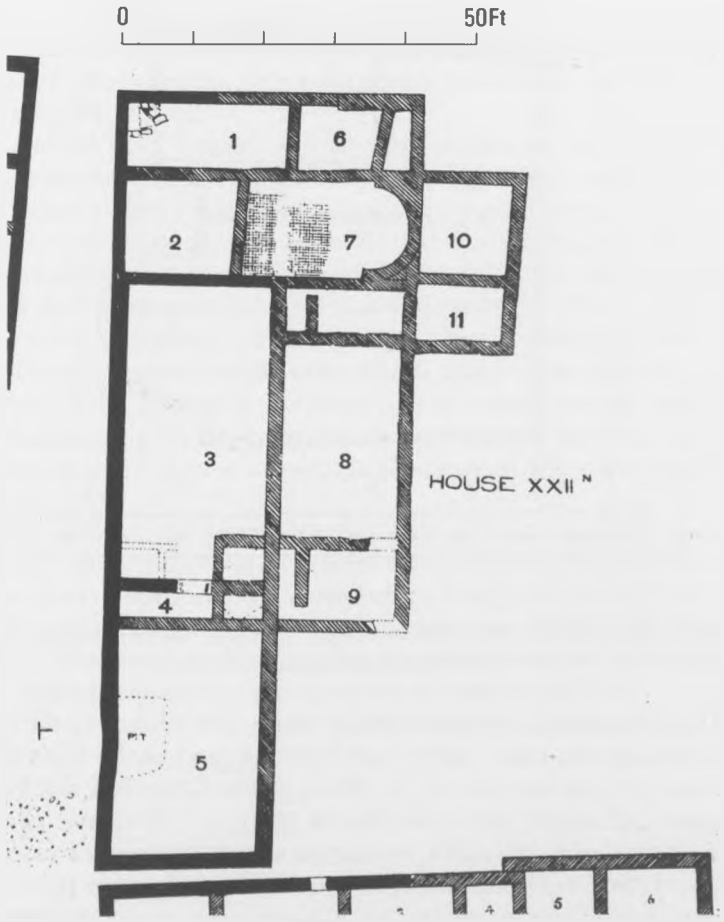


Fig. 3.

Caerwent, Insula V, House XXIIN. Plan, from *Archaeologia,* by permission of the Society of Antiquaries.

Kaiseraugst (fig.4). Britain, however, is unusual in yielding a number of wide, fairly shallow circular leaden tanks, some bearing the Chi-Rho and one, additionally, with a scene which has long been recognized as most probably one of baptism, with the naked candidate flanked by matrons and, at a distance, three elders on either side. The scene,stylized and damaged, has been diagrammatically interpreted by Charles Thomas.[64] Such a tank might well have been in occasional use here. It is perhaps significant that at the Council of Sofia, attended by British bishops in 343, it was declared that small towns and other places, which could be served perfectly well by a single priest, should not be allowed to have bishops of their own, for fear of diminishing the status of that office:[65] as is well-known, baptism was a sacrament to be administered by bishops at this period, so a peripatetic ministry throughout a province is to be inferred. It seems unlikely that there would have been resident bishops in the garrison-churches of the Rhineland or, to cite a British example, of Richborough where a massively-built font lay within a timber building.[66] It is unlikely,

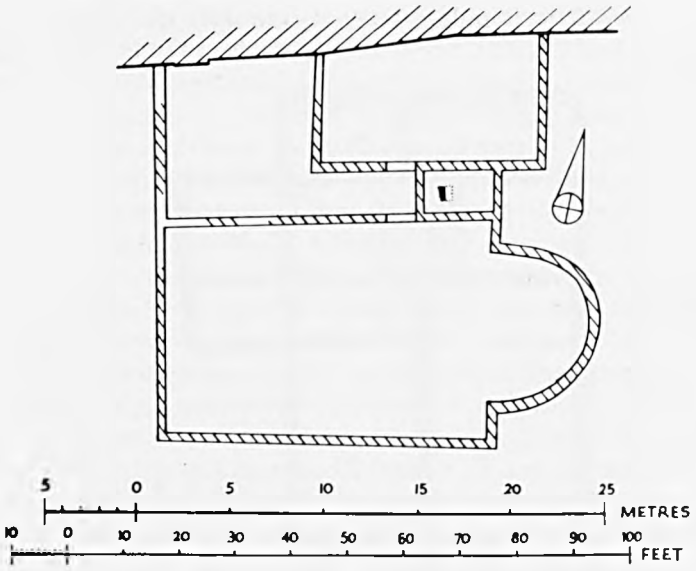


Fig. 4.

Kaiseraugst. Garrison-church, after Brown, from *Britannia,* by permission of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

perhaps, that Caerwent had a resident bishop much, if at all, before the late fourth century; indeed, the *civitas* organization, which had been adopted as the basis for an ecclesiastical structure in Gaul on the morrow of the Peace of the Church if not in parts before, was scarcely complete before the end of the fourth century.[67] Our first glimpse of the British church, at the Council of Arles in 314, reveals three bishops from cities which seem to be the capitals of three of the four Diocletianic provinces—York, Lincoln (probably) and London, the last accompanied by a priest and a deacon in accordance with the imperial invitation;[68] the Bishop of London may well have been the metropolitan, but it remains a possibility that the priest and deacon were representing the bishop of the fourth province, himself unable to attend. It would have been in this fourth province that Caerwent lay, and its bishop would occasionally have progressed as far as the Silurian capital from his seat at—presumably—Cirencester.[69] It is very unlikely that there would have been other bishops in any of these provinces so early on; even as late as 359, the British bishops attending Constantius II's Council of Rimini accepted his offer of warrants to travel 'post' on account of their poverty, their colleagues being in the fortunate position of needing no such help.[70] We may be sure that altar-plate of a Water Newton quality[71] was an extreme rarity in Romano-British churches; but, poor or not, British bishops participated in the fervid theological discussion of the period: Hilary of Poitiers names them, with those of Gaul and Germany, in the dedication of his work *On the Synods* written in Phrygian exile; he regarded them, thus, as in no way inferior to the others and his own intellectual equals. This was in 358;[72] and nearly half a century later Victricius of Rouen was invited to settle an unspecified dispute among their successors.[73] In the early fifth century, Pelagianism—Pelagius was of British origin—took firm root here, and as is well-known Germanus of Auxerre was sent in 429 to combat it in the name of orthodoxy: it was attractive, denying as it did original sin, championing

human free-will—it would be popular today.[74] The last glimpse of Romano-British Christians is of the well-dressed and well-to-do crowds who attended his conferences.[75] The mass of country-folk no doubt kept to their own beliefs meanwhile, as Martin of Tours had already found was the case in Gaul.[76]

When Tatheus arrived from Ireland to found his monastery at Caerwent in the sixth century, the sub-Roman power had successfully maintained itself, and it was only *evangelica hortamenta,* 'gospel exhortations', that King Caradoc wanted, not conversion.[77] The town itself must have been very ruinous, but was still inhabited, being a royal seat (like Bath, Cirencester and Gloucester taken by the Saxons as late as 577); the Life of Tatheus mentions *cives,* as one might expect. Perhaps the town was so little attractive that Caradoc was pleased enough to hand it over completely to the mission; but Tatheus (unlike Augustine at Canterbury) found nothing, so far as we know, which could be recognized as a church. He built on or near the site of the present St. Stephen's, or so it may be supposed;[78] and this was 300 yds. from the building which was considered above. It was the same at Silchester: St. Mary's, erected knowingly or not on pagan temple ruins, is 400 yards from its Romano-British predecessor.

There is the mute testimony of the radiocarbon dates from the cemetery outside the east gate to prove the reality of the sub-Roman presence at Caerwent. Running as they go down to the 8th or 9th century,[79] they include both *cives* and the members of the monastic *clas.* Centuries before, Irenaeus of Lyons had written of the many simple folk who 'believed in Christ without benefit of writings and ink, having salvation inscribed in their hearts through the Holy Spirit.'[80] Among the earlier burials some of them must lie.

NOTES

[1] W. H. C. Frend, *Town and Country in the Early Christian Centuries* (Variorum Reprints, 1980) x, 286.—For Christianity in Roman times cf. especially his *Rise of Christianity* (1984) and R. Lane-Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (1986, 1988); M. Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire* (tr. A. Bedini, 1983) is useful. C. Thomas, *Christianity in Roman Britain* (1981) is indispensable, with the commentary of D. Watts, *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain* (1991).

[2] *RIB* II.1, no.2411; C. Foss, *Roman Historical Coins* (1990), *Roman Historical Coins* (1990), 302 no. 9, Magnentius.—Temple, *Britannia* 1986, 369 and inf. R. J. Brewer. Frend wisely observes (*Town and Country,* x, 285) that Christianity was indestructible once it has penetrated the countryside; it will have reached the peasantry through the estate-churches (such as Lullingstone) established by Christian landowners.

[3] Tertullian, *Adversus Judaeos,* vii; Origen, *Homilia iv. in Ezekiel,* i; etc. But Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons in the 180's (*Adversus Haereses* i, 10) does not include Britain in his list of provinces where there were Christian communities (the two Germanies, Spain, Celtica [Gaul], Africa, Egypt), and its appearance towards 200 in Britain may be suggested.

[4] Sh. Applebaum, *Trans. Jewish Hist. Soc.* xvii (1951), 189-205.

[5] R. E. M. Wheeler, *London in Roman Times* (1930), 25, pl.v.

[6] Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniae* x, 5.

[7] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* vii, 13.13; Lactantius, *De Morte Persecutorum,* xv.

[8] Lane-Fox, *op. cit.*, 450; Frend, *Rise,* 319; but see Sordi, *op. cit.*, 100-15.

[9] J. Morris, *Herts. Archaeology* i (1968), 1-8. But doubts arise from the late date and corrupt character of the text: one MS has *judex* ('judge'), not *Caesar.*

[10] *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv* (edd. J. G. Evans and J. Rhys, 1893), 225; Wendy Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (1979), 121; c. 864, the name of Julius in the heading already changed to Julian. The Welsh bounds run clockwise from the east and include streams, the first of which is *Nant Merthir;* the bounds begin and end on the Usk, and Bulmore seems to be by far the most likely situation; as Mr Zienkiewicz has reminded me, there is from somewhere at Bulmore a fragment of an interlaced cross-head of the 9th-10th century (V. E. Nash-Williams, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales* (1950), no.290) which might well have dignified the *memoria* of the martyrs. High on the hillside above Bulmore stood a chapel dedicated to St. *Alban,* probably

associated with the Caerleon pair afer a relic was obtained, his tomb at St. Albans having been opened in 1129 (W. Levison, *Antiquity* xxxv (1941), 342). The chapel of St. Julian usually mentioned at the site of the destroyed Herbert house of that name nearer Newport may perhaps reflect, when taken with a (supposed) chapel of Aaron near Penrhos on the other side of the Usk, a development of the tradition harmonizing with Geoffrey of Monmouth's invented 'chiefest glories', the two wealthy churches (ix, 12). The chapel bearing Alban's name may therefore be the original *martyrium* of the pair. A charter much tampered with (*Regesta* iii, no. 373, before 1154) reflects a single church for all three, but there are later refernces to just the two, and Alban was perhaps always a supernumerary.—Not only Alban's but Julius' and Aaron's bones were scattered, perhaps when Alban was introduced here: bits of both are listed at Leominster in a heterogeneous collection of relics dated 1286, cf. G. H. Doble, *Trans. Woolhope Club* xxxi (1942-45), 58-65.

[11] E. W. Black, *Oxf. Journ. Archaeol.* iii (1984), 109-20, rather speculative. Building, my *Legionary Fortress of Caerleon-Isca* (1987), 34.

[12] T. D. Black, *Journ. Roman Stud.* 1968, 40-1; Sordi, *op. cit.*, 79-84. Frend explains Jewish-Christian relations with great insight, but does not to my mind show that there was a general persecution under Severus (*Town and Country* ix, 470-80).

[13] G. R. Stephens, *Bull. Board of Celtic Stud.* xxxii (1985), 330.

[14] H. A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (1972).

[15] Morris, *loc. cit.* note 9, 8; cf. Levison, *loc. cit.* note 10, 349.

[16] *Itinerarium Kambriae* i, 5, copying from Geoffrey the tale of two churches.

[17] Musurillo, *op. cit.*, 246/7—the recruit Maximilian, martyred in 295.

[18] *Ibid.*, 2509, as interpreted by J. Helgeland, *Aufstieg and Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.xxiii.1 (1979), 780-2. Marcellus suddenly jumped up at a banquet to honour the official birthday of the emperor(s), threw down his military belt, sword and vine-stock (the symbol of his rank as centurion) in front of the paraded standards, and shouted out that he was a soldier of Jesus Christ, the Eternal King, and would no longer serve the emperors or worship gods of wood and stone. His comrades carried him off, probably thinking he was drunk (though that is not said); and after the celebration had ended Marcellus was reported to the governor of the province, doubtless the legionary commandant. He would not retract, and so the case went to the Governor of the Spains (six provinces including Mauretania Tingitana), in the capital of which (Tangiers) the case was again heard three months later. Marcellus admitted what he had done and maintained his reason; the Governor pronounced: 'What he did merits punishment according to the military code. He has admitted disgracing himself by publicly renouncing his oath and, further, by using intemperate language, as appears in the official report. I sentence him to death by the sword.'

[19] Boon, *op. cit.* note 11, 43.

[20] Lane-Fox, 442-3.

[21] Stephen, *loc. cit. note 13, 328-9.*

[22] Cf. Boon, *op. cit.* note 11, 66.

[23] Vegetius i, 23; Festus, see under *'vallescit'*.

[24] Inhumation-graves are known north of the fortress beyond the Afon Lwyd (my *Isca* (1972), 110) and behind the ribbon-development at Bulmore (J. D. Zienkiewicz, Glam-Gwent Archaeological Trust, *Annual Report 1983-4*, 17-20, five graves.

[25] *Roman Archit. and Art* (ed. P. Salway, 1969), 180; cf. *Recherches à Salone* ii (1933), 109-10, 145-6, fig. 56.

[26] *Archaeologia* lxxviii (1928), 137-8.

[27] Cf. D. W. O'Connor, *Peter in Rome* (1969), 208-9, etc.

[28] *RIB* i, no. 363.

[29] *Loc. cit.* note 4, 199 with note 6.

[30] H. Quentin, *Acta Bollandiana xxxi (1921) 125, 137.*

[31] *Ibid.*, 134-5.

[32] Eusebius, *Martyres Palestinae* (Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* xx, 1503/4).

[33] A small locally-made pottery lamp (*Journ. Roman Stud.* 1955, 122) was mistakenly claimed to carry, in the pattern of raised dots on its base, a concealed Chi-Rho. It is far too early for a Christian monogram of this kind, known scarcely before 300, and the stratification dates the lamp to before *c.*240, cf. *Arch. Camb.* 1966, 64, no. 9, fig. 2,9.—*RIB* ii. 2, no. 2419.60 is a fragment of engraved glass bearing part of a fish, part of a palm-branch and the letter M of a motto. Palm and fish are Christian symbols but here can tell only of late 2nd-century Christians in the Rhineland, where this type of cup was made: obviously nothing can be said of its recipient at Caerleon. It would be rather surprising if a legionary soldier of that date were Christian, though it is possible (cf. Helgeland, *loc. cit.* note 18, 773).

[34] Cf. J. M. C. Toynbee on pagan motifs in Christian art, in Barley and Hanson (ed.), *Christianity in Britain 300-700* (1968), 177-92.

[35] E.g. the handsome floriated cross, which was the centre-piece of a mosaic of the Wemberham (Yatton, Som.) villa (R. C. Reade, *Proc. Som. Archaeological and Nat. Hist. Soc.* xxxi (1886), 69 and facing plate in colour; *VCH Som.* i (1906), 306 and fig. 67; M. Aston and R. Iles (ed.), *The Archaeology of Avon* [1987], 63, fig. 5.7).

[36] Frend, *Archaeology and the Study of Early Christianity* (Variorum Reprints, 1988), iii, 147-50; *idem, Rise*, 564.

[37] Frend, *ibid.*; for Thetford cf. D. Watts, *Antiq. Journ.* lxviii.1 (1988), 55-68.

[38] A. A. Barb in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (ed. A. Momigliano, 1963), 114.

[39] *Archaeologia* lxii (1911), 434, 444-5; *Britannia* 1975, 233; Radiocarbon dates in *Mon. Antiq.* iv. 3-4 (1981-2), 5, the earliest of 410±80; cf. also M. Farley, *Bull Board Celt. Stud.* xxxi (1984), 229-30. In general cf. P. A. Rahtz in Barley and Hanson, *op. cit.* note 34, 193-5, and *idem* in R. Reece (ed.), *Burial in the Roman World* (CBA), 1977), 53-64. Amulet, P. Leach, Shepton

Mallet: *Romano-Britons and Early Christians in Somerset* (1991), 24, fig. and fig, of the grave. I am obliged to Prof. Rahtz for telling me of this piece, and to Mr. Leach for additional details about it. Gregory of Nyassa (*ob. c.* 394) (*Patrologia Graeca* xlvi, 440,) refers to the custom of wearing a cross on the breast, under the robe; this is no doubt an instance.

[40] R. S. O. Tomlin, *Tabellae Sulis* (1988), 232-4, no. 98; he notes this as the first occurrence of the word *Christianus* in Britain. *Gentilis*, interesting if used here by a pagan; but perhaps the person concerned was a lapsed Christian.

[41] Whether the silver spoon inscribed with Chi-Rho and Alpha and Omega, and bearing an uncertain scratched name (*RIB* ii.2, no. 2420.57) in the Jackson Collection in NMW, with Monmouthshire provenance, came from the county, and if so Caerwent ('near Roman remains'), is quite uncertain. It has strong affinities with a spoon in a hoard found at Biddulph (Staffs.), *ibid.* 2420.56. If indeed a Monmouthshire relic, it is the only Romano-British Christian object known from the county, except the Chi-R bowl from House VIIN.

[42] I consign to this note mention of a building opened by Nash-Williams just north of the parish church and by him identified at its sub-Roman predecessor (*Archaeologia* lxxx (1930), 235-6, a view maintained as late as 1953 in *Bull. Board of Celtic Stud.* xv.2, 165-7). The remains overlay at a high level the robbed footings of the Roman public baths basilica. The supposed apse on the east of the single chamber was very slight and may have been a fire-place; the building might well be one of the 'houses of a new making' reported by Leland; there was no Roman stratification, and the high level must suggest this. The reconstructed plan involves a curious projecting narthex, based on fragments of walling on the south side of the single chamber; such a narthex is known at an advanced date in Asia Minor (C. M. Kaufman, *Handbuch der christlichen Archäologie* (1922), Abb. 79, 1 and 12, where Nash-Williams saw examples) but is totally absurd transplanted to 5th-century Caerwent. This building, or these buildings, are neither sub-Roman nor a church.

[43] *Welsh Antiquity, Essays pres. to H. N. Savory* (ed. G. C. Boon and J. M. Lewis, 1976), 163-75.

[44] *Ibid.*, fig. 5 after W. S. Penn, *Arch. Cant.* lxxiv (1960), 118-24, cf. lxxix (1964), 177, 179-80.

[45] *Archaeologia* lviii (1902-3), p1.x. Putti and Seasons occur together on various N. African and Levantine mosaics; cf. R. Stuveras, *Le putto dans l'art romain* (Coll. Latomus xcix, 1969), 51-3. A new study by I. Jesnic, *Mosaic* xvii, 1990, 7-13: Bacchus (?) in the centre; I am obliged to Dr. David Smith for this ref.

[46] *Archaeologia* lviii, 150, note 3; my notes, *Bull. Board Celt. Stud.* xxix.2 (1981), 354-5 and xxix.4 (1982), 847-9. Cf. R. A. Wild, *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis* (1981), 91-2; F. J. Dölger, *Antike und Christentum* v (1936), 169-70.

[47] R. J. Brewer, *CSIR Gt. Britain*, i.5: *Wales* (1986), no. 53. Doubtless once painted to show the eyes open rather than the blankness of the object as we have it. *Archaeologia* lviii, fig.6 shows it on the platform but obviously disturbed by the excavators. A. E. Hudd wrote to John Ward (whose unpublished study of the building was used in my Festschrift paper), Oct. 1, 1902: 'of course the stone head belongs to the Shrine [i.e. platform], and was found in it. But it my have been found near and placed on the Shrine by lime-burners a century ago. They probably removed all the remainder of the Shrine and surrounding walls, leaving only the sandstone portions' (Ward Papers, NMW).

[48] P. Lambrechts, *L'exaltation de la Tête dans la pensée et dans l'art des Celtes* (1954). In general cf. R. Merrifield, *Archaeology of Ritual and Magic* (1987), 45-6. This head might well be of considerable age. Two skulls were found in the huge rectangular pit about 35 yds. south of the shrine, with samian bowls of the late 2nd century (*Archaeologia* lviii, 151). The late persistence of skull-veneration is archaeologically attested at Wroxeter, where fragments, apparently preserved by being oiled, occurred in the latest level on the basilica site (P. Barker, *Wroxeter Roman City, Excav. 1966-80* [1982], 15).

[49] In the nature, indeed, of the Roman *Lar*: cf. Servius, *Aen.* vi, 152: 'among our ancestors all men used to be buried in their homes, whence arose the custom, that *Lares* should be venerated in houses.'

[50] F. Lauchert, *Die Kanones der wichtigsten altkirchlichen Concilien* (1896), 20, Canon 41. The delicacy of the situation is shown by Canon 60, which states that anyone murdered for smashing idols was not to be regarded as a martyr. Again, Canon 40 forbids the acceptance of the portion customarily added to their rents by tenants for the god's benefit (*quidquid ad idolum datum fuerit).* Difficult relations persisted: the Donatist bishop, Gaudentius, rails a century later against 'lukewarm and negligent' Christians who allowed pagan worship on their estates (quoted by F. J. Dölger, *Antike und Christentum* vi.4 (1950), 306, note 36, in an important study of the problem (297-320) which I had not seen when I wrote my Festschrift contribution). Later again, the agonized enquirer of Augustine's advice (note 56 below) wanted to know whether he fell into mortal sin for engaging a barbarian guard for his farm, and accepting the man's oath sworn on his own 'false gods', to protect the crops, etc.; this at the end of the fourth century.

As late as the 11th century, the concept of pagan 'impurity' survived. A. Le Prévost records a prayer for the purification of vessels found in ancient contexts and required for use again; it is part of a whole series of occasional prayers applicable to the monastic life: *Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, insere te officiis nostris et haec vascula arte fabricata gentilium, sublimitate tuae potentia ita emundare digneri, ut, omni immunditia depulsa, sint fidelibus suis tempore pacis atque tranquillitatis utenda. Per Christum Dominum nostrum, etc. (Mém. sur la collection de vases antiques trouvée à Berthouville,* 1832, 2, citing Rouen, Bibliothèque Publique, MS 93; Abbey of Jumièges).

[51] My note, *Bull. Board of Celtic Stud.* xix.4 61962), 338-45, cf. *Archaeologia* lx (1906-7), 459-60. Graffito now *RIB* ii.2, no. 2417.38. The half-latinized form comes in during the late-fourth century, as here, and may have been developed mistakenly from the pot-hook lop of a Rho as sometimes seen.

[52] J. F. Keating, *The Agapé and the Eucharist in the Early Church* (1901) is the best consideration in English; cf. Cabrol-Leclercq, *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chétienne et de liturgbie* i, *s.v.*

[53] Augustine, *Ep.* xxii.6, xxix,9.—Home celebration of the *agapé* naturally led to housewifely rivalry, and some sour remarks

were vented, e.g. by Clement of Alexandria (*Paedagogus* ii,4): 'pitiful suppers redolent of savour and sauces', or Tertullian (*De Jejunio*, xvii): 'At your house the *agapé* is boiled up in saucepans, faith is fomented in kitchens, hope rests on dishes . . .'

[54] Cabrol-Leclercq i, figs. 184, 188-90. Photograph, e.g. in J. Stevenson, *The Catacombs* (1978), fig. 71.

[55] G. H. Engleheart *et al.*, *Archaeologia* lvi (1898-9), 1-20, with BM *Guide to the Antiq. of Roman Britain* (1922), 84, fig.107; another, deeper, with Chi-Rho on the basal underside, London, Wheeler *op. cit.* note 5, 25 fig. 2,1. These and others, cf. *RIB* ii.2. nos. 2417.36, 40;29,39,41. Pottery (at the time of writing not yet scheduled in *RIB* ii), cf. A. Fox, *Roman Exeter* (1952), 92, pl.xa; *Antiq. Journ* 1927, 321-2 (Canterbury) and others, cf. Thomas *op cit.* note 1, 123-5.

[56] Augustine, *Ep.* xlvi-vii.

[57] One must not call these 'chalice and paten'. Only bread was *ceremonially* offered at *agapai;* not wine. Another pewter bowl, with Chi-Rho and other ornament on the flange, is the Isle of Ely piece (*RIB* ii.2 no 2417.29), perhaps from a hoard; and if so, another deposit of sanctified pieces, cf. Thomas, *loc. cit.* note 55. The flange presumably enabled one to raise the bowl seemly in both hands.—*Archaeologia* lx, 462-3,, fig.4, refers to a pewter flagon and plate from a well at House VI N., the latter decorated with a Greek cross, but of uncertain significance. A small gadrooned bronze bowl, with (?) missing flat rim, with a respoussé Chi-Rho on the basal underside was found in a grave near Wall (Staffs.). (*Trans. Birm. Arch. Soc.* 1924, 50, pl. xiii; *RIB* ii. 2, no. 2415. 64).

[58] Thomas, *op. cit.* note 1, figs. 33-5, 37.

[59] On grounds of its quasi-transeptal plan. Nothing like it is known of fourth-century date north of the Alps. The supposed coin-evidence is irrelevant.

[60] *Archaeologia* lxii (1911), 411-2, pl. lvii: 'The plan of the group formed by Rooms, 1,2,6,7,10 and 11 resembles somewhat that of an early church, but it would be very rash to assert that it was such a building. It is to be noticed that this part of the house was not directly accessible from the street.' That, on the contrary, would be a recommendation. Entry was via Room 4 into Room 3, but the report does not indicate a street-doorway at all. It is much to be hoped that Cadw will consider at no distant date the re-opening of this important building, so that its character can be re-examined.

[61] Pink, with splashes of red and yellow, *Archaeologia loc. cit.* Elvira, canon 36, tried to forbid *picturae in ecclesia* (in vain, as e.g. Lullingstone shows).

[62] It is neither desirable nor possible to enter into liturgical details here. For the outline of the service as in the third and probably a good part of the fourth century see e.g. Frend, *Rise,* 407-8. The Eucharistic elements would be placed on an ordinary three-legged table to be blessed, as shown in the catacomb painting reproduced (I think reversed left for right) *ibid.*, 397. Such a table, perhaps of the black lustrous Kimmeridge shale so popular in Roman Britain and represented at Caerwent (Newport Museum; J. Liversidge, *Furniture in Roman Britain* (1955), 47 and 73 note 154), would fitly stand on the panel of fine mosaic of which a few cubes were found.

[63] P. D. C. Brown, *Britannia* 1971, 225-31; P. R. Wilson, *ibid.* 1988, 411-2.

[64] Toynbee, *op. cit.* note 1, 222-3, fig.41. The Walesby (Lincs.) tank. Tanks in general are well discussed by C. Guy, *Britannia* 1981, 271-6; and *Britannia* 1986, 403; and 1989, 333-4, and Dorothy Watts, 1988, 210-22. Reading Museum. Cf. now *RIB* ii.2, nos. 2416.8-14.

[65] Lauchert, *op. cit.* note 50, 55, canon 6. A Romano-British baptismal liturgy, cf. S. McKillop, in *The Early Church in W. Britain & Ireland* (ed. S. M. Pearce, 1982), 35-48.

[66] Note 63.

[67] E. Griffe, *La Gaule chrétienne à l'époque romaine* (1947), 123-8.

[68] *CCSL* cxlviii, *Concilia Galliarum A. 314-A 500* (1963), 15, etc. Cf. J. C. Mann, *Antiquity* xxxv (1961), 316-20, esp.317. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica x,* 5.22 for a copy of an imperial letter of convocation to the Council.

[69] Based on *RIB* i, no.103, set up by a pagan governor probably under Julian II.

[70] Sulpicius Severus, *Sacrae Historiae* ii, 41; cf Ammian xxi, 16. 18 for the 'hamstringing' of the passenger post (*rei vehicularie succideret nervos*) by the Emperor Constantius' all-too-frequent provision of warrants for delegates of church councils. It was usual, however, to offer this facility, at least when councils were convened by the emperor; as was done for Arles in 314, cf. Eusebius, *loc.cit.* note 68.

[71] K. S. Painter, *The Water Newton Treasure* (1977); cf. note 36 above.

[72] Quoted by Griffe, *op. cit.* note 67, 177 note, a point made to me by my late friend Francis Needham.

[73] Victricius of Rouen, *De Laude Sanctorum* (Migne, *Patrologia Latina* xx, 443). He was there some time, to bring about a settlement (*ibi moratus sum . . . pacis me faciendae consacerdotes mei salutares antistites evocarunt)*

[74] Pelagianism is simply explained by Frend, *Saints and Sinners in the Early Church* (1985), ch.6.

[75] Constantius, *Vita Germani,* xiv-xv. The story is well-covered by P. Salway, *Roman Britain* (1982), 465-9.

[76] Cf. Griffe, *op. cit.* note 67, 199-220.

[77] A. W. Wade-Evans, *Vitae Sanctorum Britanniae et Genealogiae* (1944), 272/3—276/7, iii,v,vi, and ix. Cf. Jeremy Knight, *Mon. Antiq.* iii.1 (1970-1), 29-36.

[78] *Vita Tathei* does not actually state whether a church was built in the town; the only one mentioned (vi) places it in an *ager suburbanus* between the Roman road and the Severn (*a publica via usque ad amnem*). He is (ix) given 'the whole city and territory freely and in perpetuity' (*totam civitatem et totum territorium libere pro eterna hereditate)*

[79] See note 39.

[80] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* iii, 4 (*sine charta vel atramento scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem*).

GWENT SEALS: III

A medieval Seal Mould from Trostrey Castle

By A. G. MEIN

Plates 1, 2 and 3 show the stone mould recovered during the current excavations at Trostrey Castle, near Usk. Found in a sealed but secondary deposit in the main north ditch, it lay among other debris dumped from the fixed timber bridge which allowed access from the outer bailey into the castle. While the context in which it was found cannot be dated with any real accuracy its place in the chronology of the site is clear. This deposit marked the period of perhaps 100 years during which the stone castle was unoccupied and in decay but before its final demolition in about 1590.[1] Archaeomagnetic dating has enabled the construction of the stone castle to be established as the last decade or so of the 13th. Century at which date it replaced the decayed remains of the two-phased, palisaded ringwork which had occupied the hill top since shortly after the Conquest. The material deposited immediately below the layer in which the mould was found, which included a fine lead, bi-conical, decorated spindle whorl indicates that active occupation of the castle ended in the late 15th. Century.

The mould was presumably dumped as useless by looters roaming the empty castle so that, while that event can be dated within reason, the date of its manufacture is another matter. Designed for the casting of dies which when suitably engraved to identify their owners would have formed their personal seals, it is unique in Wales and perhaps in Britain. Fortunately the shape, dimensions and type of its dies enable an approximate date for its use to be suggested. At 7cms. long, 5cms. wide and 3cms. thick the mould is the size of a large bar of toilet soap and is of oolithic limestone. If of "Bath stone" it may have originated from the major local source in the medieval period, the ruins of Roman Caerleon, as perhaps did a piece recovered by the same group in the course of work at Llantarnam Abbey. Plates 1, 2 and 3, for which I thank Dr. Mark Redknap and the National Museum of Wales, show three attempts to produce pointed oval moulds and one for a circular mould. A fifth, a mere oval compass sketch, does not appear.

Only two, the lower shown on P1. 1 and the circular mould in P1. 2, were usable as the edge of the stone had spalled during carving. Both the usable moulds are carved with a chamfer to permit the casting to be removed easily. Both have central slots and end holes to produce raised spines with end pegs in the casting. These can be seen in the latex blanks in P1.3. The end pegs would have been drilled to take a lanyard for suspending the finished seal for safe keeping, as in the case of the silver die or matrix for the seal of Strata Florida Abbey, Dyfed, published recently by Williams.[2] Against the buff yellow of the stone both of the depressions appear markedly pink, clearly the effect of the heat of the molten metal. Traces of this remain around their edges and elsewhere and are visible as the black droplets at the bottom of the curve of the oval mould in P1.1. The metallic waste has been subjected to analysis by X-ray spectrometry and to visual examination and photography under an electron microscope. The droplets proved to be lead rich with a tin content which varied widely, indicating that the mould had been used exclusively to cast pewter objects.[3]

As can be seen from the plates there are no pegs, holes to receive pegs, ridges or grooves in the stone to act as registers. It is clear therefore that the block was designed as an open

Plate 1.
By courtesy of the National Museum of Wales

Plate 2.
By courtesy of the National Museum of Wales

Plate 3.
By courtesy of the National Museum of Wales

mould for shallow castings and was not one of a pair of matching hollow moulds.[4] The latex casts indicate nevertheless that, even after trimming, the pewter castings would have been some 6mm. thick, quite enough metal to bear an engraved device of adequate relief to reproduce well as a seal. What is not shown on any of the plates, because it is only visible under magnification with oblique lighting, is that the bottom edge of the stone bears scratches made with a fine metal compass to mark out the shape for the never attempted cutting of another oval mould. This would have been the same size as the upper and unusable mould seen in Pl. 1. It may have been contemplated as a replacement for it, for it is clear that the accidental spalling of the stone took place during the cutting of that unusable mould. It follows that it is likely that all the moulds were cut as one job. No attempt has been made to use either of the ends of the stone for further moulds.

I am indebted to Mr. Geoffrey Egan of the Museum of London for providing both positive identification and for drawing my attention to the work of Rigold and of Spencer, from which it is clear that the pegged spines put the Trostrey moulds into their Type 3.[5] From their work on English seals and that of Siddons and Williams in Wales[6] one can suggest a date from the mid-13th. to the mid-14th. Century and perhaps offer another reason for the unique interest of this object, namely that it was a family affair, the pointed oval for a seal for a woman and the circular for a man. Rigold identified two types of seal die. The first is of lead or pewter, has been cut out of a metal sheet or engraved on a cast blank, and is circular, elliptical or a pointed oval in shape. Some of his cast examples had "a small rib or projection for gripping at the rear" as in the Trostrey examples but smaller, while "most have a tab or projection, usually unpierced, off the circumference". There is a most marked preference for the use of the pointed oval shape by women; 64% of them chose it as against 9% of the men, who seemed to prefer the circular shape. Rigold dates this type "from the late 12th. to the late 13th. Centuries, and seldom much afterwards." His second type of die, which he sees as "to some degree" superseding the other, is of bronze or brass, is circular or rarely elliptical and is engraved on the base of a cast handle rather in the shape of a chess pawn. This type need not detain us further apart from noting his view that its main date is around 1300 while "the species seems to be obsolescent by the later 14th. Century, to be replaced by signet-rings."

Spencer, who was considering a large number of dies and seals which had been recovered in London since Rigold's article appeared, shows that there is a third type of die. This can be circular, shield shaped or in the pointed oval form but the distinguishing feature is that they have on their backs a ridge and a loop or other peg-like device to assist in handling the seal, as the Trostrey mould has been shown to produce—see Pl.3. None of the seals or dies considered by Spencer, of whichever type, were seemingly of women, while the three pointed oval ones were ecclesiastical. Spencer dates his third type "from the middle of the 13th. Century to the middle of the 14th," and there seems no reason why this date should not apply to the Trostrey mould. The most recently published seal-die is that lost by its owner Roger of Cumnor in his house in Oxford some time during the five years prior to 1265 and recovered recently by the Oxford Archaeological Unit. This die is of lead, is a pointed oval and has the standard ridge and peg on the rear surface.[7]

Impossible though it is to identify the individuals for whom the mould was made, it is noteworthy that the only period before the 16th. Century during which the manor of Trostrey was held by named individuals coincides with the probable date of the mould. Thus Philip Marshal was holding in 1295 and Geoffrey le Mareshal in 1314[8]. Both before

and after this period, until as late as 1535, the manor was demesne of Usk Castle. Certainly in the forthcoming report on the work at Trostrey it will be suggested that its up-grading from palisaded ringwork to stone castle was the work of this Marshall family, between whom and their vastly more powerful and famous namesakes of only fifty years before no relationship can I trace.

Dimensions of the moulds:

The usable moulds:

circular: 25mm diameter; 6mm depth for suspension loop.
oval: 49 x 20mm; 7mm depth for loop

The spoilt moulds:
39 x about 18mm; 7mm depth for loop.
43 x about 20mm; incomplete—no groove
43 x 20mm; compass scratch only

NOTES

[1] For this date, see: Mein, A. G., and Olding, R. F., 'Dafydd Benwyn and a date for Trostrey Court', *Gwent Local History Jnl.* 65 (1988) 19-25.

[2] Williams, D. H., 'Catalogue of Welsh Ecclesiastical Seals: IV', *Arch Camb.* CXXXVI (1987) 145-6 (No. 234a; Pl. XIV).

[3] For this examination I am grateful to Mr. Peter N. Martin, B.S.c., C.Eng., M.I.M.

[4] Compare with the two-part mould for the Haverfordwest Town Seal of *ca.* 1291; Williams, D.H., *Welsh History through Seals* (Cardiff; National Museum of Wales, 1982) 8.

[5] Rigold, S. E., 'Two common species of medieval seal-matrix', *Antiq. Jnl.* LVII (1977: 2) 324-9; Spencer, B., 'Medieval seal-dies recently found in London', *Antiq. Jnl.* LXIV (1984: 2) 376-82.

[6] Siddons, M. P., 'Heraldic Seals in the Gwent Record Office', *Monm. Antiq.* VII (1991) 42-54, giving at fn. 1., the reference of D. H. Williams' catalogue of Welsh ecclesiastical and personal seals published recently in *Archaeologia Cambrensis.*

[7] *Current Archaeology 121* (Autumn 1990) 32-3, and *per lit.* Mr. Brian Durham, of the Oxford Archaeological Unit.

[8] *Cal. Inquisitiones Post Mortem* (Rolls Ser.) III (1295) 371, V (1314) 538.

GWENT SEALS: IV

A Personal Seal from Monmouth

By STEPHEN J. CLARKE and DAVID H. WILLIAMS

Matrix

Impression

Plate: *National Museum of Wales*

Members of the Monmouth Archaeological Society excavating at 22-24 Monnow Street, Monmouth, in late 1990, found a lead seal matrix in the fill of a defensive ditch back-filled in the late-thirteenth century. The seal itself is perhaps not very much earlier in date. The device of a double quatrefoil was not unusual at that period. The matrix is in good condition, and gives a remarkably fine impression—save for part of the legend. This means that while it was clearly the property of one Florence, the interpretation of the surname is open to question. It is tempting to believe that Florence was a local resident, and that his parents' choice of his Christian name derived from the dedication of Monmouth Priory to Our Lady and St. Florent (after the mother-abbey of St. Florent at Saumur in the Loire valley), or from the name of Florent borne by a prior of Monmouth about 1235.[1]

Device: A double quatrefoil, with an estoile above and a crescent below.

Legend: + S' FLORANCE NOR . . .?E (Lombardic Capitals)

Date: Perhaps mid-late 13th C.
Material: Lead
Dimensions: 35 x 25 mm.

Shape: Pointed Oval.
Weight: 8.79 gms.

NOTE

[1] Kissack, K., *Medieval Monmouth* (Monmouth, 1974) 11-2, 75.

THE MANSION-HOUSE OF MAGOR

By HOWARD J. THOMAS, F.S.A., and DAVID H. WILLIAMS, F.S.A.

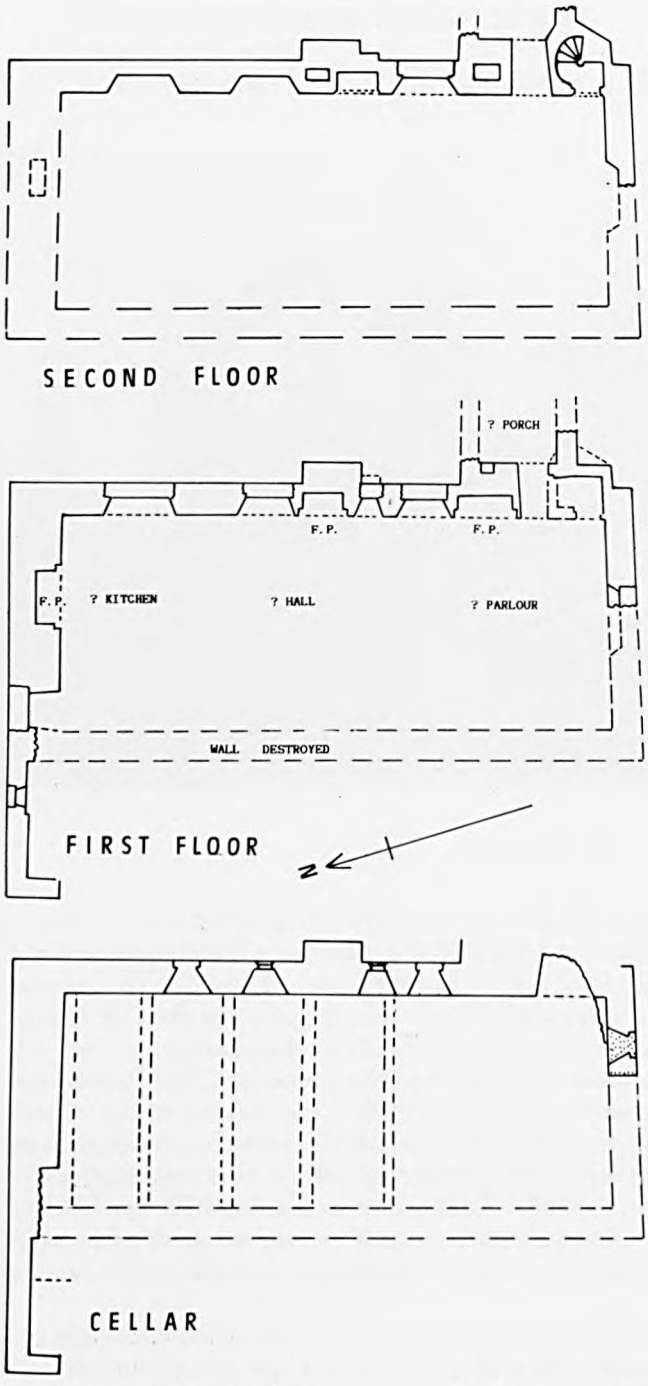
Courtesy of Cadw *Plate:* David Robinson

Introduction (David H. Williams)

There has been no little interest in recent years in the ruins of a substantial residence adjoining the churchyard at Magor, and this has been highlighted by Cal Hyland in a recent article in the journal of the Gwent Local History Council.[1] The interest is, however, not new; it goes back to at least 1858, and was the concern then of Thomas Wakeman and Octavius Morgan, both early luminaries of our Association.

Tradition has for some time ascribed the name of "The Procurator's House" to the ruined building, assuming this to have been the residence of a representative based in Magor of the Italian abbey of St Mary de Gloria at Anagni, to which monastery the church and tithes of Magor parish were granted by Gilbert Marshal, Earl of Pembroke and Lord of Striguil (Chepstow) in 1238.[2] The Cistercian monks of Tintern leased these spiritualities from the abbey of de Gloria by 1385,[3] and were granted them outright in 1442.[4] This date long precedes the probable building of the present structure in the first half of the sixteenth century.

There can be little doubt that the residence was that of the vicar of Magor, a secular priest appointed (at that time) by the abbot of Tintern to whom both church and house belonged.[5] The building must be that referred to in 1585: 'between the wall of the churchyard of Magor, *the mansion house belonging to the vicarage of Magor,* the park of the Queen in Magor . . .'.[6] Another deed of the same year alludes to 'the mansion house of Magor' as adjoining



The Mansion-House of Magor *(H. J. Thomas, 1985)*

the churchyard.[7] This does not mean that it was the first house on the site, for just after Tintern leased the church from Anagni the vicar of Magor is on record as paying an annual rent of 6d. to Tintern for 'the rectory by Magor cemetery' (1388).[8]

A letter written by Thomas Wakeman to Octavius Morgan (6th September 1858) gives an account of the Court Baron for the Manor of Magor and Green Moor held, over a century before, on 29th May 1738.[9] This shows the monastery of Tintern to have been not only possessed of the church of Magor, but also of the for long tithe-free and extra-parochial area of Greenmoor. The jurors (Thomas Lewis, gentleman; Thomas Jones, James Huggett, William Bool, Thomas Irish, Thomas Hopkins, and John Jones) reflect in their evidence the division of the manor towards the close of the seventeenth century.

"We say and do present that the Great House which adjoins the Churchyard of Magor does belong to the Lords of Greenmoor and that what now remains of the said house, and that the walls thereof now standing belongs only to Wm. Morgan, Esqre. Lord of the said Manor, and to Reginald Kemeys, Esqre. and the part which belongs to Wm. Morgan, Esqre. is on the north-east end and contains in length 30 feet, and that the third part of the backside adjoining to the said house belongs to the said Willm. Morgan as Lord of the said manor".

It is clear that the house was already in a state of ruin two hundred and fifty years ago. The 'part which belongs to Wm. Morgan' had been demised by indenture to Edmund Rosser in 1697 for eleven years.[10]

Survey for the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales (Howard J. Thomas; 20th November 1985).

Late Medieval Priest's House (ST 48 NW 4248 8701).

"Ruins of large house of *ca.* 1500-1550, abutting the N.W. side of the parish churchyard (at Magor). Said to be a "Procurator's house", but certainly (judging from the quality of the building and its position), a priest's house.[11]

The walling is built of random rubble masonry with lime mortar, pierced by putlog holes. The quoins and dressings are in fine grained sandstone.

The house is of rectangular plan aligned (approximately) N.-S. There is evidence for two small projecting wings, one at the S.E. (possibly a porch) facing the churchyard, the other on the N.W. facing the village street. Only the E. lateral wall of the house remains entire; the gable walls are reduced fragments, while the W. lateral wall is demolished. The inside contained three floors, viz. two living floors above a cellar. The cellar was timber ceiled, lit by chamfered square single light windows with segmental headed rear arches. The fireplace (dressings gone) had segmental headed relieving arches. The first floor appears from the window and fireplace arrangements, to have been originally sub-divided (by timber partitions) into three chambers, possibly a hall, kitchen, and parlour. The windows, once mullioned, were all recessed with segmental headed relieving arches over the bressumers. At the S.E. corner there survives a recess entered by a plain chamfered 4-centred Tudor door. The S.E. wing contains an aumbry. On the second floor are recessed windows all robbed of their dressings, also a Tudor fireplace, plain chamfered, with straight cut stops below a bar. A Tudor door at the S.E. corner led into a newel stair which gave access to the attic levels, now destroyed.

A short distance to the N. at ST 42488717, is a ruined gable of a 16th or 17th Century house. This retains a flat sandstone fireplace bressumer below a segmental headed relieving arch. On the N. side are remains of a newel stair."

NOTES

[1] Hyland, C., 'Magor Grant: What Bradney did not know?', in *Gwent Local History Council* 70 (Spring, 1991) 5-9.
[2] Evans, C. J. O., *Monmouthshire* (Cardiff, 1953) 396.
[3] *Calendar of Close Rolls* 1385/638.
[4] *Calendar of Patent Rolls* 1442/85-6.
[5] Cf. the architectural notes below.
[6] NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments, Box 58, No. 65.
[7] NLW, Barnard Deed 5.
[8] NLW, Badminton Manorial 1571.
[9] NLW, Tredegar Park Muniments, Box 149, No. 60; *cf.* No. 56.
[10] Ibid. Box 149, No. 55.
[11] For comparative plans and locations, see: Pantin, W. A., 'Medieval Priest's House in South-West England', *Med. Arch* I, 118-146.

A FIELD-DAY WITH THE ANTIQUARIANS IN 1867

By DAVID H. WILLIAMS, F.S.A.

Not to be expected in a county newspaper to-day was the full page spread given on August 31st, 1867, in *The Monmouthshire Merlin and South Wales Advertiser,* of the annual meeting of the *Monmouthshire and Caerleon Antiquarian Association* (as our society was then called) at Trellech on the previous Tuesday, August 27th. The correspondent pointed out that:

> notwithstanding the disadvantage arising from the fact that the *locus in quo* could not be approached by rail within a distance of some five or six miles, the gathering proved to be one of the most successful, in point of number at least, at which we have had the pleasure of being present.

And he listed by name no less than seventy-two participants, some of whom brought parties, 'besides many whom we did not know'. Amongst the assembled company was our then President, Mr Octavius Morgan, the Honorary Secretary: Mr J. E. Lee, Sir George Arney and Miss Arney of Monmouth, Colonel and Mrs Burdett, Mr F. J. Mitchell, and Miss Rolls, and no less than ten clerics. There were those who could not attend that day:

> It was a matter of regret that the vicar, The Rev C. F. Kuper, was unable to join the party, being suffering from the effects of an accident sustained at Monmouth a few days since.

More than that, the President had to explain the absence of:

> a gentleman who, until last year, had always attended their meetings, and who had always contributed largely to their information—a gentleman more versed in a knowledge of the history of the locality and of the families of the county that any other individual, viz., Mr Wakeman (the Graig, Monmouth). He regretted that the state of Mr Wakeman's health did not permit him to be present. No man possessed a greater number of documents relating to the county of Monmouth, and from which might be produced a more perfect history of Monmouthshire than any yet published.

Those who did attend had a pleasant journey:

> A fairer, sunnier morn than that with which the archaeologists were favoured scarcely could have dawned, while the scenery which surrounds the traveller proceeding to Trellech from almost every direction is distinguished by superlative loveliness.

And they were to have an enjoyable day:

> Nor was the errand on which we sped at all calculated to mar the joyousness which our surroundings inspired. Let no reader imagine that an antiquarian excursion is a dull, moping affair—a mere congregation of Dry-as-dusts. A right genial spirit pervades the assembly, and while there is much to interest and inform, the elements of hilarity and mirth are not wanting, and if there be, sometimes, a little of what some would chose to call vain and useless speculation, even that, regarded from a certain point of view, enhances rather

> than diminishes the enjoyment. If anyone doubts our version, let him identify himself with the Monmouthshire Antiquaries, and on the first opportunity share one of their pic-nics, and our word for it his misgivings will be set at rest once and for ever.

So the company arrived at Trellech, and:

> The party having assembled on the open space in front of the village hostelry, the hon. President ascended the ancient stepping stone, and bade them all a cordial welcome, expressing the pleasure he felt on witnessing so numerous a company from Monmouth, Chepstow, and more distant parts of the county. He then sketched the proposed programme of the day's proceedings, and the business was at once entered upon.

The President gave the members a conducted tour of the churchyard and church, after which 'the party then proceeded to view the Sun Dial', dated 1689, and which was 'situate close to the National School-room within the fence'. (*It has long since been removed into the church itself*). The block below the dial has engraved upon it three great points of interest in Trellech: the Terret Tump, the Three Stones, and the Virtuous Well. The President pointed out that the 'three stones were represented on the dial as upright, whereas none were now upright'. The morning session then concluded with the exhibition by Mr. R. Everett of Gibraltar, Monmouth, of a noble and half-noble of the time of Edward III, found by the river side near Monmouth, and of a bronze socket celt, found near Troy. The Luncheon

> Was now announced, and as the party was so very numerous, they formed two divisions—one being accommodated at the large room of the inn, and the other at the school-room.

The afternoon was meant to commence with an examination of the Terret Tump.[1]

> and thitherward a goodly number had proceeded, when a sudden and rather sharp shower quickly dispersed them in search of shelter, and no attempt at any outside gathering was subsequently made.

Instead, the members adjourned for the Annual Meeting to an adjacent barn. There Mr Lee, as Secretary, read the report of the Committee, detailing first the discovery of the labyrinth pavement at Caerleon, and referring to the monograph the Asscociation had published concerning it.[2] Reference was made to the purchase of a collection of 'ancient stone implements' from the North of England, and which was now on display in the Museum. The Secretary observed that 'he thought the society was doing a great deal of work'. With this the President concurred:

> 'The labyrinthine tesselated pavement found at the churchyard of Caerleon, was a valuable contribution in England, there being but one on the continent, and its discovery had created quite a sensation in the archaeological world'.

The President then referred to the fact that:

> 'the expenses of keeping up the Museum at Caerleon were considerable, inasmuch as they had to repair the building, to incur the expense necessary to collect and bring together various objects which it was their desire to preserve'.

whilst the Secretary alluded to his own book on 'The Caerleon Museum',[3] copies of which he had with him for sale.

The Secretary also stated that the subscriptions of the members amounted to some £40 per year, and the President invited:

> all present who were not already members to enrol themselves with the Association, the subscription to which, he said, was 5s. yearly for gentlemen, and 2s. 6d. for ladies.

To which, the Secretary added (amidst laughter):

> 'For unmarried lades, 2s. 6d.; married ladies, 5s'.

The Committee was then re-appointed on the motion of the Rev. W. Oakley, seconded by the Rev. W. Dyke. Its members were:

> Octavius Morgan, Esq., M.P. (president), Rev.Sir C. Salusbury, Illtyd Nichol, Esq., Rev. T. Prothero, Rev. E. Hawkins, Rev. H. P. Edwards, G. W. Nichol, Esq., F. J. Mitchell, Esq., G. T. Clark, Esq., and J. E. Lee, Esq., (hon. secretary).

No lady was numbered amongst them!

The Secretary then read a paper on 'Recent Discoveries at Caerleon', and Mr F. J. Mitchell one on the 'Ruined Church of Llangunnock', noting that the then tenant remembered the bell existing there.[4] The final paper of the afternoon, on Trellech itself, was prepared by Mr Wakeman, but read for him in his absence by the President. After the vote of thanks, the President said that:

> he had been associated with Trellech for some time; and though this was not a political meeting he must indulge in a political reminiscence. In 1841, when he had the honour of being first returned as one of the members for the shire, he met with quite an ovation at Monmouth from the whole county. Trellech then distinguished itself by bringing a large banner on which was emblazoned—''Trellech!—one and all''—and he never mentioned that election without telling the story of ''one and all''.

These remarks were received with laughter and applause. The proceedings then terminated:

> For a while the whirl of departing vehicles and the clattering of horses' hoofs awoke the slumbering echoes, and then Trellech, with its hoary relics of byegone ages, was left to its ordinary quiet and repose.

NOTES

[1] *Cf.* Soulsby, Ian N., 'Trelech: A Decayed Borough of Medieval Gwent', *Monm. Antiq.* IV: 3-4 (1981-82) 41-2.
[2] Morgan, O., *Notice on a Tesselated pavement discovered in the Churchyard, Caerleon* (Newport, 1866).
[3] Lee, J. E., *Isca Silurum* (London, 1862).
[4] *Cf.* Williams, David H., 'For the Record: Llangunnog and Capel Gwenog', *Monm. Antiq.* V: 3 (1985-88) 95-6.

FIELD EXCURSIONS, 1991

Saturday, May 11th: We spent an energetic day in the city of Exeter, with Mr. John Allan, Curator of Antiquities at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, as our guide. We visited first the excellent museum, with its very attractive displays covering the history of Exeter from its beginnings in prehistory. After lunch, we toured the city on foot, looking in detail at many of the beautiful buildings and learning something of their history—the Cathedral Close, St Nicholas' Priory and many others.

Saturday, July 13th: On a beautiful day, we arrived at Old Gwernyfed, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Beetham. This lovely old house at Velindre, Hay-on-Wye, built sometime before 1613, has been lovingly restored by the Beetham family. After coffee and home-made biscuits, we toured the house and learned something of its history from Mr. Beetham. The remains of the extensive formal gardens excited much earnest discussion. After lunch in Hay, we made our way to Maesyronnen Chapel, stopping en route to view the site of the pre-Flavian Roman fort at Clyro. The chapel, built in 1696, is a rare example of an early Nonconformist chapel and contains the original early eighteenth-century furniture. Our Chairman, Mr. G. C. Boon, spoke on the history of Nonconformity as we soaked up the unique atmosphere of the chapel. Our last stop was at Bronllys Castle, where members climbed the many steps to hear Mr. Jeremy Knight recount the history of the castle, first fortified soon after the Norman conquest of Brycheiniog.

Friday, October 4th: Hampton Court Palace was our destination on this perfect autumn day. After lunch and a chance to explore the magnificent gardens, we were shown around the Palace by the Hon. John Thorneycroft, as a sequel to his lecture at the 1989 AGM on the historic brickwork of Hampton Court. Starting with a walk through the remaining Tudor areas of the Palace, including the newly refurbished kitchens, we were able to see how all the ensuing architectural styles had been incorporated. The exhibition about the fire which started in one of the grace and favour apartments and the enormous renovation programme which followed, was of great interest, and members particularly appreciated being able to visit areas normally closed to the public.

Evening Outings: The possibility of bad weather adversely affected attendances at some of the outdoor visits, which were nevertheless most enjoyable. A small but keen band of members climbed Lodge Hill fort in poor weather, under the guidance of Mr. David Zienkiewicz. Mr Keith Kissack led a walk around the Overmonnow area of Monmouth, visiting St. Thomas's Church, Drybridge House and Troy House. Unfortunately, the exploration of the sites at Gwern-y-Cleppa had to be cancelled because of intractable problems both with the weather and the terrain. A walk around Trellech with Dr. Raymond Howell, concentrating on sites excavated by him over the last few seasons, brought home vividly the scale of medieval industrial activity and the former large population of this now quiet village. Kilgwrrwg church, tiny and secluded in its circular churchyard on a little hill was visited on a perfect summer evening. Mr. John Greeves spoke on the history of the little church and all the work necessary to conserve it in recent years, and showed us some of the interesting features of the churchyard. Our last evening visit was to Llanfoist, under the guidance of Mr. Jeremy Knight. After looking at the church and several graves of note in the churchyard, including that of Crawshay Bailey, we climbed in the deepening gloom to Llanfoist Wharf and the canal basin. The visit to Glyn Pits, Pontypool, which should have followed, had to be postponed till next season, as we were by then engulfed in darkness.

G.V.J.