

ART. IX.—*A new leaden sealing from York, and further examples from Brough-under-Stainmore.* By R. P. WRIGHT, F.S.A.

THE discovery at York of a new leaden sealing with an informative legend merits a note for these *Transactions*, in which in 1936 Professor I. A. Richmond published his paper¹ on the sealings from Brough-under-Stainmore, with an appendix on comparable examples from other sites in Britain.

In August 1954 Mr L. P. Wenham² found the new sealing in an excavation on the north side of Blossom Street, York, about 100 yards south-west of Micklegate Bar, at a junction where a Roman road to the north-west branched off from the main Roman road to Tadcaster. The object lay among the cobbles at the top of the second of two road-levels, but was not sealed by the layer of cobbles. The sealing is 15/16 in. in diameter. The reverse, which is humped, is blank, but shows that the direction of the two threads which once ran through the sealing lies a few degrees left of the vertical line. The obverse (fig. 1, *a*) reads PBI, with BI placed close together and an interval between P and B. Below them is a bull, facing right, in the attitude of bellowing.

A similar sealing was found at Felixstowe and is here re-drawn (fig. 1, *b*) from Roach Smith's plate.³ The original appears to be lost, and so cannot be examined. It seems probable that it once carried an I as third letter after PB, and that this was not noted or had flaked away before the drawing was made. The expansion of *p(rovinciae) B(ritanniae) I(nferioris)* admirably fits the

¹ CW2 xxxvi, 1936, 104-125.

² Mr Wenham kindly sent it to the writer for examination and supplied details of the discovery.

³ *Collectanea Antiqua* iii p. 197, pl. xxxii, no. 2. The drawings for fig. 1 have been made by Miss S. M. Gifford.

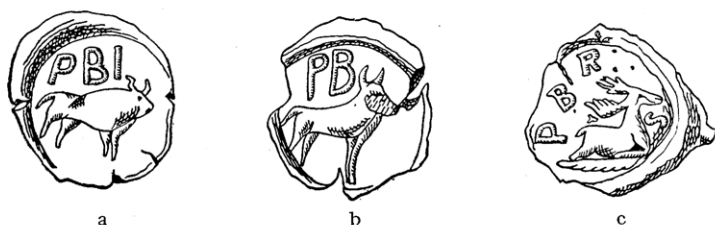


FIG. 1.—Leaden sealings (actual size).

specimen from York, which was the capital of Lower Britain after the province was divided into Upper and Lower Britain early in the 3rd century. The sealing must have been lost off its package in transit on the outskirts of Eboracum. The bull is generally considered⁴ to be the badge of the Sixth Legion, which was stationed at York.

A further sealing of this type citing a province (fig. 1, c) was found⁵ at Combe Down, a mile south of Bath, in a Roman building near to which an inscription⁶ was found, re-used as a coffin-lid, mentioning headquarters (*principia*), presumably of procuratorial officials. The reverse is blank, but the obverse shows a kneeling stag facing right and above it *PBR S, p(rovinciae) Br(itanniae) S(uperioris)*. This expansion can now be put forward with confidence on the basis of the occurrence of *I(nferioris)* on the new example from York. Why the stag should be the emblem chosen is not evident.

In the collection bequeathed by Lt-Col. L. A. D. Montague to the Royal Albert Museum at Exeter⁷ there are five leaden sealings which the donor bought in 1927

⁴ Ritterling, in *RE* XII s.v. *legio*, col. 1599, in support of his view, cites a crudely carved tombstone from Carrawburgh (Bruce, *Lap. Sept.* no. 930), but the standard-bearer with bull-standard there commemorated must be an auxiliary, not a legionary.

⁵ *EE* iv 707, ix p. 516 note to C vii 62; *Coll. Ant.* vii p. 68, with second figure on that page.

⁶ C vii 62, *EE* ix p. 516; Haverfield *VCH Somerset* I, 311.

⁷ The Assistant Curator, Major A. B. Gay, kindly made the sealings and register of the collection available.

from the late G. F. Lawrence, who dealt in antiquities in London. They are numbered 758-762 in Montague's typescript register which says: "found at Syracuse; from the Nugent collection". The present writer has so far been unable to discover any details about the Nugent collection. But the ascription to Syracuse appears to be erroneous, as four of these sealings have close parallels among the large group found at Brough-under-Stainmore.

Nos. 760, 761. Oval; 15/16 in. and 7/8 in. in diameter respectively. *Obv.* Crescent | C(ohors) VII T(hracum) | palm. *Rev.* TVD | asterisk in crescent. Richmond (CW2 xxxvi, 1936, 117 fig. 1, A2) lists four similar examples.

No. 759. Oblong; 7/8 in. long. *Obv.* Leg(io) II: *rev.* JXC. The first letter is damaged, but appears to be rounded. This may be a variation of the legend EXP, of which Richmond (*ibid.*, 117, fig. 1, B3) records five blundered versions.

No. 758. Oval, 1 in. in diameter. *Obv.* CQS + : *rev.* OFP + . The first letter coincides with the margin and seems to be O. Roach Smith (*Coll. Ant.* iii pl. XXXII, 11, followed by Huebner, C. vii 1269, 5) has a close parallel reading IQS : OFP.

No. 762. Oval, 11/16 in. in diameter. An impression from a personal seal, of which varied examples are already known from Brough. This example exhibits: *obv.* two figures, of which the left, facing right, kneels in supplication on right knee and holds up both hands, while the right figure, facing left, bends down and extends the left arm in clemency. *Rev.* blank.

It seems reasonable to regard these five objects as further items salvaged from the waste-heap of the Brough sealings and preserved for about a century in some private collection.