

ART. V.—*Recent discoveries at Ambleside.* By MARY E. BURKETT.

Partly read at Rydal Hall, July 12th, 1963.

ON 25 October 1962, builders removed a large slab of stone at Wanlass How, Waterhead, while putting in a soak-away drain to extensions in the grounds. The stone (Plate I, a) was already broken into two pieces and it was only after these had been put on one side that someone remarked on the traces of writing visible. Mr P. A. Dover, Classics master, was called in and was able to decipher parts of a Latin inscription. A careful excavation of the site was made but no remaining pieces could be found and the soil below the stone seemed undisturbed. The whole of the surrounding area had been greatly disturbed in the building of a tennis-court during the last century.

The stone is a piece of local slate. It measures 4 ft. 10 in. by 2 ft. 4 in., and is $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick at the base and 1 in. thick at the top. The lettering, which is a uniform 2 in. high at the beginning of the inscription, becomes as much as 3 in. high and much more crude towards the end, in spite of very faint, but nevertheless clearly distinguishable, parallel lines, obviously scratched as a guide.

The inscription is as follows:

D B M
FLA FVSCINVS EME
EXORDIVISI ANIS LV
D B M
FLA ROMANVS ACT
VIXIT ANNI XXXV
INCAS · INTE · AB · HOSTI¹

¹ JRS lxiii (1963) 160-164.

Professor Birley suggests DIS BONIS MANIBUS, though there seems to be no parallel for this on a tombstone. Dessau *ILS* 4477 expands a religious dedication as D(IS) B(ONIS) S(ACRUM).

EME(RITVS) EXORDI(NATO) is "retired from the centurionship".

VISI(T) is VIXIT for there are several references to the spelling "visit", in Diehl, *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres*, iii 609.

VISI(T) AN(N)IS LV is "lived for fifty-five years".

FLA(VIVS) ROMANVS ACT(ARIUS) is "Flavius Romanus, record-clerk". Actarius is a clerk in the regimental office.

INCAS(TELLO) INTE(RFECTVS) AB HOSTI(BVS) is Professor Birley's suggestion, which means "killed in the fort by the enemy", a precise piece of information rarely given on inscriptions.

TO THE GOOD GODS OF THE UNDERWORLD
FLAVIUS FUSCINUS RETIRED
FROM THE CENTURIONSHP LIVED 55 YEARS.

TO THE GOOD GODS OF THE UNDERWORLD
FLAVIUS ROMANUS, RECORD-CLERK,
LIVED FOR 35 YEARS
KILLED IN THE FORT BY THE ENEMY.

In 1864, it is recorded in the *Archaeological Journal* xi 395, an inscribed stone was found beside the East gate of the fort and then lost, never to be seen again. As the site of the tombstone was less than 100 yds. from the East gate of the fort, it is tempting to think this might have been the same one. Wanlass How was built in 1841, and extensive landscape gardening was done. The stone might have been used for drainage or flattening purposes.

In July 1962, Mr W. Began, working for the builder Mr B. Armer, noticed and salvaged almost intact a grey jar containing bones (Fig. 3, 1). The site was in the property of Mr Fish, where bungalows are being erected

to the east of the road separating them from the Roman fort. The pot was found 2 ft. below the surface of the ground and standing in a cist, formed of large slabs of slate. Miss D. Charlesworth dated this *c.* A.D. 80-130. It had been used as a cremation jar. Mr B. L. Thompson, who had been taking an interest in the work, had the bones examined by a pathologist who identified them as those of a middle-aged female. Several pieces of amphora and other rims were also found nearby.

This pot was found on the edge of what appeared as an area of cobbles, 14 ft. wide, going north across the building-site from the direction of the camp and appearing again clearly in cross-section some 6 yds. further on in a large drainage hole, dug by the contractors. (Fig. 1, Location plan, *facing* p. 88).

Fragments of leather were first recovered from the site by Mr B. L. Thompson and were shown at the spring meeting of the Society at Carlisle (CW2 lxiii 302). Mr Thompson sent the fragments to the British Leather Manufacturers' Research Association, who reported that they appeared to be from cattle skin. "Some of the samples have split into two layers; this is commonly found in leathers of this kind and is caused by the decay of the undertanned layer at the middle of the skin. It would be difficult to obtain, by the methods then used, complete penetration of tan through a thick skin."

Soon afterwards I noticed a quantity of leather still turning up in the excavations being done by the contracting firm, and also many fragments of samian and other ware appearing from the foundations of the bungalows. A detailed description of the illustrated pottery is given below (p. 93). The nearest point of this building-site is 60 yds. from the north-east-angle tower of the fort, and at a distance of 70 yds. we dug a small trench, at first about 6 ft. by 6 ft. by 4 ft., in order to try to find some clues to the abundance of leather. We were digging some 20 yds. from a stream running north to south, and the

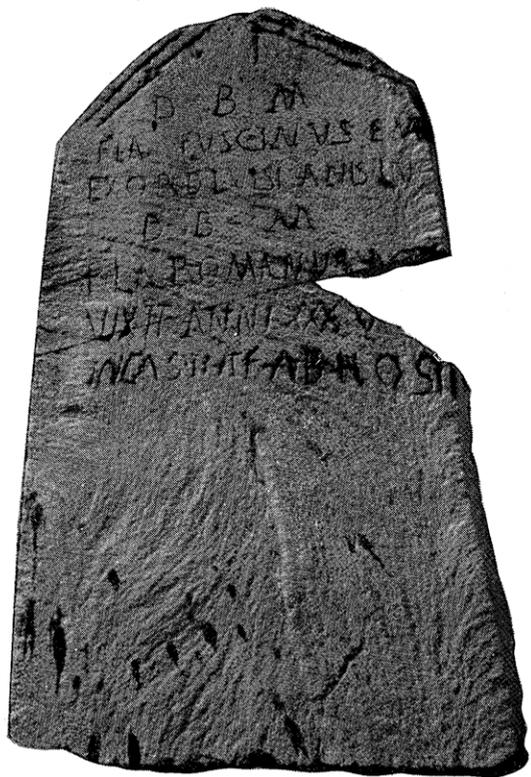


PLATE I, a.—Tombstone.

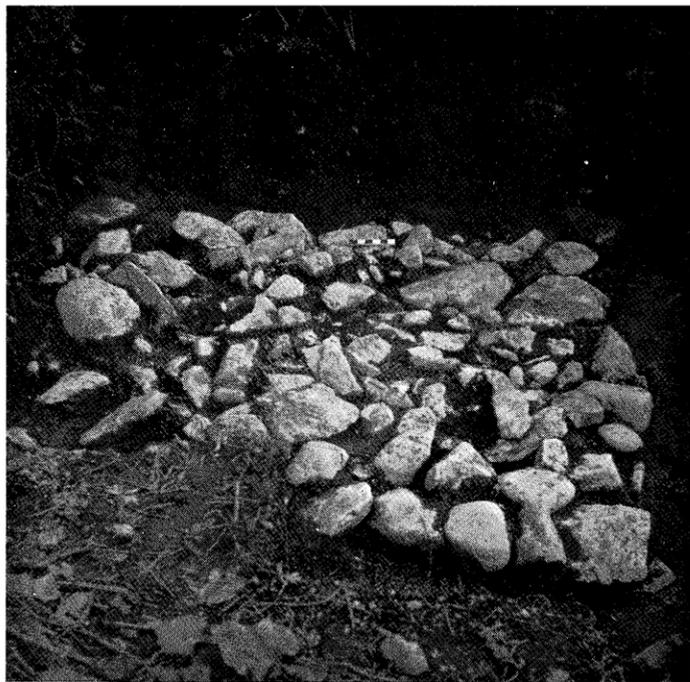


PLATE I, b.—Roughly-paved floor.

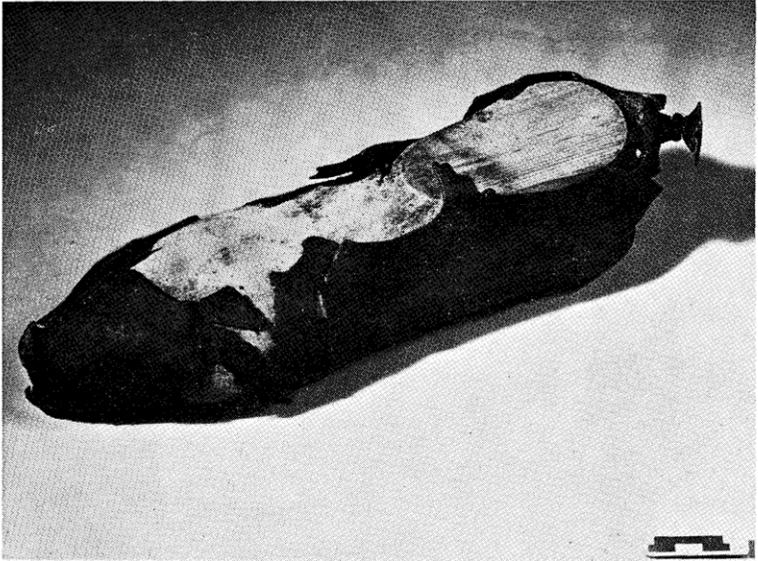


PLATE II.—Roman shoe.

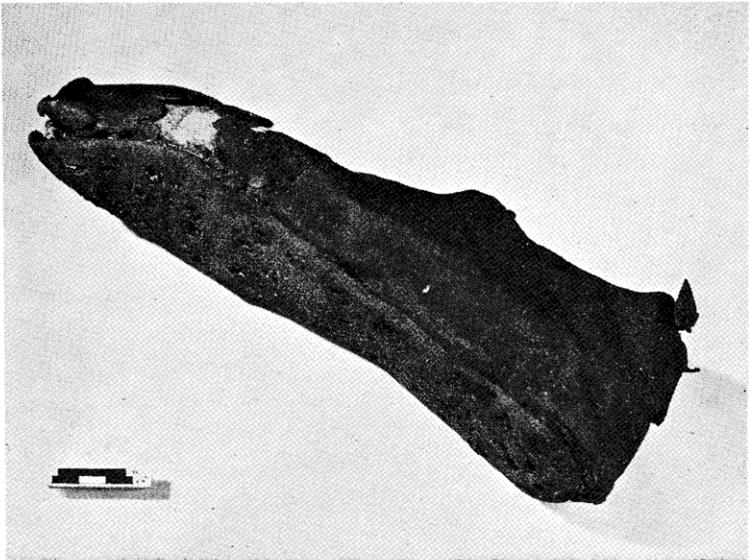


PLATE III.—Roman shoe.

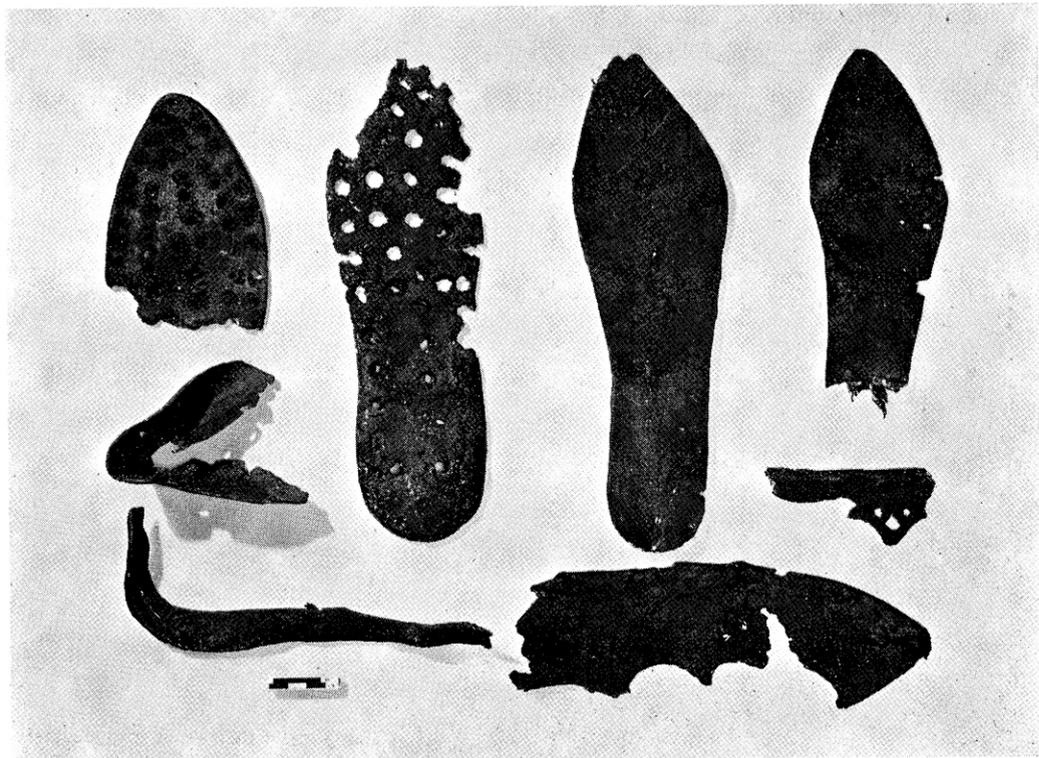


PLATE IV.—Portions of shoes.

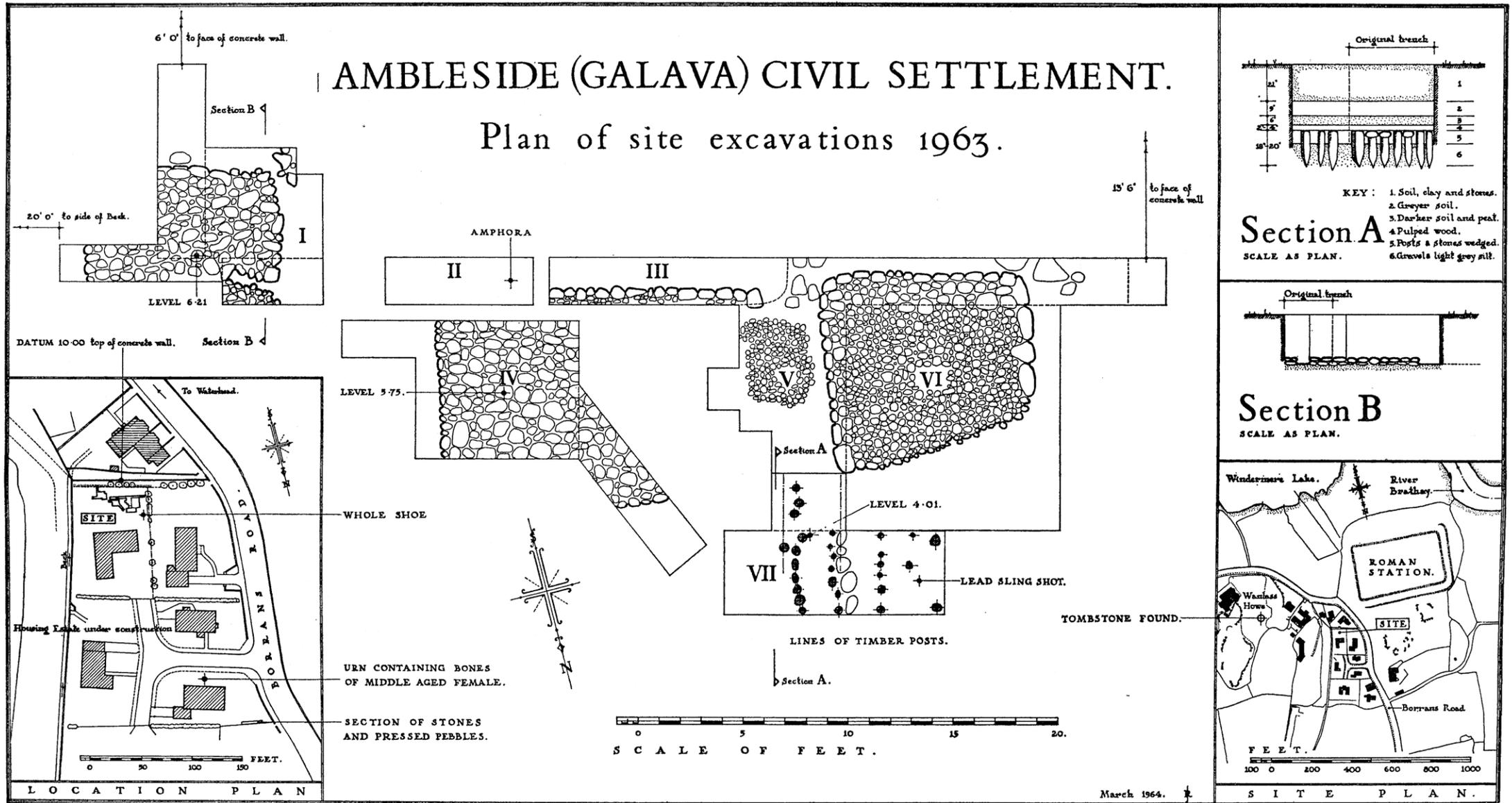


FIG. 1.

field is low-lying and liable to flooding. Only a limited area was available for excavation as the houses were well under way, but the owner and builders co-operated fully.

The trench at first yielded soil full of broken plant-pots, as this was formerly a nursery garden. From 21 in. down the soil changed colour from yellow-brown to a greyer soil, containing fragments of black pot and leather. At about 36 in. the colour changed again and became very dark brown and was obviously decomposed vegetable material and wood — about 4 in. thick in places, in others 2 in. thick. Most of the wood was so decomposed that it left colour and texture only. But in places horizontal slabs remained. Below these were vertical round posts supporting the original horizontal ones, both made of oak.²

There were five rows of these posts in a trench which was extended to 14 ft. long, 6 ft. wide and 6 ft. deep. On one row a number of large flat stones had been well wedged between the heads of the stakes and the flat top pieces. Directly below this layer of dark brown pulp was a bed of thick decomposed vegetable matter; in the main, bracken stalks, thin hazel twigs and birch twigs were the most recognizable. Throughout this level, hazelnuts, cracked neatly in half, were frequent. The lines of demarcation were noticeably straight in this section. Below this the colour changed again nearing the bottom of the posts, which were about 18 in. long and showed signs of having been dressed with some kind of metal tool. Fig. 1, section A, and Fig. 2 show the point and mortice joint. Round the points was grey river-silt.

We then tried to find the extremities of this pattern with a trench 40 ft. long, but instead of finding the usual wooden structures we came upon small, rather roughly cobbled stone-paved areas, which were probably foundations of small houses or workshops. Neither the wooden

² They were kindly identified by Dr Winifred Tutin, of Leicester University, who also examined other soil samples for me.

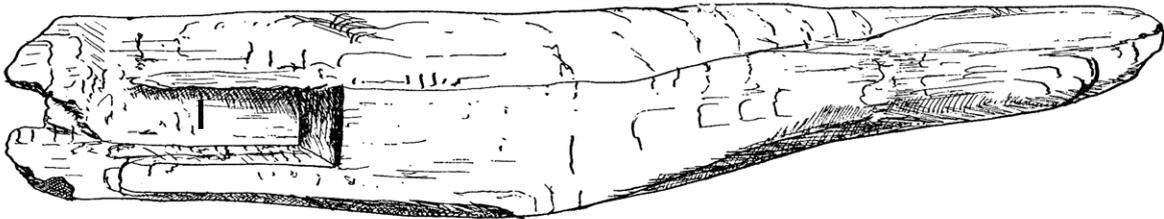


FIG. 2.—(Scale $\frac{1}{2}$).

structure on brushwood nor the little stone squares showed any indication of superstructure. On one of these small squares of stones (Plate I, b) was a possible socket stone, not being used for its original purpose but upturned on the floor.

A lead sling shot (Fig. 5, no. 8), nails and an iron key (Fig. 5, no. 9) all came from the black soil in this part.

On all the builders' spoil-heaps where black soil occurred were many pieces of leather, including a number of whole soles and heels, and one complete shoe (Plates II, III and IV). The damp had preserved the leather, but at the same time had shrunk the soles and shoe considerably. Dr K. W. Pepper, Director of the Leather Research Association, reports on these further samples as follows:

"Many of the thickest pieces of leather are from cattle-hide but the thin pieces of leather would appear to be from goat or hair sheep type. It is difficult to identify leather from the grain pattern once the leather is so shrunken and it is possible that some of the thicker pieces could be from horse. We are, of course, not able to date the leather."

H. S. Cowper reported on 20 June 1901³ similar finds in this area. He suggested that the wooden piles and horizontal beams were part of the Roman road. The pointed stakes he described are the same as those we found, although none of the stakes we found had holes near the points, but one or two had grooves near the tops for the horizontal beam to rest upon (Fig. 2). The other interesting point of comparison is in his discovery of a great deal of stonework opposite the north-east corner of the fort, as this is rather suggestive of a continuation of the paved areas we discovered to the east of our original hole, at a depth of 18 in. to 2 ft. 8 in. Sixty-three years later it seems confusing and difficult to speculate on the exact functions of the finds. We found

³ CW2 xi 31-37.

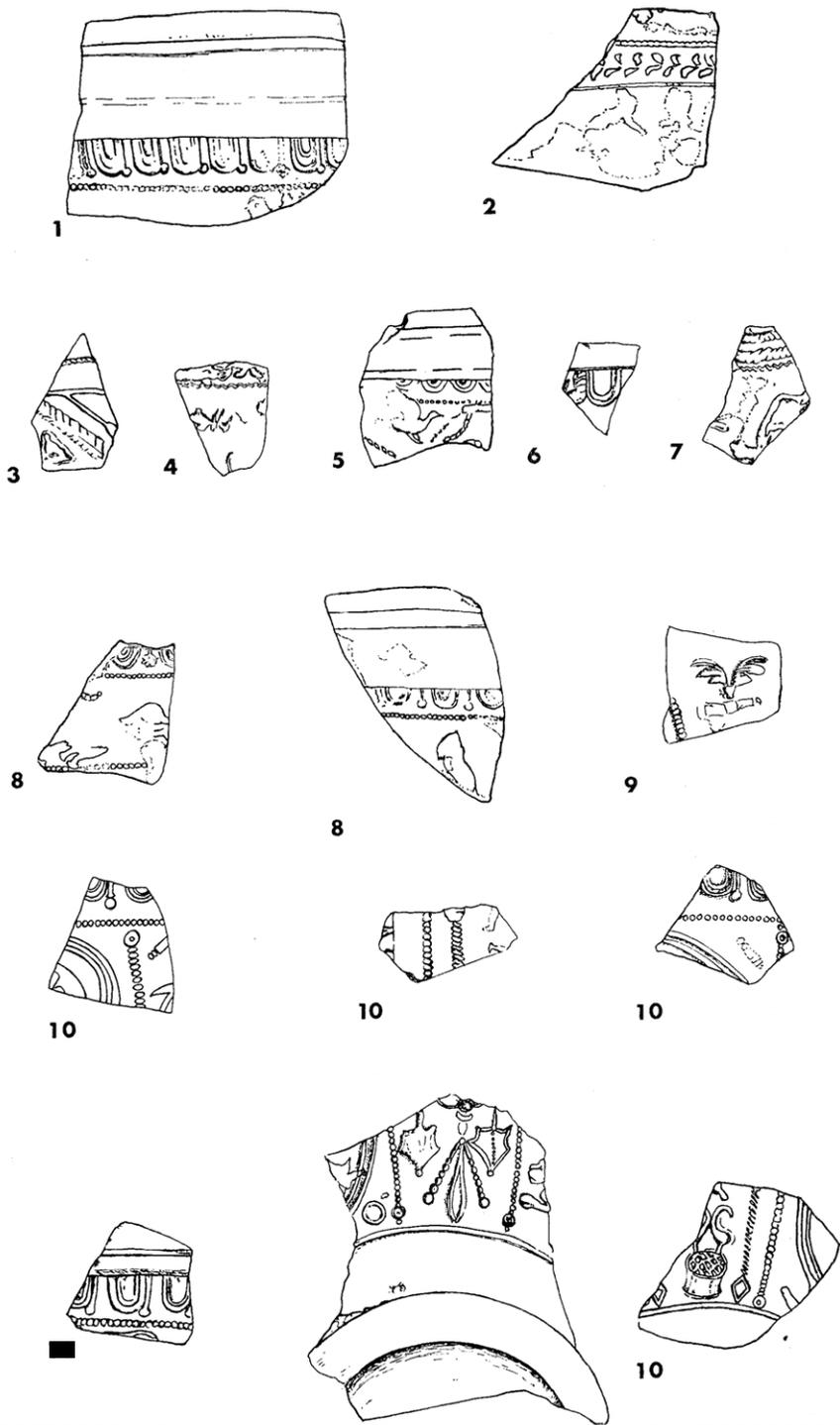
it difficult to decide this point, as only limited areas were available for excavation, the remains having been noticed when the new bungalows were being constructed. A road seemed possible and we hope to test this in future excavations.

During the dig the area in which we were working was extremely wet, making me wonder how the Romans could have lived there. Admittedly, during most of the wettest weather the water level seemed to be within an inch or two below the stone layer of the three little rectangular floors we had unearthed. One day, however, an old inhabitant of Ambleside who had been interested in the excavations commented that, of course, when the Romans were there they had 5-ft. tunnel drains. This remark led to an enormous amount of exploring in admittedly old drains and other subterranean places in the area, but, apart from emphatic statements from three octogenarians who independently described their experiences down the reputed Roman drains, no definite proof can be found, as the old entrances they remember are gone and one new and long tunnel, 6 ft. high and 170 ft. long, is a diversion from the old drain. The old people say that their fathers and grandfathers used to refer to the Roman drain, and the theory is interesting in relation to this very wet civil settlement. Also, it is of interest that no record has been made of the tunnels we have succeeded in finding. The Fisherbeck descends in a small basin of Wansfell whose entire waters pour down in it, directly to the camp. This latter was duly raised and drained and it would not be surprising if the Romans had devised some means of channelling what might in storms have been a veritable deluge on the civil settlement. Outflow drains of these dimensions are not uncommon in Roman sites, but this one would have diverted water before it reached the camp.

Report on decorated samian.

By B. R. HARTLEY and FELICITY PEARCE.

1. Form 37, rim with blurred ovolo and cable border, typical of late South Gaulish bowls of the period *c.* A.D. 85-110. (Fig. 3, 1.)
2. Form 37, with blurred cable border and chevron wreath below the decoration. Both features are typical of the latest regular South Gaulish exports to Britain. *c.* A.D. 85-110. (Fig. 3, 2.)
3. Form 37, South Gaulish. The blurred borders and festoon show that the piece belongs to the same category as nos. 1 and 2. *c.* A.D. 85-110. (Fig. 3, 3.)
4. Form 37 flake, Central Gaulish. Both the wavy-line border and acanthus leaf-tips are characteristic of the early 2nd century, and this piece is probably Hadrianic, though there is insufficient left to suggest the potter (*cf.*, however, C.G.P. pl. 87, 26 — ATTIANVS). (Fig. 3, 4.)
5. Form 37, Central Gaulish, with ovolo, festoon and bird (O.2317). All used by DRVSVS II, the Lezoux potter, *c.* A.D. 125-145. (Fig. 3, 5.)
6. Form 37 flake, with ovolo no. 1 (C.G.P. fig. 18) of Stanfield's Potter X—6, *c.* A.D. 125-150. (Fig. 3, 6.)
7. Form 37, Central Gaulish. The combination of wavy-line borders, trifid leaf and Mercury (D.291) suggest manufacture by one of the QVINTILIANVS Group or Stanfield's X—6. *c.* A.D. 125-150. (Fig. 3, 7.)
8. Two fragments, not joining, from a form 37 in the style of DOCILIS, whose common ovolo appears, together with his favourite stag (D.1777) as well as a gladiator (O.1056A) recorded for him (*cf.* C.G.P. pls. 91, 6; 92, 13). *c.* A.D. 125-145. (Fig. 3, 8.)
9. Form 37, Central Gaulish. Both the beaded borders and seated Apolo (D.52) recall the work of ARCANVS, who moreover used a free ring in this manner under the chair on a bowl from Rottenburg and Moulins (Knorr, *Germania* 1939, 165). This bowl is, therefore, likely to be by ARCANVS and is, in any event, Hadrianic or Early Antonine. (Fig. 3, 9.)



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 FIG. 3.—Saman. (Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.)

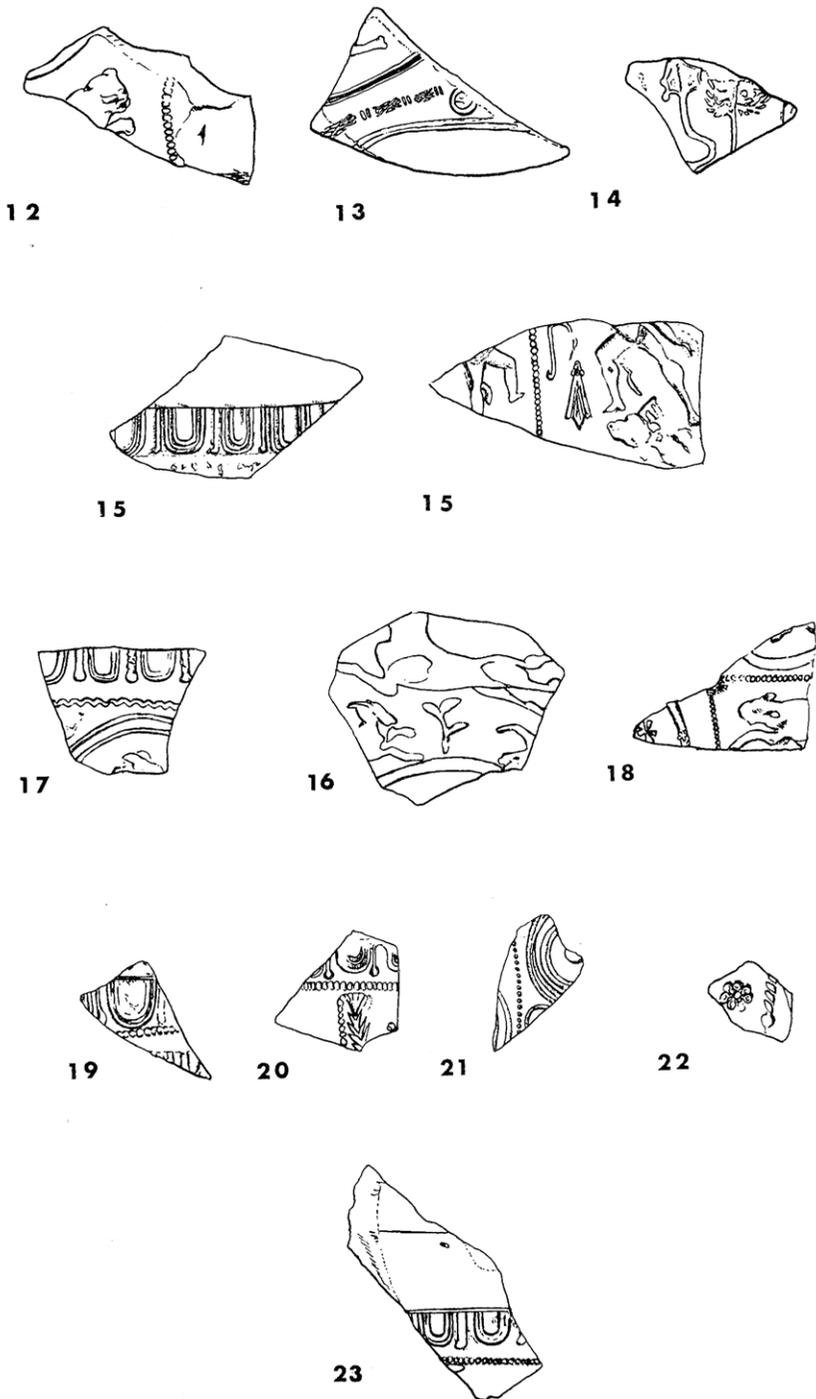


FIG. 3.—Samian. (Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.)

10. Five fragments from the same bowl, one bearing the edge and a fragment of the lettering of the large label stamp CINNAMIOF. The ovolo is CINNAMVS no. 2. The style, with arcade balanced on small lozenges (CGP pl. 160, 42) and containing the tripod (D.1069A) and small gladiator (D.614), is slightly unusual. (Fig. 3, 10.)

The ovolo is one that CINNAMVS probably inherited from SACER and it is not uncommon on his small bowls, though it may be confined to his earlier work. It appears in such deposits as those of the Verulamium Second Fire (c. A.D. 150-160), but does not so far seem to have been recorded in the northern forts believed to have been re-occupied c. A.D. 160.

11. Form 37, Central Gaulish. This piece may be from a bowl of CINNAMVS, since the borders with ring-terminals are typical of his work and since he also used the trifid component of the central panel. We do not, however, know a precise parallel for the total decoration. Nevertheless, the piece is certainly Antonine and c. A.D. 145-185. (Fig. 3, 11.)
12. Form 37, Central Gaulish, with leopard (D.798) used commonly by CINNAMVS and his contemporaries. Antonine. (Fig. 3, 12.)
13. Form 37, Central Gaulish. This is not strictly assignable to a particular potter, though the cross-gartered column was commonly used by ALBVCIVS, BALBINVS and CENSORINVS. c. A.D. 150-190. (Fig. 3, 13.)
14. Form 37, Central Gaulish. The large vine scroll and leaves recall the work of CINNAMVS and contemporaries. c. A.D. 145-185. (Fig. 3, 14.)
15. Form 37, Central Gaulish. This worn piece has panel decoration in the style of CENSORINVS (C.G.P. pl. 102, 18, which has all the same motifs). The figure-types are D.365 (satyr with amphora) and D.69 (Diana). c. A.D. 150-180. (Fig. 3, 15.)
16. Form 37, Central Gaulish, freestyle. The only distinctive feature is a small plant used on a similar freestyle bowl stamped by ADVOCISVS (Wisbech Museum, unpublished). Horse (O.10904); goat (D.891?). c. A.D. 150-190. (Fig. 3, 16.)
17. Form 37, Central Gaulish, with ovolo and wavy-line borders diagnostic of SERVVS II (cf. C.G.P. pl. 131). c. A.D. 160-190. (Fig. 3, 17.)

18. Form 37, Central Gaulish. Panel decoration with the cross-gartered column used by ALBVCIVS, CENSORINVS and contemporaries. There is insufficient to determine the potter, but the piece is certainly Antonine. *c.* A.D. 150-190. (Fig. 3, 18.)
19. Form 37, Central Gaulish, with ovolo, no. 1 of PATERNVS and bearing a small fragment of his large retrograde monogram stamp. *c.* A.D. 150-190. (Fig. 3, 19.)
20. Form 37, Central Gaulish. The small ovolo is common to ALBVCIVS, PATERNVS and CENSORINVS and his associates. One of the latter, LAXTVCISSA, also used the chevron festoon, so the bowl may well be his work. *c.* A.D. 150-180. (Fig. 3, 20.)
21. Form 37, Central Gaulish. A festoon encloses a small double medallion with central circle, and may be paralleled precisely on an unpublished bowl in the style of DIVIXTVS from Caerleon. *c.* A.D. 150-180. (Fig. 3, 21.)
22. This fragment is from an enclosed vessel of uncertain form and appears to be in East Gaulish fabric. Antonine or later. (Fig. 3, 22.)
23. Form 37, Central Gaulish, with ovolo no. 3 of CINNAMVS or the ovolo used by the "PAVLLVS Group" (P.S.A.S., xciv 103, 5, etc.). *c.* A.D. 145-185. (Fig. 3, 23.)

There are nine scraps from Antonine bowls of form 37, all Central Gaulish and all too small to determine the potters, and three scraps which are more likely to be Hadrianic.



FIG. 3.—Samian dish. (Scale $\frac{1}{4}$.)

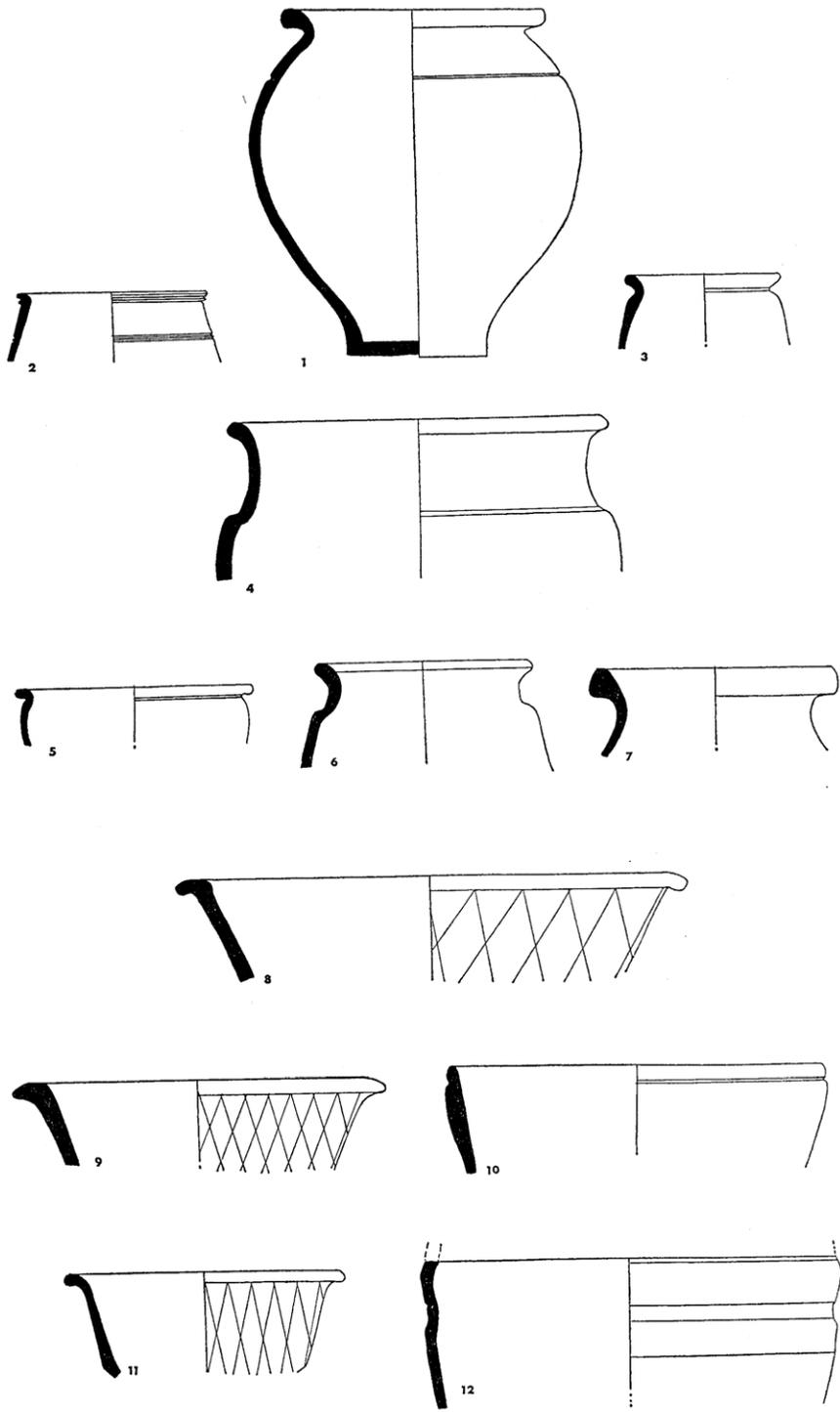
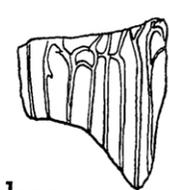


Fig. 4.—Coarse pottery. (Scale 1/4.)

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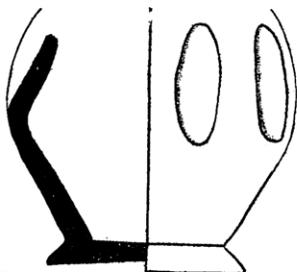
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4



5



6



7



8



9

FIG. 5.—1-6. Castor ware. 7-9. Metal objects. (Scale $\frac{1}{2}$.)

Description of the coarse ware.

There were many sherds of coarse grey ware with burnished lines and much black, always in the lowest part of the trenches. Remains of one or two large amphorae and a little Castor ware were among the other finds.

1. Light grey cremation pot, found intact (see above), smooth surface. Rim diam. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., base diam. 3 in., height $7\frac{1}{3}$ in. (Fig. 4, 1.)
2. Fine light buff ware, with smoothed-off grooved surface; suggests little beaker. Rim diam. 4 in. (Fig. 4, 2.)
3. Light grey fine body smoothed by burnishing inside and out and patterned dark grey. Diam. $3\frac{1}{2}$ in. (Fig. 4, 3.)
4. Red and grey uneven firing, rather coarse grit body. Wet smoothed inside and out. Rim diam. 8 in. (Fig. 4, 4.)
5. Fine smooth body grey ware, smoothed inside and out, similar Gillam type 104.⁴ (Fig. 4, 5.)
6. Grey body with walls burnished smooth inside and out, with two darker black-burnished rings inside the rim. Marked shoulder as in Gillam type 124. Rim diam. $4\frac{3}{4}$ in. (Fig. 4, 6.)
7. Coarse light grey body of porous nature, heavy and rather similar to Gillam type 107. Diam. 5 in. (Fig. 4, 7.)
8. Dark grey porous body with fritti substance, burnished and smoothed inside and out, with criss-cross pattern outside. Diam. 11 in. (Fig. 4, 8.)
9. Buff body, wet smoothed inside and with fairly close, light cross-hatching outside. Diam. 8 in. (Fig. 4, 9.)
10. Light buffish-grey body, fairly fine. Slip smoothed light grey, similar to Gillam types 318, 319. One small groove. Diam. 9 in. (Fig. 4, 10.)
11. Grey body, burnished smooth with black inside and out and lightly engraved outside, chamfered base, Gillam types 220-222. Diam. $5\frac{3}{4}$ in. (Fig. 4, 11.)
12. Buffish body, fairly fine, rouletted pattern outside. Diam. 9 in. Top of rim missing. Similar to Gillam types 42 and 43. (Fig. 4, 12.)

⁴ AA4 xxxv, type 104. Gillam types of Roman coarse pottery.

Part of a Roman bronze harness-ring was found at Fisherbeck Gardens, Ambleside, in 1963. (Fig. 5, no. 7.)

In 1933 Mr W. B. Hargreaves found two Roman copper coins in the mud on the edge of the lake and just below the fort. They have been identified at the British Museum and are of Augustus A.D. 11-12 and of Claudius A.D. 41, both minted at Rome.

In 1960 in Little Langdale, Map Ref.: N.Y. 314037 (latest Ordnance Survey, 1 mile to the inch), a coin was found by Paul Hodgson. It is of A.D. 198-209 and was probably minted at Kyparissia (Messenia).

Acknowledgements.

My grateful thanks are due to Dr. G. H. S. Bushnell, F.S.A., for preserving and photographing the shoe and soles; to Miss D. Charlesworth, F.S.A., and Miss C. I. Fell, F.S.A., for the help they gave me; and to all the volunteer diggers who did so much strenuous work and without whom the "dig" would not have been possible.