

be used to isolate them to facilitate comparisons with finds from the upper fills. Such turn analyses can in turn be compared with intra-site distributions, of which the following seem likely to be specially significant: 'grass'-tempered, *Schlickung* and rusticated sherds, nails and slags. These are finds which occur in their thousands and could scarcely be handled in this way without a computer.

Work at Mucking Post-Excavation has been aimed at this kind of achievement, which seems to be a logical outcome of the Frere recommendations, and it would be a pity if financial cuts were to jeopardize this unprecedented and probably unrepeatable opportunity to record and analyse major evidence for the onset of the Migration period in England.

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#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> M. Bell, 'Excavations at Bishopstone', *Sussex Archaeol. Coll.*, 115 (1977).
- <sup>2</sup> P. J. Drury and N. P. Wickenden, 'An early Saxon settlement within the Romano-British small town at Heybridge', *Medieval Archaeol.*, xxvi (1982), 1-40.
- <sup>3</sup> S. Davies, 'Excavations at Old Down Farm, Andover. Part 1: Saxon', *Proc. Hampshire Field Club Archaeol. Soc.*, 36 (1980), 161-80.
- <sup>4</sup> M. Farley, 'Saxon and Medieval Walton, Aylesbury', *Records of Buckinghamshire*, xx (1976).
- <sup>5</sup> H. Wheeler, 'Excavations at Willington, Derbyshire 1970-72', *Derbyshire Archaeol. Soc.*, xciv (1979), 58-220.
- <sup>6</sup> P. V. Addyman, 'The Anglo-Saxon village at Chalton, Hampshire', *Medieval Archaeol.*, xvii (1973), 1-25.
- <sup>7</sup> S. Losco-Bradley, 'The Anglo-Saxon settlement at Catholme', *Trent Valley Archaeol. Res. Ctee.*, 8 (1973), 1-35.
- <sup>8</sup> M. Millett, *Excavations at Cowdery's Down* (Basingstoke, Basingstoke Planning Dept, 1980).
- <sup>9</sup> R. Miket, *Medieval Archaeol.*, xix (1975), 226-27.
- <sup>10</sup> E. T. Leeds, *Early Anglo-Saxon Art and Archaeology* (Oxford, 1936), 26.
- <sup>11</sup> J. N. L. Myres, *Anglo-Saxon pottery and the settlement of England* (Oxford, 1969), maps 3, 4a, 5b.
- <sup>12</sup> M. U. Jones, 'Saxon pottery from a hut at Mucking, Essex', *Berichten van de Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Bodemonderzoek*, 19 (1969), 145-56; W. A. van Es, *Wijster: a native village beyond the Imperial frontier* (Groningen, 1967), 273-75.
- <sup>13</sup> M. U. Jones, '?Woolcomb warmers from Mucking, Essex', *Antiq. J.*, lv (1975), 411-13.
- <sup>14</sup> T. Briscoe, 'Anglo-Saxon pot stamps', *Anglo-Saxon studies in Archaeol. and Hist.* (Oxford, Brit. Archaeol. Repts. Brit. ser. 92, 1981), 1-36.
- <sup>15</sup> W. T. Jones and S. E. Rigold, 'A group of "primary sceattas" from Mucking, Essex', *Antiq. J.*, lvii (1977), 321-22.
- <sup>16</sup> M. U. Jones, 'Saxon sunken huts: problems of interpretation', *Archaeol. J.*, 136 (1979), 53-59.
- <sup>17</sup> P. Demolon, *Le Village Mérovingien de Brebieres* (Arras, 1972).
- <sup>18</sup> W. A. van Es, *Wijster: a native village beyond the Imperial frontier* (Groningen, 1967).
- <sup>19</sup> J. P. J. Catton, M. U. Jones, and J. C. Moffett, 'The 1965-78 Mucking excavation computer database', in I. Graham and E. Webb (eds.), *Computer applications in archaeology* (London, 1981).

## ISLAMIC GLASS VESSEL FRAGMENTS FROM THE OLD VICARAGE, REIGATE, SURREY (Figs. 2 and 3; Pl. XI, B)

### *Introduction*

Five small fragments of manganese glass<sup>1</sup> were found during excavations by the Holmesdale Archaeological Group on the site of The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Reigate.<sup>2</sup> These have been identified by Mr R. J. Charleston<sup>3</sup> as Islamic, from a vessel or vessels manufactured in Syria in the 13th century.

### *The Glass Fragments*

The five fragments were found within a layer of sandy brown soil representing the upper filling of a ditch originally cut in the 12th century or earlier. The ditch lay adjacent to the earliest house which was later extended to cover it. There was no evidence for deliberate infilling or rubbish disposal and it is likely that the ditch silted naturally. Associated pottery confirms a general date for the deposition of the glass in the late 13th or early 14th century, and thus also for the extension of the house.

Charleston has recently reviewed the evidence for decorated Islamic glass from contexts in Britain and Europe, both from excavations and as survivals from old collections.<sup>4</sup>

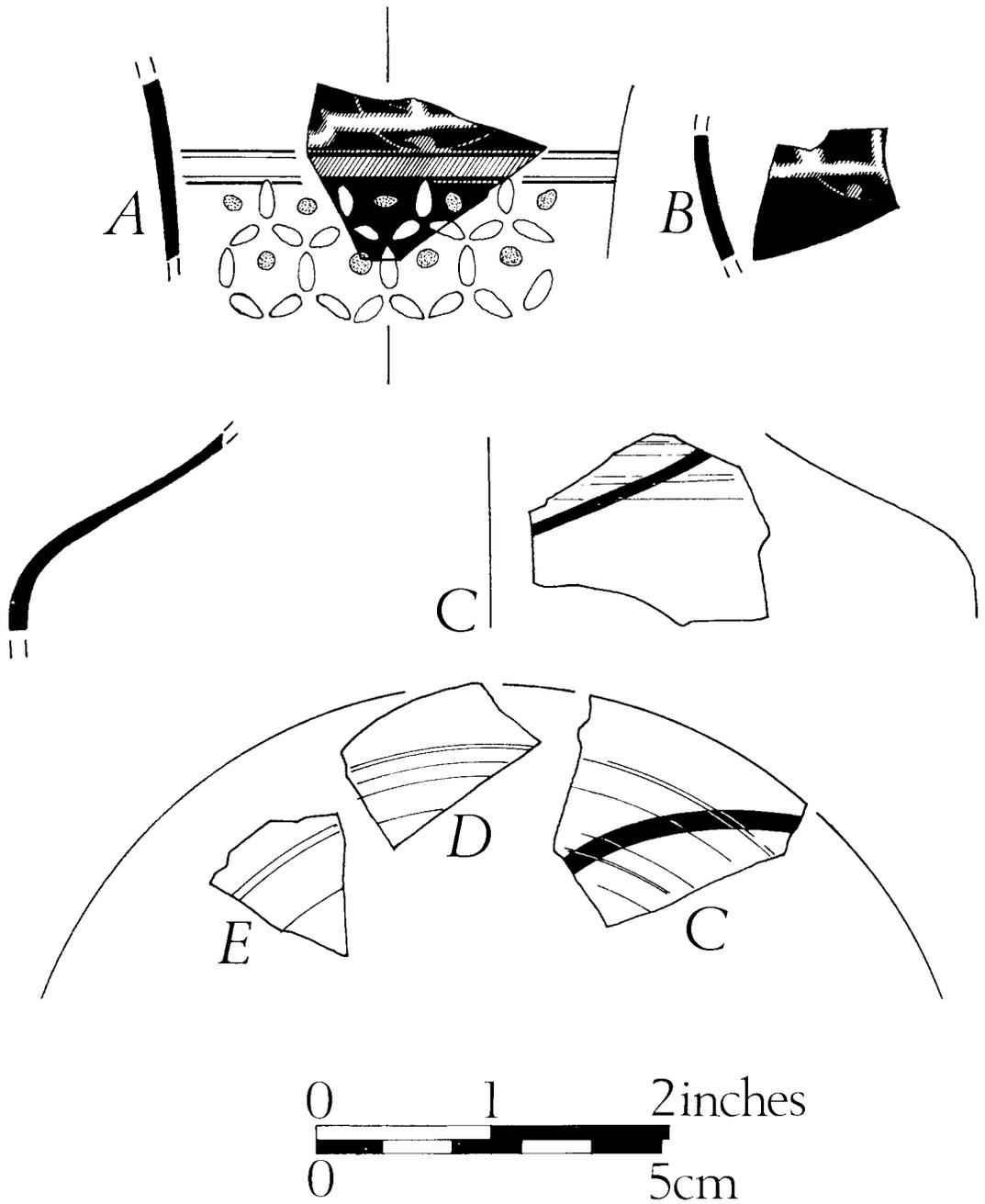


FIG. 2

THE OLD VICARAGE, REIGATE. Islamic glass fragments; c is shown both in profile and in relation to the undecorated pieces. Scale 1 : 1

Although examples of 12th-century, blue glass, 'Byzantine' bottles and late 13th-century 'Syro-Frankish' vessels (which are now tending to be thought of as Venetian) are known from Britain,<sup>5</sup> only two examples of enamelled and gilt Syrian glass have been found in this country — two neck fragments from a flask, from the Chapel of the Pyx, Westminster Abbey, decorated with an inscription,<sup>6</sup> and the fragmentary neck of a flask from Restormel Castle, Cornwall, which remains unpublished.

Of the five small fragments from The Old Vicarage, two bear definite traces of enamelled and gilt decoration, a third shows possible traces of gilding, and the others are plain. None of the fragments comes from the base or rim. Parts of two vessels may be present.

The enamelled fragment A (Fig. 2 and Pl. XI, B) shows what appears to be the base of a line of Arabic 'Kufic' script in white enamel. Beneath this is a formal design consisting of leaf-like shapes set in a repeating trefoil pattern, interspersed with red spots. Where these enamel designs have worn away the exposed glass surface is left with a pitted appearance. The former presence of gilding survives as matt bands, contrasting with the surrounding glossy surface of the glass. Gilt bands of differing width run horizontally between the enamelled designs and also outline the script. Additionally, thin, tendril-like lines with attached 'leaves' loop between the lettering. Fragment B bears only the gilt-outlined lettering and tendrils — relict patches of gilding may still be seen on this fragment under magnification.

Of the three remaining fragments, C is the only one showing signs of decoration. This appears as a curving band, visible against the light, apparently bounded by a shallow, etched line, perhaps a key for gilding.

Lamm<sup>7</sup> illustrates a bottle-like vessel of manganese glass with similar decoration to that on fragment A. On it (Fig. 3) the red spots are replaced with asterisks and the lettering is of a



FIG. 3

Bottle-like vessel, height c. 175 mm. After Lamm, *op. cit.* in note 7

somewhat freer form. Although the enamelled decoration is clear in the reproduced photograph, the gilt pattern is not easily visible, but a band of gilding separates the lettering from the repeating pattern. Gilding also provides a background of fine lines to the lettering. Lamm also illustrates other fragments with similar, repetitive leaf-like shapes. These similarities seem sufficient to put the identification of fragment A beyond dispute. B, which lacks the enamelled design, is probably part of the same vessel.

Both these pieces, then, may come from a vessel similar to that illustrated in Fig. 3. The concave profile and diameter of fragment A certainly suggest such a shape, although it is possible that both may come from the characteristic beaker shape such as the well-known 'Luck of Edenhall'.<sup>5</sup> Owing to its small size, the angle of fragment B is uncertain.

The remaining pieces, C–E, cannot be reconciled with the above fragments. Their diameter is much greater; they may represent a second vessel. What this vessel may have been is unclear at present.

### Conclusion

These five pieces of Syrian glass from Reigate add to the meagre archaeological evidence at present existing for the importation of glass from the Near East into England in the Middle Ages. No attempt will here be made to suggest how the vessel(s) arrived in this country (although the Crusades or pilgrimages must be prime possibilities), but that the glass found its way at all to a small Surrey town is a matter of considerable interest.

DAVID W. WILLIAMS

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The colour of the metal is in fact a deep red, shading to purple.

<sup>2</sup> The excavation, 1976–80, was carried out by the Archaeological Group of the Holmesdale Natural History Club on behalf of the Reigate and Banstead Archaeological Coordination Committee. See e.g. D. Williams, 'The Reigate Vicarage Excavation', *Popular Archaeol.*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (October 1981); *Bulletin of the CBA Churches Committee*, No. 15 (December 1981).

<sup>3</sup> I would like to acknowledge Mr Charleston's help in the preparation of this note.

<sup>4</sup> R. J. Charleston, 'A 13th-century Syrian glass beaker excavated in Lübeck', *Lübeck 1226: Reichsfreiheit und Frühe Stadt* (Lübeck, 1976), 321–37.

<sup>5</sup> D. B. Harden, 'Glass Vessels in Britain, A.D. 400–1000' in D. B. Harden (ed.), *Dark-Age Britain* (London, 1956), 154–56) also cites two small flasks and a further fragment thought to be of Dark Age date but which may equally belong to the 13th century. Additionally the well-known beaker, 'The Luck of Edenhall', has been in the possession of the Musgrave family of Edenhall, Cumberland since at least 1729 (R. J. Charleston, 'The Luck of Edenhall: A Notable Acquisition for the Nation', *The Connoisseur* (February 1959). Charleston, op. cit. in note 4, 329 and 336, n. 15 also mentions glass vessels in the inventories of Kings Edward III and Henry IV which may have been of Near Eastern origin.

<sup>6</sup> London Museum, *Medieval Catalogue* (London, revised ed. 1967), 293 and pl. LXXXIV.

<sup>7</sup> C. J. Lamm, *Mittelalterliche Gläser und Steinschnitarbeiten aus dem Nahen Osten* (Berlin, 1929/30), pl. 109:1. This bottle is cited as being in Bologna. Judging from the illustration, the neck is a later restoration.

## A MEDIEVAL KNIFE HANDLE FROM CROWLAND, LINCOLNSHIRE (Figs. 4 and 5)

Amongst the collections in the Peterborough City Museum and Art Gallery is displayed the carved figure of a man who has a hawk perched on his left hand. This object, donated in 1932, was discovered at Crowland Abbey, Lincolnshire (TF 2415 1040) but no further details of the find are known.

### DESCRIPTION

The figure (acc. no. L594) is made of bone and is 94.5 mm long and 19 mm wide. In places the cancellous tissue of the bone breaks through the carved surface showing that a longbone, possibly sheep, was used.