

road turned again between the moat and the two ponds to the W. and finally crossed the moat in two stages to reach the main gate of the castle.

Yet this highly contrived approach is only one element of the landscape of Bodiam Castle. On the crest of the high ridge to the N. of the castle, and some 30 m vertically above it, is an earthwork known as the Gun Garden, variously interpreted as part of a 17th-century military work or, following limited excavations in 1961, as a medieval building platform. It lies adjacent to the present Court Lodge, whose predecessor is shown on maps of 1671 and 1730 as well as on a late 18th-century engraving as a late 16th- or early 17th-century remodelling of an earlier fairly modest vernacular structure. The earthworks are now somewhat disturbed but in essence consist of broad terraces backed by what may be the sites of a building or buildings. Whatever the date of the feature (and the 'medieval' dating was the result of a very restricted excavation of the site) it is obviously ornamental and grand in scale. It is most likely to have been a garden or a pleasance containing buildings and other features but it surely must have also functioned as a viewing platform for the landscaped setting of the castle below. Whether it stood as a completely separate feature or was physically linked to the castle is now unclear. The general elongated form of the field between it and the castle suggests the latter though the present boundaries are merely hedges. The only hint lies in a long cross-scarp half-way up the field, now much degraded by ploughing.

Other earthworks recorded by the Commission notably to the W. and SW. of the main moat are not part of the contrived landscape of the castle. The terraced closes N. of The Tiltyard pond are the abandoned eastern ends of village tofts which still exist to the W. The long ditches and scarps to the NE. are the remains of a former hedge surrounding a field still in existence as late as 1898. Within it are traces of ridge-and-furrow as well as modern drainage channels.

In summary, therefore, the earthworks surrounding Bodiam Castle form an elaborate and contrived setting for the building of a coherence not previously perceived. Most striking is the use of sheets of water to create a staged landscape, not only to be passed through but to be viewed from above. Such contrivances are most familiar in both the general documentation and the physical remains of later 16th- and 17th-century gardens in England. Here might be a very Spenserian fantasy landscape. Yet in detail the documentation does not suggest a plausible context for a garden at this date. Nothing later than the early 16th century seems possible while a 15th-century date is more likely. If indeed the whole landscape setting, encapsulated in these earthworks, is of late medieval date, it perhaps adds more conclusive weight than anything else to Hohler's assessment of Bodiam as 'an old soldier's dream house'.

C. TAYLOR, P. EVERSON and R. WILSON-NORTH

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The survey was undertaken by the staff of R.C.H.M.E.'s Keele Office, Messrs P. Everson and R. Wilson-North with the assistance of D. Johnston. It was carried out within a base-line and traverse framework generated with Wild total stations equipment and plotted on a Calcomp 1042 GT drum plotter. Archaeological detail was supplied using normal graphic methods. The full archive has been deposited in the National Archaeological Record (NAR no. TQ 72 NE 1).

## A LATE MEDIEVAL CAST COPPER-ALLOY STIRRUP FROM OLD ROMNEY, KENT (Fig. 5)

During 1989 a copper-alloy stirrup fragment was submitted for identification to the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities, the British Museum, by Michael Hill, Esq. of 37 Rolfe Lane, New Romney, Kent. The item was recovered by means of a metal detector from a field adjacent to the Manor House at Old Romney (TR 035253). It was identified as a fragment of a D-shaped stirrup of cast copper-alloy; only the suspension loop and guard and a portion of the arm survive. The rectangular suspension loop for the stirrup-leather is

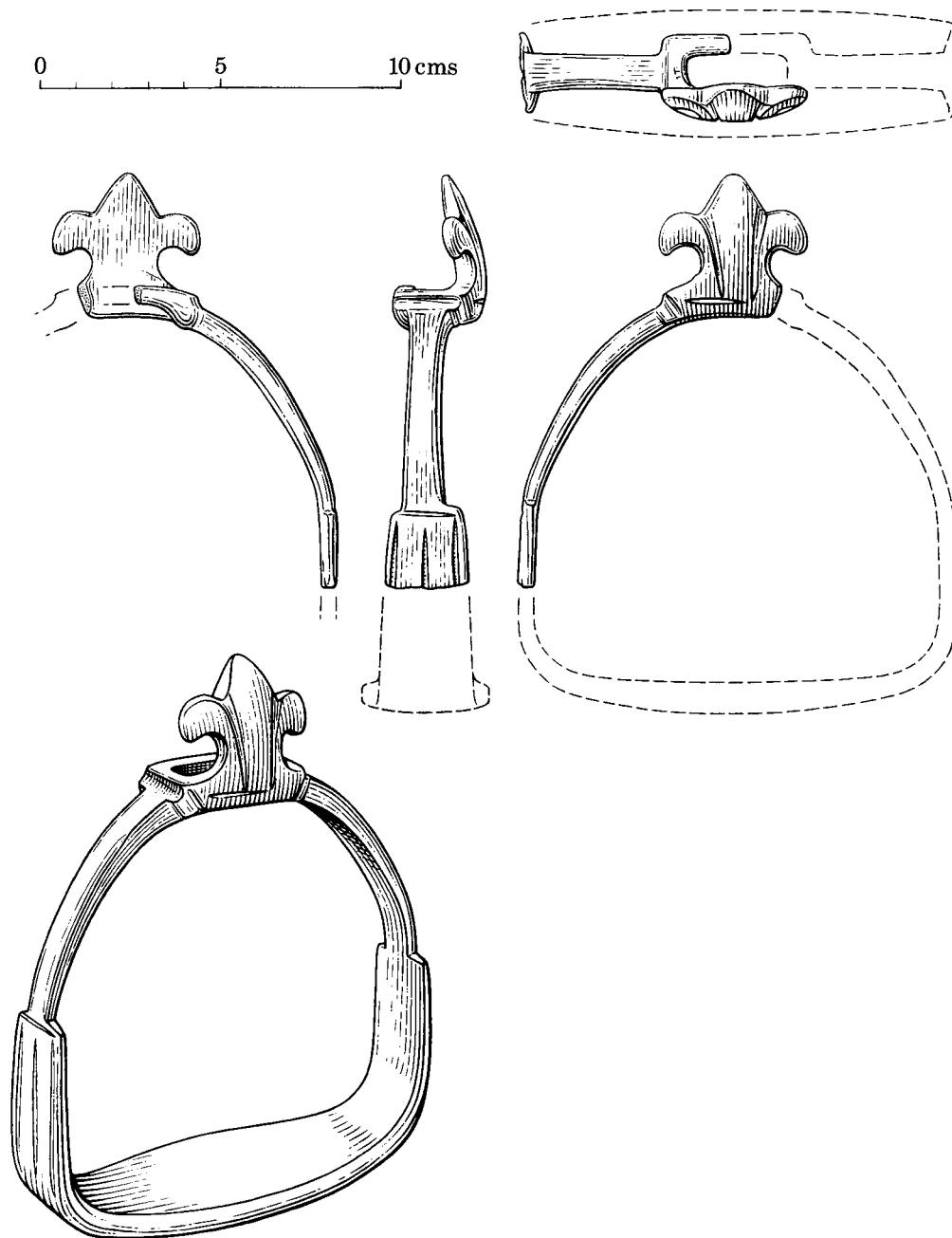


FIG. 5

Above: copper-alloy stirrup from Old Romney,  
Kent. Below left: reconstruction

protected by a cover-plate cast in the form of a fleur-de-lis. The arm terminates in a narrow fan-plate chiselled with three vertical grooves. No traces of gilding survive. The maximum height of the stirrup is 115 mm, its estimated width being 120 mm.

Typologically the Old Romney find would appear to be a developed form of the late 15th-century stirrup type<sup>1</sup> and represented by four examples held by the British Museum.<sup>2</sup> They each possess a suspension-loop guard but are characterized by a narrow, concave stirrup-arm. The stirrup described here differs in that the stirrup-ring is an expanded D-shape in form.

In the British Isles one of the few late medieval stirrups to be recovered archaeologically comes from Clontuskert Priory, Co. Galway, Eire.<sup>3</sup> This example is ornamented by a cast scallop-shell cover-plate and is also cast into a D-shaped ring. The find is dated by its stratigraphical association with a Saintonge ceramic barrel-costrel to the early 14th century, although the precise chronology of this pottery-type remains questionable (pers. comm. J. G. Hurst). The most reliable typo-chronological indicators for the Old Romney stirrup come from northern and central Europe, where comparable stirrup forms have been dated to c. 1500.<sup>4</sup> Changes in footwear and foot armour have always played a primary role in the development of stirrup morphology. The replacement of the long-toed sabaton (armour-plated shoe) by the broad round-toe type (so-called 'bear-paw' sabaton) at the end of the 15th century<sup>5</sup> necessitated a broader stirrup with a wider footplate. This also prevented the rider's foot from being caught in the stirrup when being dislodged from his mount.<sup>6</sup>

The Old Romney stirrup should not be dated on stylistic grounds to the post 1500–10 period. The example belonging to Henry VIII's horse armour dating to c. 1514 and held by the Royal Armouries<sup>7</sup> possesses a far broader stirrup-arm of ribbed fan-like construction. The fan-plates of two tinned iron stirrups in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford,<sup>8</sup> are joined by an arched bar and are typical of early 16th-century stirrups. The Old Romney find would therefore appear to represent the typological transition between the late medieval stirrup forms illustrated by the British Museum group and the broad fan-plate type emerging during the opening decades of the 16th century.

Until more comparative work is undertaken the reconstructed profile of this stirrup remains somewhat hypothetical, and no definite conclusions can be reached regarding its country of origin. The fleur-de-lis cover-plate was probably purely ornamental, and is unlikely to be heraldically attributable. It is worth noting, however, that the Old Romney stirrup is cast in copper-alloy, whilst the majority of known comparable examples from the Continent are of iron. Moreover, the Tudor stirrups held by the Royal Armouries are mostly of steel plate.<sup>9</sup> Whether this fact is of chronological, technological or even socio-economic significance for stirrups dating to around 1500 also requires further research.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to thank Mrs Blance Ellis formerly of the Royal Armouries, HM Tower of London, and Mr John Clark and Mr Peter Sott of the Medieval Department, Museum of London, for their most valuable assistance in researching the Old Romney stirrup. Mr John Cherry, Medieval & Later Antiquities, British Museum, kindly commented on an initial draft. The find is published by kind permission of Mr Michael Hill of New Romney, Kent, who first brought the discovery to the attention of the Museum. The illustrations are by Hans Rashbrook.

DAVID R. M. GAIMSTER<sup>10</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> London Museum, *Medieval Catalogue* (London, 1967), 2nd edition, Fig. 26, 2.

<sup>2</sup> MLA 1909, 3–19, 9 copper-alloy, found Butlers Wharf, Thames St, London (*Proc. Soc. Ant.*, xxii, 2nd series (1909), 355–56, fig. 2); MLA 1910, 4–5, 1 copper-alloy, found Framshall Pk., Stroud, Gloucs. (*Proc. Soc. Ant.*, xxii, 2nd series (1909), 355–56, fig. 1); MLA 1836, 9–1, 68 copper-alloy; MLA 1913, 12–6, 1 copper-alloy, found Ringwood, New Forest.

<sup>3</sup> T. Fanning, 'Excavations at Clontuskert Priory, Co. Galway', *Proc. Royal Irish Academy*, 76, Section C (1976), 97-169, Fig. 9, no. 70.

<sup>4</sup> R. Zschille and R. Forrer, *Die Steigbügel in ihrer Formen-Entwicklung. Charakterisierung und Datierung der Steigbügel unserer Kulturvölker* (Berlin, 1896), Fig. 5.

<sup>5</sup> C. Blair, *European Armour circa 1066 to circa 1700* (London, 1958), 101.

<sup>6</sup> For examples of the 'bear-paw' sabaton of the period c. 1500-10 see: G. A. Gloss, 'Der Harnisch der Übergangszeit von der Gotik zur Renaissance (1495-1520)', *Zeitschrift für Historische Waffen-und Kostumkunde*, Neue Folge, Bd. 3, 12, Heft 7 (June 1930), 145-48.

<sup>7</sup> A. R. Duffy, *European Armour in the Tower of London* (London, 1968), Pl. I.

<sup>8</sup> G. M. Wilson, 'Stirrups' in A. McGregor (ed.), *Tradescant's Rarities. Essays on the Foundation of the Ashmolean Museum 1683 with a catalogue of the surviving early collections*, Ashmolean Museum (Oxford, 1983), 186-88, cat. no. 84.

<sup>9</sup> C. J. Ffoulkes, *Inventory and Survey of the Armouries of the Tower of London*, 1 (London, 1916), cat. nos. 135-41.

<sup>10</sup> Dept. of Medieval & Later Antiquities, British Museum, London WC1B 3DG.

## THE ISLE OF MAN CONFERENCE 1990

The 33rd Annual Conference of the Society for Medieval Archaeology was held between 20 and 24 April 1990 at the Manx Museum, Douglas, Isle of Man on the subject of 'The Isle of Man in the Medieval Period'. The conference was welcomed by the Chairman of Manx Museum and National Trust. Stephen Harrison, Director, spoke on the new displays and conference facilities and Wendy Horn, Deputy Director, on the work of the museum and the organization of archaeology on the Isle of Man. The conference then saw a film 'The Making of Mann' and were given a reception by Manx Museum and National Trust.

On Saturday 21 April the conference heard lectures from Marshall Cubbon on 'The Early Christian Church', Paul Reilly on 'Monte Carlo and the Isle of Man', Chris Morris on 'Keel Vail' and Sir David Wilson on 'The Viking Age in the Isle of Man', followed by visits to Andreas, Bride and Maughald led by Marshall Cubbon.

On Sunday 22 April the conference heard lectures from David Freke on 'The Early Medieval cemetery and Norse occupation at Peel Castle', Harry Gordon-Slade on 'Peel Cathedral and Vicar's Choral', Lawrence Butler on 'Rushen Abbey and religious architecture' and Peter Davey on 'Medieval and early Post-Medieval pottery', followed by visits to Tynwald, Odin's Raven, Peel Castle and St Patrick's Cathedral led by Larch Garrad and David Freke. In the evening a reception was provided by the Isle of Man Department of Tourism at Castle Rushen during which Frank Cowin and Harry Gordon-Slade led guided tours of the castle.

On Monday 23 April the conference heard lectures by Chris Morris on 'The wider setting of settlement in Viking and later Norse Man', Margaret Gelling on 'Place names in the Isle of Man', Gillian Quine on 'A Review of Upland Settlement in Man' and Ann Harrison on 'Settlement in the Isle of Man: the documentary evidence'. The President, Helen Clarke then summarized the proceedings after which the conference visited The Braid, Chapel Hill Balladoole and Cronk Ny Merriu led by Larch Garrad and Sir David Wilson.

About 110 people participated in the conference and Wendy Horn deserves many thanks for the large amount of administration and organization which she undertook as Local Secretary.

ALAN VINCE

## LORD FLETCHER OF ISLINGTON 1903-1990 (Pl. x)

Eric Fletcher helped make the foundation of the Society for Medieval Archaeology possible in a typically unobtrusive fashion: by anonymously giving us £200 he provided a float on which the Society was launched. He was an honorary vice-president from the foundation and generously funded much of the Society's grant-giving activities after the death of H. Dunscombe Colt.

Despite a busy life in the law and in politics (where he was a minister in the Wilson government of 1964 and deputy speaker), he retained a keen amateur interest in archaeology.