

XIV Notes

1. ARMAMENTARIA

AN INSCRIPTION of the reign of Gordian found at Lanchester (RIB 1092), which records the restoration of *principia et armamentaria*, raises the question of the whereabouts of the latter. The stone suggests that they were probably at least near to the headquarters building, if not part of the same structure.

The editors of RIB translate *armamentaria* as armouries, and there seems no reason to quibble with that usage. In other words, in *armamentaria* we would reasonably expect to find arms and armour, and equally reasonably we might expect to find *custodes armorum* associated with such buildings. It is therefore of interest to note that, at the fortress of the legion *III Augusta* at Lambaesis in Numidia, the inscription set up by the *collegium* of the *custodes armorum* in A.D. 200 (ILS 9097) was found in one of the small rooms on the east side of the large courtyard of the *principia*. From the west side of the courtyard came an inscription including the words *cur. operi arm.*, no doubt to be expanded to read *cur(ator) operi arm(amentarii)* or the like (CIL VIII 2563). Three other rooms, on the south and east sides of the courtyard, yielded fragmentary versions of inscriptions reading something like

ARMA ANTESIGNANA . . .
POSTSIGNANA . . .

The precise significance of these inscriptions is not at all obvious, but they clearly refer to arms. Finally, 6,000 catapult shot and 300 ballista balls were found in the north-east corner room of the courtyard.¹ Not surprisingly, it has long been recognized that the small rooms around the large courtyard of the head-

quarters building at Lambaesis came to be used as the *armamentaria*, or armouries, of *III Augusta*. We may note also that in one of the two long rooms on the east side of the small headquarters building of the third century legionary detachments at Dura on the Euphrates, a few scales of bronze armour turned up.²

It is reasonable to ask, how and where were arms and armour stored in auxiliary forts? Unlike, for example, granaries, arms stores are not easily recognized as a consistent element among their buildings. On the analogy of Lambaesis and Dura, it is reasonable to look at the courtyard areas of auxiliary *principia*. Here it is interesting to note that whereas the functions of the shrine (*aedes*) and the ranges of rooms on either side of it, and of the cross-hall (*basilica*), are well established, in the early period at least the courtyard seems to have had little real function. Religious ceremonies can be assigned to the *aedes*, or to the parade-ground; judicial matters and (one would have thought) such functions as the morning *salutatio* would find a place in the *basilica*. This seems to leave only certain forms of punishment for the courtyard.³ The courtyard and its colonnade seem to have been definitely underemployed. No great inconvenience seems to have been caused by inserting settling tanks in the *principia* courtyard at Benwell.

It is interesting then to note that the colonnade of the courtyard of the headquarters building at Housesteads was walled in at a date some time after the original construction, creating at least two and possibly four or more separate rooms. Even more interesting is the

fact that in the new headquarters built at Vindolanda at a late date, probably the early fourth century, four separate rooms were provided, the courtyard having been so greatly reduced that it forms little more than a light-well between them. Is it not probable that the inscription from Lanchester records the construction of a similar set of structures, with the two separate functions of the rehabilitated building recorded by the use of the words *principia et Armamentaria*?

It is perhaps significant that none of this evidence, whether legionary or auxiliary, for *armamentaria* dates before the third century. When men began to be officially allowed to live outside their forts (under Severus—Herodian 3, 8, 5), were their arms (which had previously been stored in the forepart of each *contubernium*) now kept in the *armamentaria* developed for the purpose?

J. C. Mann

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¹For the evidence from Lambaesis, see R. Cagnat, *L'Armée Romaine d'Afrique*, 1913, pp. 493–7; plan of *principia* at p. 465.

²M. I. Rostovtseff, *Excavations at Dura Europos, Preliminary Report of Fifth Season of Work*, 1934, p. 217; plan of *principia*, Plate III.

³Frontinus, *Strategemata* IV, 1, 26–8; Suetonius, *Augustus* 24, 2.

2. SUB-ROMAN BROOCHES FROM ROMAN SITES ON THE NORTHERN FRONTIER

Evidence from recent excavations on Roman military sites in the north suggests a variant of the D7 penannular brooch is associated with occupation in the very late fourth or early fifth century, so offering the interesting possibility of identifying a characteristic find for the sub-Roman period.

The term “D7 penannular” was originally given to six examples (five brooches and a

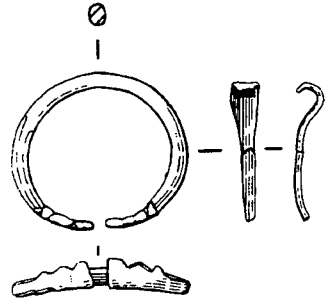


Fig. 1. Type D7 penannular brooch from recent excavation at South Shields. Scale 1:1. (Drawn by I. Hagan; from Bidwell, P. T. and Speak, S. C., *The Roman fort at South Shields: excavation of the west gate and headquarters building*, Tyne and Wear Museums, forthcoming.)

mould) which showed slight differences in detail.¹ They came from widely dispersed sites in England, Scotland and Ireland with a date range from the end of the fourth century to the seventh or possibly the ninth. Two of these brooches, from Woodcuts² and Colchester,³ closely resemble six further examples from northern England. They are all small (c. 20–30 mm in diameter), with distinctively narrow terminals formed by pinching the metal upright and cutting notches in the upper edge (see fig. 1).⁴

This variant could perhaps be called the “South Shields type” of D7 penannular as three examples are now known from the site,⁵ two from recent excavations⁶ and an uncontexted example from earlier excavations.⁷ The former two are both stratified. One was associated with early post-Roman quarrying of street surfaces beside the *principia*, the other with the demolition of the floor in the granary formed from the forecourt of the early *principia*. A worn coin of Valens provided a *terminus post quem* of c. 400 for the demolition deposits in which the brooch was found.

There are two close parallels from Piercebridge,⁸ from contexts dated to the late fourth or early fifth centuries.⁹ At least one further example has been found in recent excavations at Birdoswald.¹⁰ It came from

backfill between the sleeper walls of the demolished northern granary, in a layer containing worn coins of Valens and Valentinian II. Indirect associations suggest this demolition may be contemporary with the re-occupation of the southern granary with which a worn Theodosian coin is associated.¹¹ Work in progress may yet identify more examples of type D7 amongst many penannulars found at Birdswald.

It is interesting to find the same rare brooch type associated with late alterations to granary buildings at both South Shields and Birdswald. Sub-Roman re-fortification at South Shields is demonstrated by the digging of a wide defensive ditch in front of the southwest gate at some time later than c. 400.¹² The subsequent sequence in this area cannot be closely dated, but is likely to have extended well into the fifth century or possibly beyond. At Piercebridge a similar defensive ditch was also dug at a late date.¹³

Late Roman occupation is also suggested at the Romano-British settlement of Woodcuts, where the D7 brooch was found in the fill of the main ditch.¹⁴ The site was re-occupied at a late date and the main ditch was recut. In a re-assessment of the site by C. F. C. Hawkes in 1947 it was suggested that this occupation lasted for about 50 years, the site being abandoned after c. 355 but before 370.¹⁵ The dating was based on pottery evidence and on the lack of coins of the 370s. However the number of coins was very small and a much later date would no doubt now be assigned to the pottery, thus raising the possibility of very late Roman or sub-Roman occupation. It is interesting to see a D7 brooch on this non-military site in the southwest as well as on military sites in the north.

No details of the context of the Colchester D7 brooch were given in Mrs. Fowler's report,¹⁶ but it is hoped to follow up this example and to look for others, as at present the distribution of the type (Dorset, Essex, Hadrian's Wall and its hinterland) seems odd to say the least. A possibility is that many examples have not yet been recognized because of their somewhat undistinguished

appearance and the likelihood of damage to the narrow and fragile terminals.

It is vital that more examples are identified as these small brooches may be of great significance if they can be used as indicators of sub-Roman occupation on other sites where structural or stratigraphic evidence is lacking.

Margaret E. Snape

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Paul Bidwell, Tony Wilmott and Andrew Fitzpatrick for discussing the significance of these brooches with me and for allowing me to quote from their reports ahead of publication.

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¹Fowler, E., (1964). "Celtic metalwork of the fifth and sixth centuries AD: a reappraisal", *Archaeol. J.* 120, 98-160; see p. 113.

²Pitt-Rivers, A. H. L., (1887). *Excavations in Cranborne Chase 1881-5* (vol. 1), 56, no. 10, pl. XVI.

³Fowler *ibid.*, 146.

⁴I am grateful to P. T. Bidwell and S. C. Speak for allowing me to use the drawing of this brooch ahead of publication in the forthcoming monograph on recent excavations.

⁵Snape, M. E., *Roman brooches from north Britain*, Oxbow Books, forthcoming.

⁶Bidwell, P. T. and Speak, S. C., *The Roman fort at South Shields: excavation of the west gate and headquarters building*, Tyne and Wear Museums, forthcoming.

⁷Allason-Jones, L. and Milet, R., (1984). *The catalogue of small finds from South Shields Roman fort*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 112 no. 3.119. The drawing does not make it very clear that this is in fact a type D7 brooch.

⁸S. Butcher in A. Fitzpatrick, forthcoming.

⁹Fitzpatrick, A., *Roman Piercebridge*, forthcoming.

¹⁰J. Summerfield in T. Wilmott, forthcoming.

¹¹Wilmott, T., *Birdswald on Hadrian's Wall: excavations 1987-91*. English Heritage Arch. Rep., forthcoming.

¹²Bidwell and Speak, *op. cit.*

¹³Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.*

¹⁴Pitt-Rivers, *op. cit.*

¹⁵Hawkes, C. F. C., (1947). "Britons, Romans and Saxons round Salisbury and in Cranborne Chase", *Arch. J.*, 104, 27-81; see pp. 46-8.

¹⁶Op. cit.

3. QUERNS AT FOURSTONES

During the period of 1969 to 1970, as part of a larger survey, a thorough survey of the village of Fourstones was made. No less than eleven quern stones were claimed to underlie farms and gardens on the East side of the hamlet. Of these, six were examined and two were drawn by Mary Hurrell.

The first illustration (fig. 2) shows the base of a large grind-stone of the Roman period. Its thickness was $2\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 cm), and its average dia-

meter $10\frac{1}{4}$ " (26 cm). The second drawing (fig. 3) illustrates the top stone of a fluted bee-hive quern, which had been worn away to the first wooden handle-hole and, therefore, a second hole had been drilled and much used. The average diameter was $11\frac{1}{2}$ " (29 cm), with an average height of $4\frac{1}{2}$ " (11.5 cm). The average base thickness, though worn away, is estimated at some $2\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 cm). Both stones, plus the other nine, were made of 'pudding-stone' rock, according to local opinion. They were used at a native farmstead (including a round house of

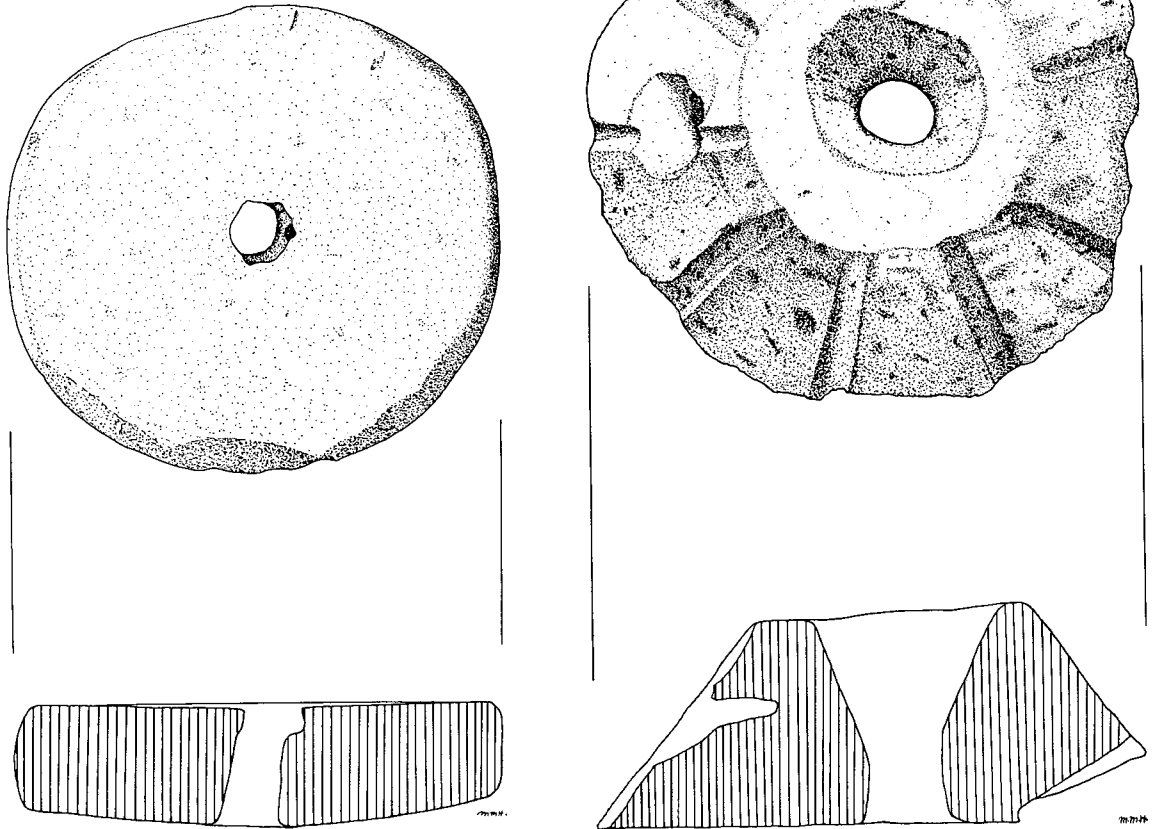


Fig. 2 Querns at Fourstones, Northumberland

stone), situated in a terraced field, just above the flood plain of the Tyne at 87/893 677. Only two conclusions seemed apposite from this profusion of quernstones, namely that the farmstead had had a long "life-span", concentrating upon the production of wheat—a crop admirably suited to the alluvial soils and more sheltered and sunny aspect of its site. Secondly, lying in close proximity to this site, there was a surviving stretch of "hollow-way" some 80 yards long, descending towards the river bank. Such a route might make it easy to supply the Roman garrisons near the Tyne by river, whilst, at the same time, not excluding transport by road since the Stanegate was only a short distance away to the north.

E. W. Sockett

4. A FURTHER NOTE ON THE HAUGHTON PAPER-MOULDS

Since I wrote my account of the Haughton paper-moulds in the Society's collections (*AA*⁵ xviii, 151–7) I have been in correspondence with Mr. Eckhard Prochaska of Maintal, Germany, who is engaged in research into the history of *assignats*. His letters are mainly concerned with the search for parallels to the Haughton watermarks among those forged *assignats* in his collection and also among those at the record office in Frankfurt/main. Two matters arising from this correspondence directly relate to points in my account. Quoting a recollection of the Revd. Rome Hall, I go on (p. 155) to the surmise that mould 1938.6 was intended to make paper for the counterfeiting of notes of 100 livres under the decree of 29 September 1790. Mr. Prochaska expresses doubts about this surmise on the grounds:

- 1) There are no contemporary sources reporting a forgery of 100 livres, 29.9.90 notes, and up to the present no such forgery has been found;
- 2) It was possible to print on the paper produced from the mould 1938.6 *all* the forgeries which are known of the *assignats* 50 to 100 livres of the issues of *both* 29.09.90 and

19.06.91. (I considerably compress Mr. Prochaska's argument here.)

To these may be added the consideration that the Haughton mill was directly concerned only in making the paper; the Smiths' knowledge of the values to be printed on their paper would at best be second-hand. While therefore mould 1938.6 was certainly designed to make paper for forged *assignats*, it cannot be said that these were probably of a face value of 100 livres.

The second point relates to mould 1938.7 which it is claimed was for making paper for 250 livres *assignats*. In the watermark of these *assignats*, Mr. Prochaska points out, are three points arranged in formation within the border of rings; one between the words *République* and *Française* in the printed title and the others to the right and left respectively of the printed *Numero* and the actual number. The three points are each barely 2 mm in diameter. Mr. Prochaska queried whether the small circle about 2 mm across which may be seen inside one of the border rings in Figure 3 could relate to these points.¹

This seems improbable, as it is a ring of copper wire not a domed boss such as would be required to make in the paper marks like these points. Furthermore closer scrutiny showed that a second similar ring of copper wire lies under the visible ring recorded in the figure. The repairer has had two rings left on his hands with no clue as to where they should go and has caught them up at random in a loop of the sewing to avoid their loss. There is no remaining trace on the wove cover as to where they might have been attached, nor can we be sure that they came from this mould. Such rings might have been intended to form literal 'O's, numerical zeros or to be decorative only. They would appear to have no bearing on the question whether or not our mould ever had the four sets of three little bosses that would have put the "points" into the 250 livres forgeries.²

I am greatly indebted to Mr. Prochaska for his observations. Responsibility for this summary consideration of some of their implications is however mine alone.³

John Philipson

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¹ AA⁵ viii, 154.

² This discussion owes much to observations of Mr. P. Bower.

³ It may be useful to add, from material supplied by Mr. Prochaska, two early continental references to the episode of British forgery of *assignats*. The earlier is from the *Gazette Nationale ou Le Moniteur Universel* of 12 April 1794 which reports a debate in the British House of Commons on 19 March in which Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Taylor charge the Government with complicity in the forgery of *assignats*. The other is to *Annalen der Britischen Geschichte* by J. W. Archenholz (Carlsruhe 1796) vol. 12, p. 391 and vol. 13, pp. 10/11. Archenholz states that from the beginning of 1793 three large paper mills in Britain were occupied in making paper for forged *assignats*, and that one of them was in the village of Lambeth, near London.

5. A CROP-CIRCLE AT LONGBENTON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE (fig. 3)

This particular crop-mark, not being a feature engendered by archaeological remains, would normally not have merited notice in the pages of these Transactions. An exception may be allowed, however, in view of some recent publications in which similar phenomena, attributed to the actions of meteorological vortices, have been seen as early contributory factors to the circularity of form adopted by certain prehistoric monuments and symbols (v. Reviews). It is also the case that such features in this neck of the woods have so far largely escaped the publicity afforded to them in the south of England. The following observations are made without prejudice as to how this circle was



Fig. 3 A crop-circle at Longbenton, Tyne & Wear

formed, but certainly exclude the supernatural or unidentified flying objects as agents.

The crop-mark lay in a fairly flat field at NZ 284693, and was noted by the writer on 31 July 1991 when travelling on the local Metro between Palmersville and Benton stations. Photographs were taken on the following morning from a convenient signal ladder and from on the site. The circle had been formed in a crop of green corn, laid anticlockwise, and was *c.* 17.4 metres in diameter with a sheer, well-defined edge. It was distanced some 16 metres to the south of the base of a low embankment, here some 2 metres high, which supports two railway tracks. The feature remained visible until the crop was reaped, but during that time there was no attempt by the farmer to take economic advantage by establishing a new, if temporary, Wiltshire-style cottage industry.

At the time of the visit only one earlier and very narrow track of partly laid corn could be seen to approach the circle from the embankment. But as with many circles illustrated in the aforementioned publications, a less easily detectable approach by persons intent on deception could have been made along the tractor lines, here running at intervals roughly east to west. And it could have been of significance to intending hoaxers that at this location the circle had the potential of being visible to thousands of daily travellers by rail, including at least one bifocalled, one-eyed septuagenarian! If hoaxers were by chance the agents, then their action on the horizontal plane is to be as much deplored as that of the graffiti inscribers on nearby vertical surfaces.

George Jobey

