

III. Inscriptions¹

By R.S.O. TOMLIN

A. MONUMENTAL

1. **Moulton** (NZ 21901 02886), North Yorkshire, Roman roadside settlement (FIG. 1). Buff sandstone altar, 0.22 m (at base) by 0.95 m, 0.15 m thick,



FIG. 1. (a) and (b). Moulton stone altar (No. 1). (Photographed and drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

¹ Inscriptions on STONE have been arranged as in the order followed by R.G. Collingwood and R.P. Wright in *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain* Vol. i (Oxford, 1965) and (slightly modified) by R.S.O. Tomlin, R.P. Wright and M.W.C. Hassall in *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain* Vol. iii (Oxford, 2009), which are henceforth cited respectively as *RIB* (1–2400) and *RIB* III (3001–3550). Citation is by item and not page number. Inscriptions on PERSONAL BELONGINGS and the like (*instrumentum domesticum*) have been arranged alphabetically by site under their counties. For each site they have been ordered as in *RIB*, pp. xiii–xiv. The items of *instrumentum domesticum* published in the eight fascicules of *RIB* II (Gloucester and Stroud, 1990–95), edited by S.S. Frere and R.S.O. Tomlin, are cited by fascicule, by the number of their category (*RIB* 2401–2505) and by their sub-number within it (e.g. *RIB* II.2, 2415.53). When measurements are quoted, the width precedes the height.

found² in 2015 in a large pit (Pit 5, Field 210) associated with the settlement. The capital, now broken and incomplete, consists of a cylinder on top of two roll mouldings, into which a shallow round focus has been neatly cut. On the front of the base two small rectangular panels are outlined which support a projecting triangular motif at the foot of the recessed die. Crudely incised on the die in irregular capitals: ◦ D ◦ MĀRTI | CONDATĪ | CVNŌBA|CHA | P, *d(eo) Marti | Condati | Cunoba|cha | p(osuit)*. ‘To the god Mars Condates, Cunobacha set (this) up.’³

2. Ibid. (NZ 21874 03057) (FIG. 2). Buff sandstone altar, 0.205 by 0.318 m, 0.15 m thick, found in 2015 in another large pit (Pit 1, Field 209) associated with the settlement. Capital and base are squared and plain except for a simple moulding formed by a groove not extending to the sides, which distinguishes the capital from the slightly recessed die. Within the capital an oval focus has been crudely incised. Coarsely incised on the die with a mason’s point: DIIO | MAR | VOL | RIIC P, probably *deo | Mar(ti) | Vol(..) | Rec(eptus) p(osuit)*. ‘To the god Mars Vol(..)ius Receptus set (this) up.’⁴

3. **Caerleon** (*Isca*, ST 34306 89877), Ultra Pontem, in the area of the Roman cemetery across the river Usk, 0.6 km south-east of the fortress (FIG. 3). Fragment of a buff sandstone slab, 0.26 by 0.34 m, found⁵ in 2015. Crudely inscribed: [...] | IVL × S[.] | VIX × [...] | III × DĪ[...] | [...]P. [...] | [...], [*D(is) M(anibus)*] | *Iul(ius) S[.] | vix(it) [a(nnos) ... m(enses)] | III d(iem) I [..]p[.]p[.]*. ‘To the Shades of the Dead. Julius S[...] lived [...] years, three months, one day ...’⁶

² With the next item during excavation by Northern Archaeological Associates before the motorway upgrading by Highways England of the A1 (Dere Street) from Leeming to Barton. Hannah Russ, post-excavation manager, made them available and sent a copy of the interim report.

³ Line 1: the initial D is preceded as well as followed by a medial point; the fourth stroke of M is supplied by R although it is not actually joined.

2: O is reduced to fit against C; ND is ligatured; A and T are cut into a surface which is irregular due to a flaw in the stone, and followed by possible trace of a diminutive I.

3: C is almost closed by an apparent stroke which seems to be due to a flaw in the stone; VN is ligatured; there is no sign that A was completed with a cross-bar.

4: C and H are clear, but there is (again) no sign that A was completed with a cross-bar.

5: the lower vertical of P has been lost in the triangular motif to its left, but P (not D) is supported by the *p(osuit)* which concludes the next item. There is no good trace of a medial point after it.

Although the place-name *Condate* is found in Gaul (A.L.F. Rivet and C. Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (1979), 315–16), the cult of Mars Condates (‘god of the waters-meet’) is attested only in northern Britain: the altars dedicated to him are *RIB* 731 (Bowes), 1024 (Piercebridge), 1045 (Chester-le-Street) and III, 3500 (Cramond). The dedicatory name *Cunobacha* is unique: evidently it begins with the Celtic name-element **cuno-* (‘hound’), but the second element is unattested.

⁴ The informal II for E is unusual in ‘monumental’ inscriptions, but occurs on some altars and centurial stones. For other instances of DIIO for DEO see *Britannia* 46 (2015), 386, no. 4 (with note). The dedicatory name is uncertain. He abbreviated it for want of space, but assuming he was a Roman citizen with nomen and cognomen, the most likely expansion of VOL is *Volusius* (as conjectured in *RIB* 641) or *Volumnius*, although a few rare nomina would also be possible; and the most likely expansion of REC is *Receptus*, although *Rectus* / *Rectinus* or an unusual Celtic name like *Rectugenus* would also be possible. However, it is possible that he bore only a cognomen, and that VOL is an abbreviated title of Mars, like CON in No. 1 (above). Mars was ‘identified’ with many other gods, but the only instance of VOL is *AE* 1991, 1246a, *deo Marti Volmioni*, a title which seems to be unique to the region of Trier. Besides, since No. 1 is dedicated to Mars Condates, a different ‘identification’ from the same location seems unlikely.

⁵ During the demolition of the fireplace of a cottage at 1 and 2 Uskvale. Jean-Yves Robic of Cardiff Archaeological Consultants sent a photograph and other details.

⁶ The edges are all broken, but the uninscribed space to the left of IVL and VIX probably marks the left margin. Medial points were indicated at mid-height by two short strokes bisecting each other. The name of the deceased was probably preceded by the usual heading *D(is) M(anibus)* in the line above. After his abbreviated nomen IVL, the tail of S, the first letter of his cognomen, is just visible in the broken edge. His age at death was prefaced by *vix(it)*, and was evidently given in years, months and days. Unusually, the third numeral was inserted within D, apparently for *d(iem) I*. The name would have followed of the person commemorating him, perhaps with a note of the relationship (parent or widow, for example) and a concluding funerary formula, but nothing can be deduced from the upper half of P (or possibly B) which is all that remains, except for the upper serif of another letter to the right.



FIG. 2. (a) and (b). Moulton stone altar (No. 2). (Photographed and drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)



FIG. 3. Caerleon gravestone (No. 3). (Photo: Cardiff Archaeological Consultants)

B. INSTRUMENTUM DOMESTICUM

CHESHIRE

4. **Chester** (*Deva*), amphitheatre, north-west quadrant (FIG. 4). Oblong tag cut from sheet lead and pierced for attachment, *c.* 68 by 48 mm, found⁷ unstratified in 2004. Incised in crude capitals: 7 COSTAN|TIS, (*centuria*) *Co(n)stan|tis*. ‘Century of Constans.’⁸



FIG. 4. Chester lead tag (No. 4), upper half. (Photo: Cheshire West and Chester Council)

DORSET

5. **Long Bredy** (SY 567 881) (FIG. 5). Fragment of a silver finger-ring (second/third-century), 19.3 mm long, 2.37 g in weight, found⁹ in 2014. It is rectangular in section, and would have been of ovoid profile expanding to a flattened bezel, but only one shoulder and perhaps two-thirds of the bezel survive. Inscribed in capitals: AFR[.] | CORO[.].¹⁰

⁷ During excavation directed by Tony Wilmott and Dan Garner for English Heritage and Chester City Council (*Britannia* 36 (2005), 420–2), sf 10110. It is now folded long-axis and is too fragile to be opened, but it will be conserved. Gill Dunn, Senior Archaeologist (Roman finds), sent photographs and other details.

⁸ For other lead tags from Chester which name centuries, see *RIB* II.1, 2410.6–8. This century is unattested, unless it is the same as the century of Eppius Const(ans) building Hadrian’s Wall just east of Birdoswald (*RIB* III, 3430 and 3451). The assimilation of medial [ns] to [s] is a frequent ‘Vulgarism’, as in *COST* for *Co(n)st[ant].* at Maryport (*RIB* 876).

⁹ By a metal-detectorist, and held by the British Museum pending the result of a Treasure inquest (2014 T813). Richard Hobbs made it available there, and provided details.

¹⁰ 2–3 letters have been lost in each line. Of the second O, only the left-hand curve remains, but C, G or Q are unlikely. There is no good parallel for the inscription, which seems to have consisted of two names, perhaps abbreviated. It does not seem to be religious: although *Corotiacus* is a title of Mars (*RIB* 213), it would hardly have been preceded by the dedicator’s name. For the personal name *Coroticus/a*, see *RIB* 371 (with *Britannia* 44 (2013), 395, Add. (a)) and *RIB* III, 3053. This might be the second element of the owner’s name, either as cognomen or patronymic, but the ring was apparently divided by a groove which ran round it, bifurcating at the shoulders, which would suggest that two persons were named, perhaps as recipient and donor.



FIG. 5. Long Bredy silver ring (No. 5). (Photo: British Museum)

DURHAM

6. **Chester-le-Street** (*Concangis*, NZ 2752 5124), Auckland Cottage (FIG. 6). Incomplete lead sealing now in two pieces, found¹¹ in 2005 in the upper layers of a Roman street within the fort. Obverse: palm branch | AVOC | palm branch, *a(lae) Voc(ontiorum)*. '(Sealing) of the Cavalry Regiment of Vocontii.' Reverse: E [] star.¹²

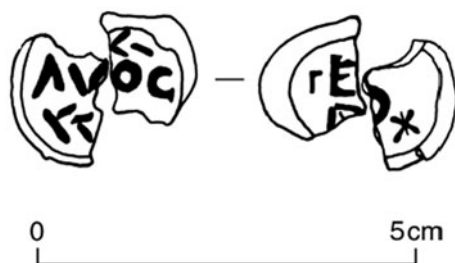


FIG. 6. Chester-le-Street lead sealing (No. 6). (Drawing: Paul Bidwell and Alex Croom)

¹¹ During work by Michael Lee previous to the excavation of 2009 (*Britannia* 41 (2010), 361–2), as noted by P. Bidwell and A. Croom, 'A lead sealing of the *ala Augusta Vocontiorum* from Chester-le-Street', *The Arbeia Journal* 10 (2015), 149–51.

¹² Bidwell and Croom (above) note that the obverse decoration and lettering are just like those of *RIB* II.1, 2411.90 (Leicester), but the die is not identical. The reverse is different, but may likewise have been the abbreviated name of a decurion. They observe (after P. Holder in R.J.A. Wilson and I.D. Caruana (eds), *Romans on the Solway* (2004), 56–8; and compare *RIB* II.1, p. 88) that sealings found at a fort may well name the unit in occupation, and deduce that Chester-le-Street is likely to have been garrisoned by the *ala Vocontiorum* in the third century. Its whereabouts are otherwise unknown after Newstead was evacuated in c. A.D. 180, and Chester-le-Street was certainly garrisoned by an *ala* in A.D. 216 (*RIB* 1049).

ESSEX

7. **Colchester** (*Camulodunum*, TL 99 25) (FIG. 7). Buff pitcher with handle, 0.32 m high, said to have been found¹³ here in the 1970s. Incised after firing on the shoulder in capitals: IIBRALINIS¹⁴



FIG. 7. Colchester coarse ware graffito (No. 7). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin from a photograph)

8. **Heybridge** (TL 84917 08226), 39–45 Crescent Road (FIG. 8). Samian base sherd (Drag. 33) stamped CALETIM (Caletus, Lezoux c. A.D. 180–220), found¹⁵ in 2002. Scratched underneath after firing, within the base-ring, in crude capitals: AR, *Ar*(...)¹⁶

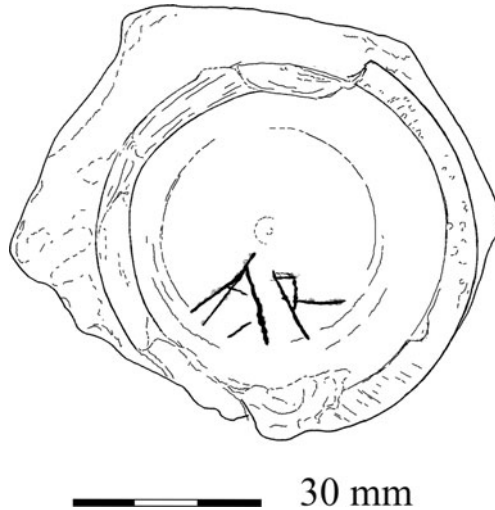


FIG. 8. Heybridge samian graffito (No. 8). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

¹³ By Albion Antiquities on eBay, where it was accompanied by photographs and sold as ‘Very Large Roman Jug with inscription on body’. Communicated by Guy de la Bédoyère.

¹⁴ Unless the first stroke is an unfinished L, the graffito appears to be complete, and would imply the proper noun *Ebralinis*, whether it were a place-name in the ablative plural or a personal name, the genitive of **Ebralo*. There seems to be no other instance of either.

¹⁵ With the next item (sf 1057) during excavation (*Britannia* 34 (2003), 337–8) directed by Mike Roy for the former Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit. Louise Rayner of Archaeology South-East made them available. The site adjoins Elms Farm (*Britannia* 29 (1998), 85–110).

¹⁶ The graffito, which is complete, is an abbreviated personal name with many possibilities.

9. Ibid. (FIG. 9). Black burnished (BB2) rim sherd. Inscribed after firing in crude capitals: [...]LLINE, [...]llin(a)e. '(Property) of [...]llina.'¹⁷

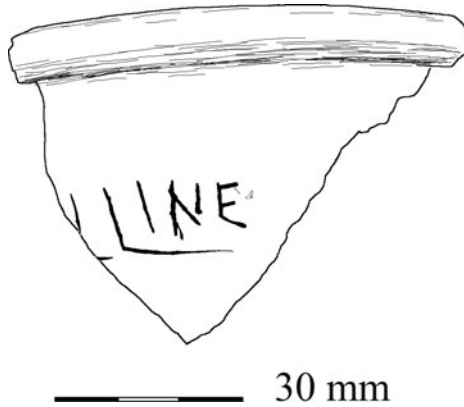


FIG. 9. Heybridge samian graffito (No. 9). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

10. **Lydney** (SO 63 03) (FIG. 10). Gold ring (Henig type V, c. A.D. 150/200) found¹⁸ in 2015. Neatly incised within the integral oval bezel: V F, *u(tere) f(elix)*.¹⁹ 'Use (this and be) happy.'



FIG. 10. Lydney gold ring (No. 10). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

¹⁷ The tip of L survives in the broken edge, but its horizontal stroke is much shorter than that of the second L. The graffito is a woman's name in the genitive case: *Marcellina* is quite likely, since this is a common name and is found in London in the same 'Vulgar' spelling of the genitive termination with *e* for *ae* (*Britannia* 40 (2009), 333, no. 29, MARCILLINII).

¹⁸ By a metal-detectorist (PAS ref. GLO-988544, Treasure ref. 2016 T231). Information from Martin Henig and Kurt Adams, Gloucestershire and Avon Finds Liaison Officer.

¹⁹ Both letters are carefully serified, but the second horizontal of F is now rather faint. To the left of V, the curving mark is casual. For the inscription compare *RIB* II.3, 2423.28 (Southwark), a copper-alloy ring with the bezel inscribed VT F.

11. **Uley** (ST 789 996), West Hill, the temple of Mercury (FIG. 11). Irregular oval of lead sheet, 53 by 88 mm, found²⁰ in 1978. It was originally folded four times, and there is some loss to the edges. The surface is well preserved in a central band from top to bottom, but towards either side is rough and corroded since it was less well protected there. In consequence the beginning and the end of lines 3–12 have largely been lost. Inscribed on one face with eighteen lines of Old Roman Cursive: *Genitus | Mercurio | [g]enio qui mihi | [?]fru]dum fecerit an[ulū]m involaverit | sa[?]nct(um)] genium si [...] | a[n]cilla si liber [...] | [mu]lieris si puer si [pue]lla | [...] permitt[...] eum | [...] .ernat pudorem | [...] iat pede [...] | [...] mblat(!) [...] | nec manducat nec | sedit nec magiat n[isi] ad templum | tuum repraesentaverit op[ti]heius. ‘Genitus to Mercury the *genius*. (He) who has done me ?wrong, has stolen (my) ?ring ... holy *genius* that whether [?free woman] or slave-girl, whether free man [...] of a woman, whether boy or girl [...] you do not permit him ... shame ... with his foot ... nor to eat nor to sit (?at stool) nor to ?urinate, unless he pay [...] at your temple.’²¹*

²⁰ During the excavation published in A. Woodward and P. Leach, *The Uley Shrines: Excavation of a Ritual Complex on West Hill, Uley, Gloucestershire: 1977–9* (1993), in which it is noted at p. 128 as no. 34 (sf 936). It will be published with fuller commentary in the final report being prepared on the inscribed lead tablets.

²¹ Line-by-line commentary.

1, *Genitus*. Although *Genitor* (‘begetter’, i.e. ‘father’) is attested as a personal name, this seems to be the first instance of *Genitus* (‘begotten’, i.e. ‘son’).

2, *[g]enio*. The restoration is confirmed by the repetition of *genium* in 6, but this is the only Uley tablet to identify Mercury as a *genius*. The writer probably meant to address the god’s *genius*, as in *Britannia* 23 (1992), 310, no. 5, *rogaverim genium numinis tui* (‘I would ask the genius of your divinity’).

4, *fecerit*. The object of this verb ends in *-um*, not *-em*, which would exclude *fraudem* (‘wrong’) but suggest *furtum* (‘theft’), but this too is excluded by the two preceding diagonal strokes which imply *a* or *d*. The writer may have conflated the two nouns, as in *Britannia* 40 (2009), 327, no. 21 (Leicester), *frudum(!) fecit*.

5–6, *involaverit*. The object of this verb is divided between the lines, and its letters are badly corroded, but the traces are consistent with *an[ulū]m* (‘ring’), a frequent object of theft.

6–8 is a series of mutually exclusive alternatives, with 6 probably ending with *si libera si* (‘whether free woman or slave-girl’), but the genitive *[mu]lieris* (‘of a woman’) is difficult.

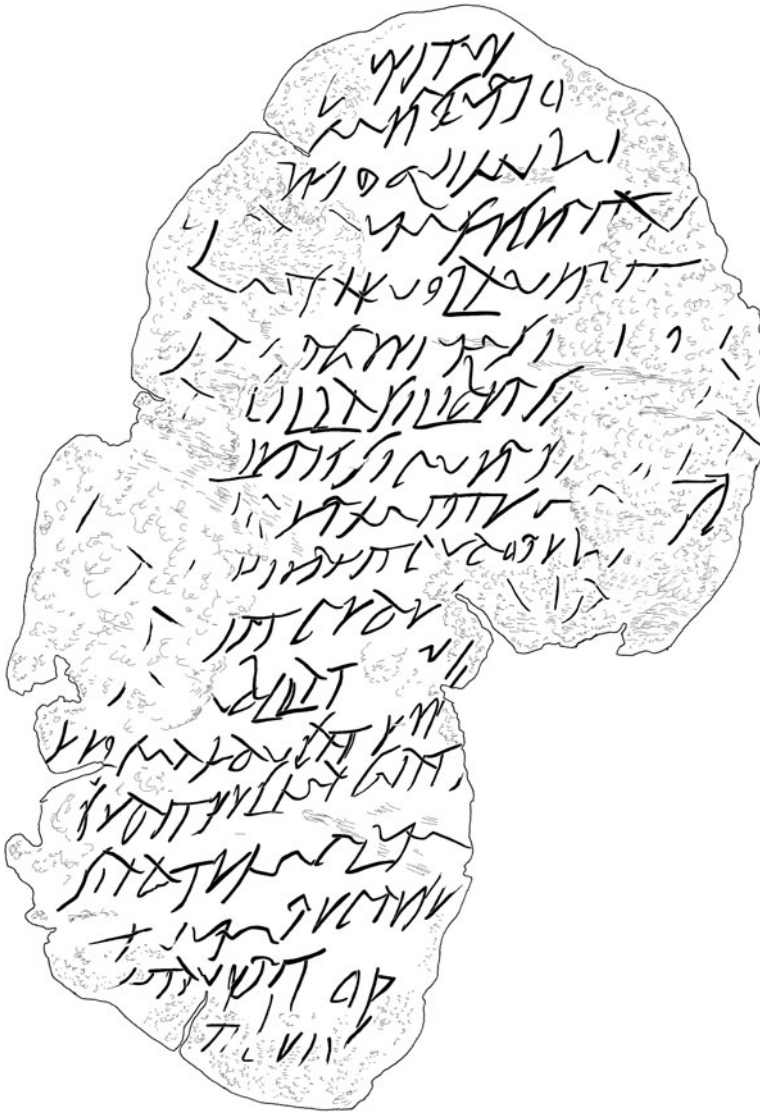
9, *permitt(...)* *eum* would be an easy slip for *permitt(e) eum* (‘permit him’), but the imperative would be rather abrupt towards a god; the usual formula is the subjunctive *non permittas*.

10–12 are badly damaged and do not contain any recognisable formulas, unless the sequence *blat* (12) (the double *ll* is certain) is a mistake for *ambulat*. This seems quite likely, since there is good trace of the tail of *m* before *b*. Not to be able to ‘walk’ (*ambulare*), as opposed to ‘sitting’ (*sedere*) and ‘lying’ (*iacere*), is a typical curse, for example in *Tab. Sulis* 54.

11, *pede* (‘with his foot’) may be an elaboration of this ‘walking’, previously unattested.

13, *nec manducat*. The verb ‘to eat’ is contrasted with *bibere* (‘to drink’) in curses of ill-health, to which *Tab. Sulis* 41 adds the subsequent process of elimination, ‘defecation’ (*adsellare*) and ‘urination’ (*meiere*, restored). This would explain the contrasting verbs in the phrase *nec | sedit nec magiat* (13–14): *sedit* (for *sedeat*), ‘sitting’ in the sense of *adsellare* (‘come to stool’), and *magiat* (for *meiat*, by confusion with *mingere*, the alternative form of *meiere*) for ‘urinate’. Compare Uley no. 5 (sf 5050), *ne maiet ne cacet*.

15–17, *ad templum tuum repraesentaverit*. The restoration of stolen goods ‘to the temple’ is frequent, and for this verb, with its sense of ‘paying ready money’, compare Uley no. 1 (sf 1180). 17–18 is too corroded for restoration, and nothing is suggested by the context.



30 mm

FIG. 11. Uley lead tablet (No. 11). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

ISLE OF WIGHT

12. Location undisclosed, but *c.* 5 km west of **Newport** (FIG. 12). Main portion of a copper-alloy openwork brooch, 34 mm in diameter, found²² in 2015. Within a circular frame three seriated capital letters, R M A, combine to form the monogram RoMA.²³ *Roma*, '(the goddess) Rome'.²⁴



FIG. 12. (Newport) copper-alloy brooch (No. 12). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

LANCASHIRE

13. **Yealand Redmayne** (SD 500 757) (FIG. 13). Part of the handle of a copper-alloy skillet (*trulla*), recorded²⁵ in 2015. An impressed stamp, now incomplete, reads: ALA ◦ VM ◦ Λ[...]²⁶

²² By a metal-detectorist and recorded by the PAS (ref. IOW-DA5661). See this volume, S. Worrell and J. Pearce, 'Finds reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme', *Britannia* 47 (2016), No. 22.

²³ Reading from left to right, with O supplied by the circular loop of R.

²⁴ This is the first example from Britain, but others have been found in southern Germany, Romania and Bulgaria. For full details and discussion see J. Pearce, F. Basford and S. Worrell 'Mars, Roma or Love, actually? A new monogram brooch from Britain', *Lucerna* 50 (2016), 22–3.

²⁵ PAS ref. LANCUM-83C97B, communicated by Sally Worrell, which probably conjoins LANCUM-8DBAC3, found in 2012.

²⁶ Comparison with *RIB* II.2, 2415.39 (Caerleon), a *trulla* stamped ALA ◦ I ◦ TH (or THR), would suggest that a cavalry *ala* is being named, but V can hardly be a numeral ('5') since almost no *ala* was numbered more than II ('2'), and the letters match nothing in J. Spaul, *ALA²: the Auxiliary Cavalry Units of the Pre-Diocletianic Imperial Roman Army* (1994).



FIG. 13. Yealand Redmayne copper-alloy skillet handle (No. 13). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

LEICESTERSHIRE

14. **Woodhouse** (SK 531 140) (FIG. 14). Expanded ovate bezel of a copper-alloy finger-ring, 19 by 8 mm, 1 mm thick, weight 1.36 g, found²⁷ in 2015. Inscribed in capital letters above and below a horizontal groove: DA | VITA, *da (mihi) | vita(m)*. ‘Give me life.’²⁸



FIG. 14. Woodhouse copper-alloy ring bezel (No. 14). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

²⁷ PAS ref. LEIC-30A5D5, communicated by Sally Worrell.

²⁸ For other copper-alloy rings with a two-line inscription divided by a horizontal groove, see *RIB* II.3, 2422.47 (Wroxeter) and No. 29 below (Flixton). In the Woodhouse inscription *mihi* (‘to me’) should be understood, implying that the ring is a gift to one who will ‘give (me) life’: compare *RIB* II.3, 2422.75 (London), an iron finger-ring inscribed DA MI | VITA, *da mi(hi) | vita(m)*. In both cases, the final *-m* has been omitted because it was not sounded.

LONDON

15. **City of London** (*Londinium*, TQ 532549 181002), Bloomberg Place (FIG. 15). The stylus writing-tablets found²⁹ in 2013 have now been published. They include this item and the next two, which have been chosen as examples for inclusion here by virtue of their historical interest.³⁰ No. 15 (WT 33) is a fragment, 136 by 44 mm, from the bottom of a ‘page’: traces | *Classico praefecto c(o)hortis* | *VI Nerviorum*. ‘... *Classicus*, prefect of the Sixth Cohort of Nervii.’³¹

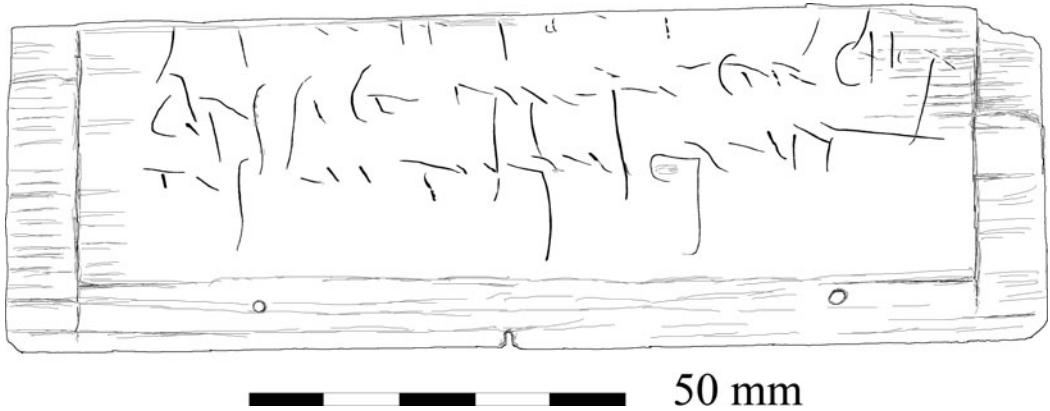


FIG. 15. London writing-tablet fragment (No. 15). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

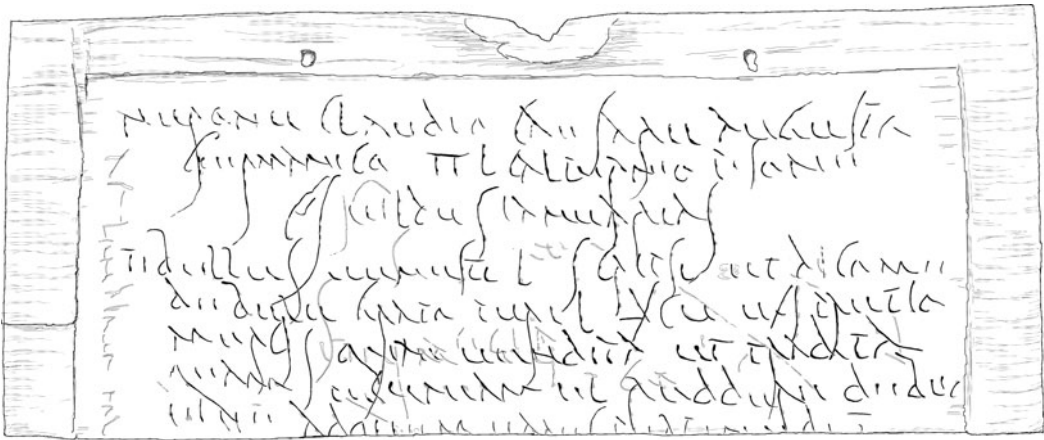
²⁹ As noted in *Britannia* 45 (2014), 445, no. 24.

³⁰ R.S.O. Tomlin, *Roman London's First Voices: Writing Tablets from the Bloomberg London Excavations, 2010–14*, MoLA Monograph 72 (2016), to which refer for photographs and fuller commentary. Altogether it publishes 79 legible texts, many quite fragmentary, as well as 104 illegible ‘descripta’ including uninscribed tablets of unusual format, and two ink tablets.

³¹ *Classico* is either dative or ablative, but the loss of the preceding text makes the context unknown. The only equestrian officer known to have borne this unusual cognomen is the Treveran noble Julius *Classicus* (Devijver *PME* I 46), who in A.D. 70 was commanding an *ala* when he joined the Batavian Revolt. Since a tribunate would have intervened, his first command must have been an auxiliary cohort in the early 60s. This tablet was found in an archaeological context of c. A.D. 65/70–80, which supports the identification, especially since another Treveran noble, Julius *Classicianus*, became procurator of Britain in A.D. 60/61: *Classicus* has already been suggested as his kinsman (A.R. Birley, *The Roman Government of Britain* (2005), 304, no. 11), and it may now be further suggested that *Classicianus* secured a commission for him in his (*Classicianus*’) new province. Previously the cohort was first attested in the Brigetio diploma of A.D. 122 (*CIL* xvi 70, cohort no. 36, tabulated in *RIB* II.1, table 1), but it can now be seen as one of the eight auxiliary cohorts from Germany which reinforced the garrison of Britain in A.D. 61 (Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.38). Other tablets allude to the *Vangiones* (WT 48) and the *Lingones* (WT 55), both of which are listed in the same diploma (cohort no. 8 and cohorts nos 5, 23, 29, 31 respectively).

16. Ibid. (WT 44) (FIG. 16). Fragment, 137 by 56 mm, consisting of the upper half of a ‘page’: *Nerone Claudio Cesare Augusto | Germanico II L(ucio) Calpurnio Pisone | co(n)s(ulibus) VI Idus Ianuarias | Tibullus Venusti l(ibertus) scripsi et dico me | debere Grato (S)puri l(iberto) (denarios) CV ex{s} pretio | mercis quae vendita et tradita (est) | quam pecuniam ei reddere debeo | eive ad quem ea res pertinebit | [...]*

‘In the consulship of Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus for the second time and of Lucius Calpurnius Piso, on the sixth day before the Ides of January [8 January A.D. 57]. I, Tibullus the freedman of Venustus, have written and say that I owe Gratus the freedman of Spurius 105 *denarii* from the price of the merchandise which has been sold and delivered. This money I am due to repay him or the person whom the matter will concern ...’³²




50 mm

FIG. 16. London writing-tablet fragment (No. 16). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

³² The archaeological context is pre-Boudican (c. A.D. 53–60/1), which matches the date of the tablet. Its content illustrates Tacitus’ characterisation of London before its destruction (*Ann.* 14.33) as being ‘very full of businessmen and commerce’ (*copia negotiatorum et commeatum maxime celebre*). This is not only the earliest dated text from Roman Britain, it is the City of London’s first financial document.

The two freedmen may be acting on their own account, but more likely as agents of their patrons. The only other instance of the cognomen *Tibullus* seems to be the poet himself, but since slaves often received a fanciful name which they retained as freedmen, perhaps *Tibullus*’ master had literary tastes. Since he is identified by his cognomen, *Venustus*, not his praenomen like the patron of *Gratus* (where the initial letter of *Spuri* has been omitted by mistake), he was probably not a Roman citizen. If not, he cannot be identified with M(arcus) Rennius Venustus in the next item (WT 45).

The phrase *scripsi et dico me | debere* is formulaic, as are last two lines (*quam pecuniam*, etc.); for parallels see the fuller commentary.

ex{s}, like *condux{s}isse* in the next item (WT 45), is an example of *s* being intruded after *x* to reinforce the [ks] sound, which is frequent in British Latin.

After *mercis* are extensive traces of a previous draft, which was probably ... *quam vendidit et tradidit* (‘which he has sold and delivered’, the subject being *Gratus*). The writer then chose the passive construction instead, but omitted *est* by mistake.

17. *Ibid.* (WT 45) (FIG. 17). Three conjoining fragments, 142 by 81 mm, consisting of the upper half of a ‘page’: *P(ublio) Mario Ce(lso) L(ucio) Afinio Gallo co(n)s(ulibus) XII Kal(endas) N(ovembr(es)) | M(arcus) Renn[ui]s Venustus me condux{s}isse | a G(aio) Valerio Proculo ut intra | Idus Novembres perferret a [[Londi]] | Verulamio penoris onera viginti | in singula (denarii) quadrans vecturae | ea condicione ut per me mora | (asses) I Londinium quod si ulnam | om[n]e[m] traces | [..]*

‘In the consulship of Publius Marius Celsus and Lucius Afinius Gallus, on the twelfth day before the Kalends of November [21 October A.D. 62]. I, Marcus Renna Venustus, (have written and say that) I have contracted with Gaius Valerius Proculus that he bring from Verulamium by the Ides of November [13 November] twenty loads of provisions at a transport charge of one-quarter *denarius* for each, on condition that ... one *as* ... to London; but if ... the whole ...’³³

NORFOLK

18. **Billingsford** (TG 014 193) (FIG. 18). Oval cornelian intaglio, 10 by 13 mm, 2 mm thick, weight 0.5 g, found³⁴ in 2015, which depicts Apollo leaning on a column and holding a laurel

³³ The consular date is certain, but instead of writing *Celso*, the scribe wrote *Cexiii*, apparently a false anticipation of the day-numeral. There is no trace of correction. At the end of the line, he interlineated *-mbr(es)* to complete the date, which is neatly matched by the archaeological context, immediately post-Boudican (c. A.D. 60/1–62). This contract is therefore evidence that London and Verulamium (St Albans) both recovered quickly from their destruction in A.D. 60 or 61 with the loss of 70,000 lives (Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.33) and supports the earlier date.

The perfect infinitive *condux{s}isse* requires a finite verb, which must have been omitted by oversight; probably the formulaic *scripsi et dico* (‘I have written and say’), as in the previous item (WT 44).

At the end of line 4, the scribe began to write ‘London’ by mistake for ‘Verulamium’, deleted it by smoothing out the wax, which would have left no trace in the wood beneath, and then realised that he would not have enough space for *Verulamio*, so he postponed it until line 5.

The size of the ‘loads’ (*onera*) is not specified, whether they were by wagon or by pack-animal, but another tablet (WT 29) refers to the loss of ‘beasts of burden’ (*iumenta*), ‘investments which I cannot replace in three months’ (*conpe(n)dia quae messibus(!) tribus reficere non possum*).

(*denarii*) *quadrans*. The basic meaning of *quadrans* is ‘one-quarter’, and it was thus applied to weights and measures, but here it is preceded by the *denarius* symbol (a bold X now missing its medial stroke) and evidently means one-quarter of a *denarius*, the equivalent of four *asses*. This seems to be the first explicit instance, but many Vindolanda accounts specify (*denarii*) (*quadrantem*), abbreviating *quadrantem* like *denarii* to a symbol. *quadrans* is also used of a very small coin, the quarter-*as*, but this would be absurd for a day’s work by a driver and draught animals, when a soldier earned 10 *asses* a day (Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.17), forty times as much.

vecturae is rather incomplete, but there are sufficient traces, besides its being demanded by the context. It occurs in *Tab. Vindol.* III, 649.ii.12 and 14 in the sense of ‘carriage-moneys’ (for which see the editors’ note), and also in an unpublished stylus tablet from Vindolanda (Inv. no. 88.836).

This payment of four *asses* per load is immediately qualified by a ‘condition’ (*ea condicione*) involving ‘London’ (*Londinium*) and the sum of one *as*, where the numeral ‘1’ is preceded by the symbol found five times in *Tab. Vindol.* II, 186, which is described by the editors as ‘a longish vertical which slants to the right and has a short, more or less horizontal tick placed centrally to the left’. Unfortunately the succeeding words are damaged and the reading is uncertain; the ‘condition’ is likely to have been that one-quarter of the fee was withheld until ‘the whole’ (*om[n]e[m]*) had been delivered.

³⁴ PAS ref. NMS-B6A4F4, communicated by Sally Worrell. Martin Henig comments that the best match is a cornelian gemstone of Augustan date from the *colonia* at Xanten (G. Platz-Horster, *Die antiken Gemmen aus Xanten* (1987), 61 with pl. 21, no. 112). See also this volume, S. Worrell and J. Pearce, ‘Finds reported under the Portable Antiquities Scheme’, *Britannia* 47 (2016), No. 20.

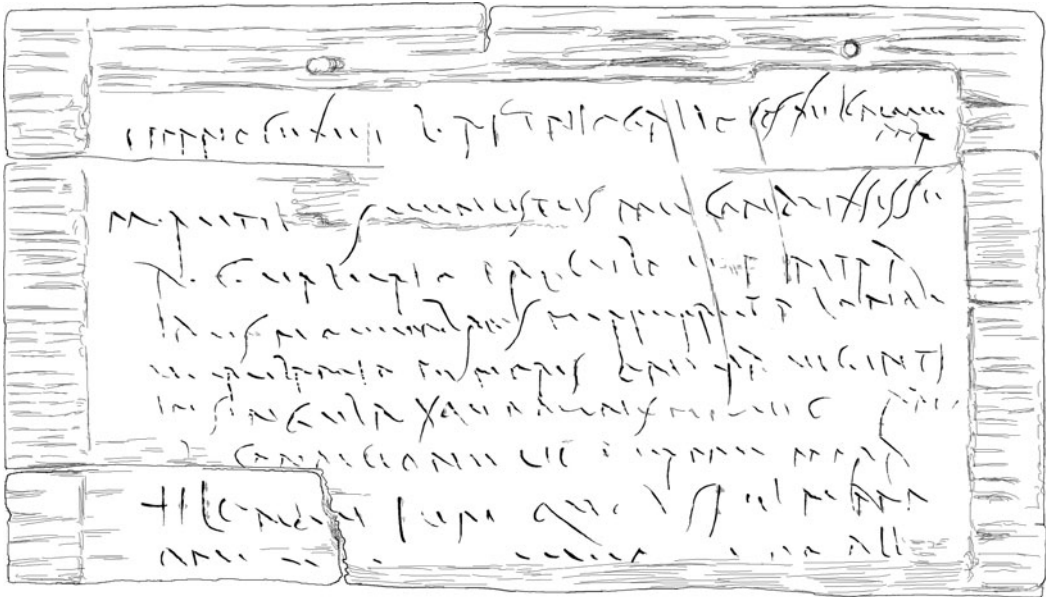


FIG. 17. London writing-tablet fragment (No. 17). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

branch in his right hand. To the left, incised retrograde in capitals: SECVNDINI, *Secundini*. ‘(Seal) of Secundinus’.³⁵



FIG. 18. Billingford cornelian intaglio (No. 18). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

³⁵ ND is ligatured, and the lettering is broken by the olive branch. It is most unusual for an intaglio to be inscribed with a name: for examples see *RIB* II.3, 2423.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

19. **Piddington** (SP 7965 5400), Roman villa (FIG. 19). Fragment of an arched roof-tile (*imbrex*, sf 185) found³⁶ in 2015. On the underside in relief, the moulded letters: [...]*JOLL*[...]



FIG. 19. Piddington tile (No. 19). (Photo: R.S.O. Tomlin)

20. *Ibid.* (FIG. 20). Fragment of a flanged roof-tile (*tegula*, sf 184) (FIG. 20). On the underside in relief, the moulded letters: [...]*JOMI*³⁷

³⁶ With the next two items during excavation by the Upper Nene Archaeological Society directed by Roy Friendship-Taylor, who made them available. They will go to the Society's museum at Piddington.

³⁷ This might be read inverted as *IVVC*[...] or *IVVO*[...], but it would be inconsistent for there to be no letter-spacing between *V* and *V*, and a difficult letter-sequence would result. Both tiles were locally made in the same fabric, and were inscribed by pressing them onto wooden moulds in which letters had been cut. This is exceptional, since separate impressed dies were used to stamp Roman brick and tile. Although the remaining letters are too few for identification, they presumably named the tile-maker(s).

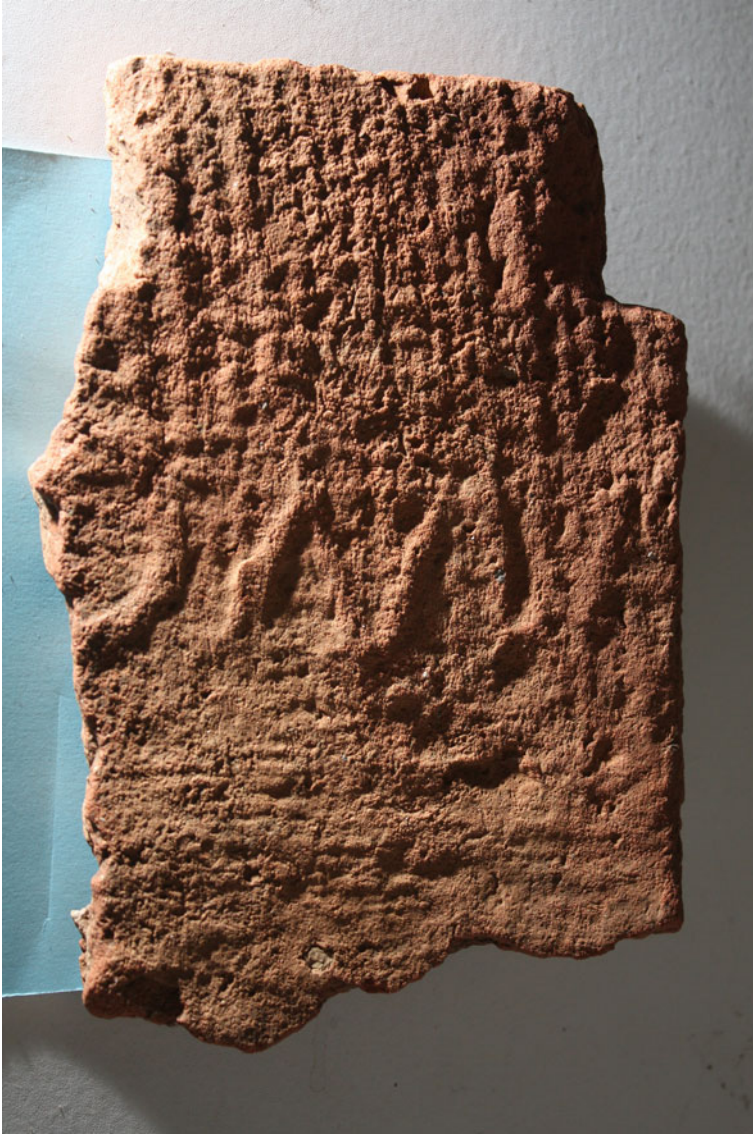


FIG. 20. Piddington tile (No. 20). (Photo: R.S.O. Tomlin)

21. Ibid. (FIG. 21). Sherd comprising the base of a poppyhead beaker (Fabric C, Highgate Wood, c. A.D. 60–150), inscribed after firing in neat capitals inverted as to the vessel: CANDIDA, *Candida*³⁸

³⁸ The feminine form of *Candidus*, quite a common name; for examples of *Candida* on samian, see *RIB* II.7, 2501.117 and 118.

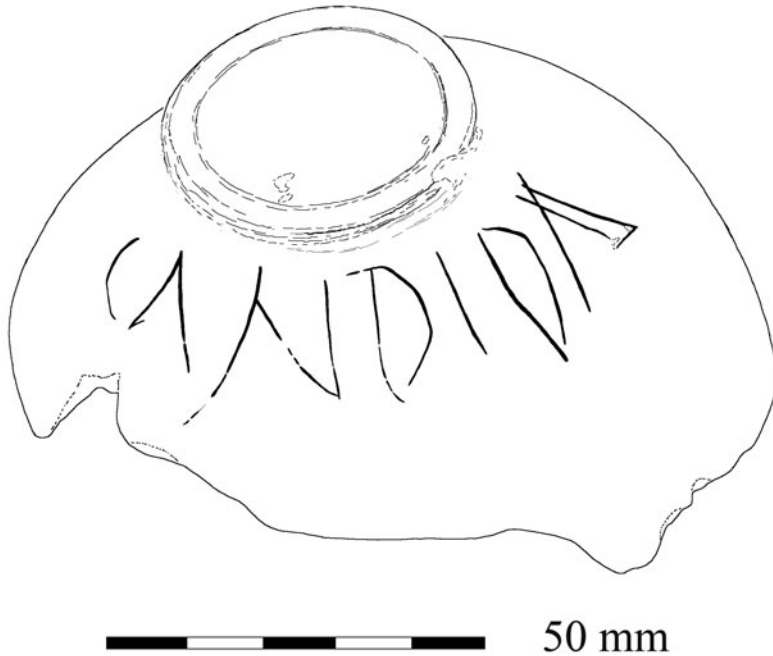


FIG. 21. Piddington coarseware graffito (No. 21). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

SUFFOLK

22. **Barnardiston** (TL 710 480) (FIG. 22). Right-hand portion of an oblong lead sealing, 15 by 11.5 mm, 4 mm thick, found³⁹ in 2015. Deeply impressed by a rectangular die: [...]*VS*!⁴⁰



FIG. 22. Barnardiston lead sealing (No. 22). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

23. *Ibid.* (FIG. 23). Rectangular copper-alloy plate, 45.7 by 14.4 mm, 1.3 mm thick, rounded at one end with a projecting lug now broken, found⁴¹ in 2015. It seems to be a mount or strap fitting

³⁹ PAS ref. SF-4D045C, communicated by Sally Worrell.

⁴⁰ V might be an incomplete N, and I the vertical of another incomplete letter. But EVST can hardly be read, although two instances within an oval cartouche are known from London (*RIB* II.1, 2411.266 and *Britannia* 45 (2014), 445, no. 26). There is no other possible match in *RIB* II.1, 2411.

⁴¹ PAS ref. SF-4D6761, communicated by Sally Worrell.

but of uncertain form or function. One face is inscribed in punched-dot capital letters within a decorative edging: CVNICIVS, *Cunicius*⁴²



FIG. 23. Barnardiston copper-alloy plate (No. 23). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

TYNE AND WEAR

24. **Newcastle** (*Pons Aelius*), Roman *vicus* (NZ 2489 6380) (FIG. 24). Samian base sherd (Drag. 18/31–31, with an illegible stamp but likely to be early to mid-Antonine), found⁴³ in 2014. Incised underneath after firing, in capitals within the foot-ring: [...]IVNIE[...], *Iuni(a)e*. ‘(Property) of Junia.’⁴⁴

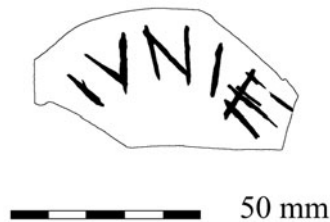


FIG. 24. Newcastle samian graffito (No. 24). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin from a rubbing)

25. **Benwell** (*Condercum*, NZ 216 646), Vallum crossing (FIG. 25). Four conjoining sherds preserving the badly worn base-ring of a samian bowl (Drag. 30 or 44), found⁴⁵ unstratified in

⁴² N resembles VI, but the resulting sequence would be difficult, whereas *Cunicius* is acceptable as a personal name formed from the Celtic element *cuno-* (‘hound’) and the suffix *-icius*. It is not attested, but compare *Cunitus* (RIB II.2, 2416.2) and *Cunicatus* (RIB II.8, 2503.236).

⁴³ During excavation by Archaeological Services, Durham University, directed by Richard Annis. It will go to the Great North Museum. Alex Croom sent a rubbing and other details.

⁴⁴ Despite the letters being so close to the broken edges, the graffito seems to be complete. *Iunius* and its feminine form *Iunia*, although a common Latin nomen, is often found by itself as a cognomen. For instances of *Iunia* from Britain, see RIB II.7, 2501.275 (Great Chesterford) and 276 (Hacheston, Suffolk); II.8, 2503.296 (Brompton-on-Swale). The genitive termination *-e* for *-ae* is a trivial Vulgarism; the pronunciation would have been the same.

⁴⁵ During excavation directed by F.G. Simpson and I.A. Richmond which continued that reported in *JRS* 28 (1938), 172–3. The sherds, which are stored by Durham University Museums (acc. no. DUMA:1984.26), were made available by Alex Croom.

1938. Incised underneath after firing, in crude capitals within the base-ring: R[.]ICIITI, probably *R[e]ce(p)ti*. '(Property) of Receptus.'⁴⁶

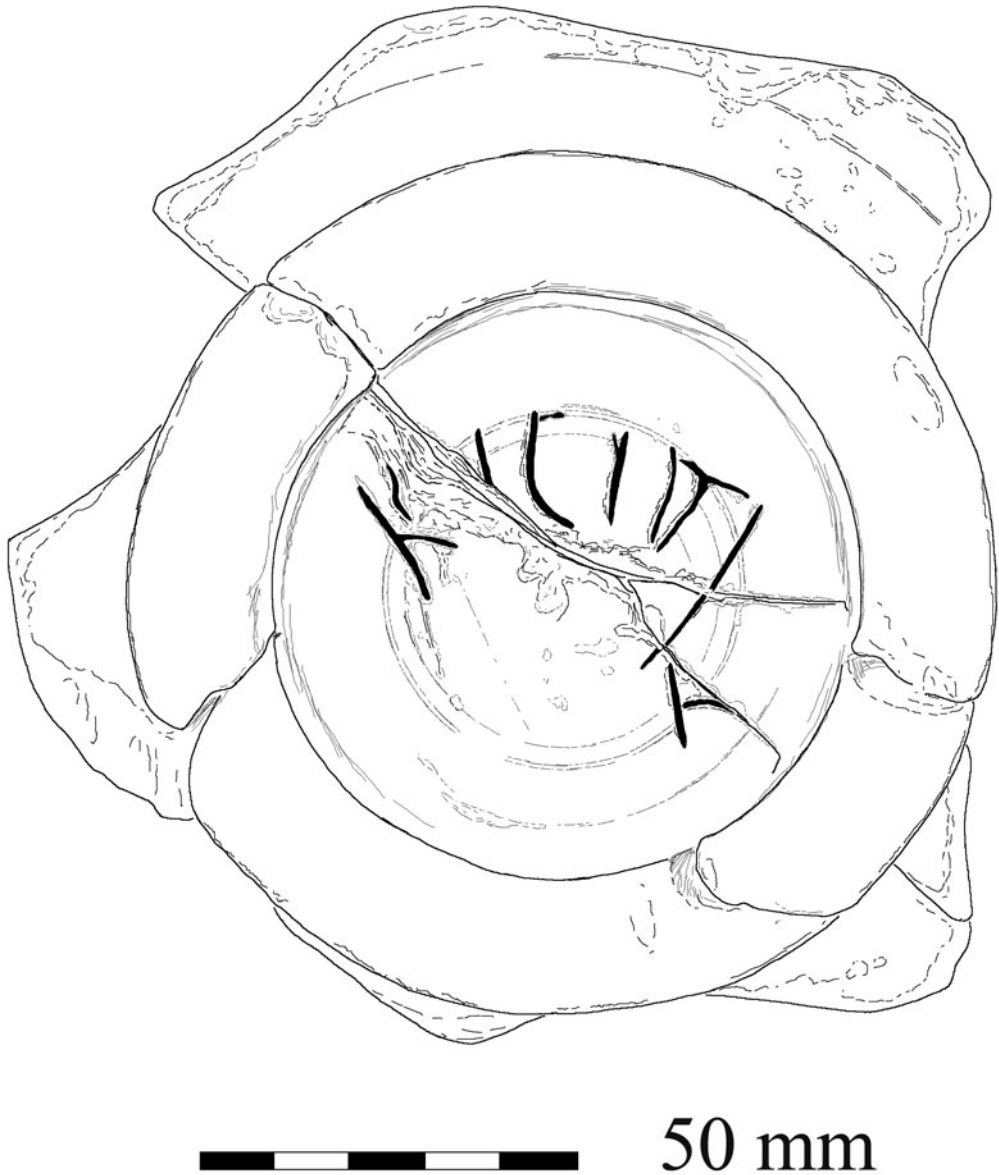


FIG. 25. Benwell samian graffito (No. 25). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

⁴⁶ The loop of R is unclosed, but K seems unlikely. The first stroke of II (for E) has been lost. The second II awkwardly abuts T. The final I is extended downwards to mark the end of a name in the genitive case. At its foot is a separate incision (or probably two incisions) which are unrelated; perhaps the beginning of a graffito which was never continued. R[I]CIITI must be understood as a blundered RIICIPTI (*Recepti*), P having been omitted by mistake; its loss cannot be explained as a 'Vulgarism'. The name *Receptus* ('received') is well attested, and has already been found in Britain (*RIB* 155).

WILTSHIRE

26. **Wanborough** (?*Durocornovium*, SU 19 85) (FIG. 26). Fragment of brick or tile, probably part of a *tegula*, found⁴⁷ in the period 1966–76. Impressed by a rectangular die now incomplete, the letters in relief: IAN[. . .], probably *Ian[uarius]*⁴⁸

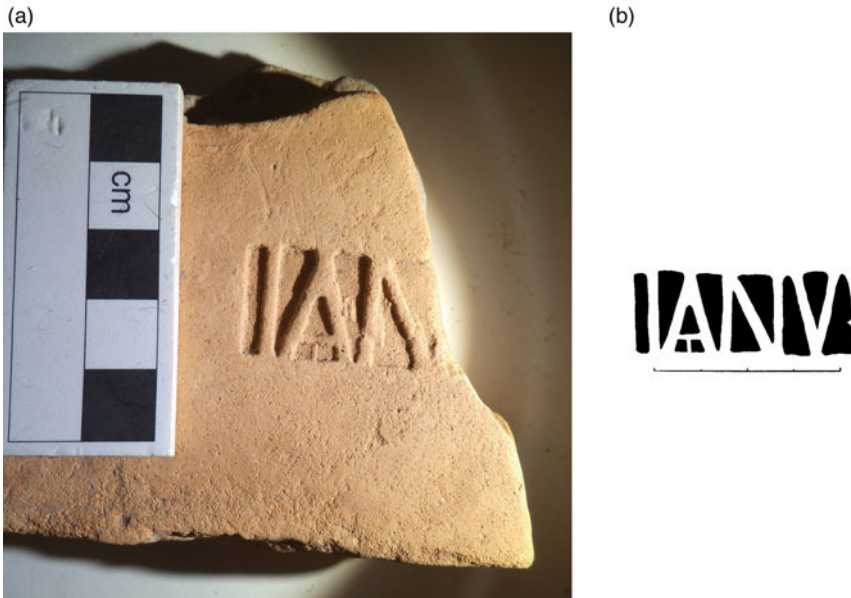


FIG. 26. (a) and (b). Wanborough tile stamp (No. 26). (Photographed and drawn by Peter Warry)

YORKSHIRE (EAST RIDING)

27. Roman site near **Elloughton** (FIG. 27). Small fragment of brick or tile, found⁴⁹ in 2015. Crudely inscribed before firing: LEGVI | VIC, *Leg(ionis) VI | Vic(tricis)*. '(Work) of the Sixth Legion Victrix.'⁵⁰

⁴⁷ During the excavations reported in A.S. Anderson, J.S. Wachter and A.P. Fitzpatrick, *The Romano-British 'Small Town' at Wanborough, Wiltshire: Excavations 1966–1976* (2001), where it is noted on p. 316 (no. 25) and drawn on p. 315 as fig. 110, no. 25. The reference was communicated by Peter Warry, who sent a composite drawing (above, FIG. 26(b)) made from it and another stamped fragment also stored by Swindon Museum, but not necessarily from Wanborough, which taken together read IANV[. . .].

⁴⁸ Unless abbreviated or in the genitive case, *Ianuari*. The die is otherwise unknown, but other private tile-makers are attested at Wanborough: see *RIB* II.5, 2489.18 (IVC DIGNI) and 44G (initials).

⁴⁹ On the surface by a metal-detectorist. For the site, see *Britannia* 46 (2015), 299–300. Peter Halkon, University of Hull, sent a photograph and other details.

⁵⁰ It is unclear whether the graffito is complete, and thus equivalent to an impressed stamp. A conventionally stamped tile of the Sixth Legion has also been found at the site, but this informal inscription is most unusual. There is nothing like it in *RIB* II.5, 2491 (tile graffiti).



FIG. 27. (Elloughton) tile graffito (No. 27). (Photo: Peter Halkon)

YORKSHIRE (NORTH)

28. **Healam Bridge** (SE 323 835), Roman fort(?) and roadside settlement (FIG. 28). Fragment, 38 by 44.5 mm, of the first leaf (*tabella I*) of a copper-alloy military diploma, found⁵¹ in 2010. Both faces are inscribed. (i) Inner (*intus*) face: [*imp caes divi ha*]DRIAN F D[*ivi traian pa*] [*rth nep divi n*]ERV PRONEP [*t aelius*] | *hadrian anto*]NIN AVG PI[*us pont max*] | [*trib pot*] COS III[*p p*].⁵² (ii) Outer (*extrinsecus*) face: MISS [*quor nom subscript sunt ips lib*] | POST EOR [*civit dedit et conub cum uxor*] | QVAS TVNC [*habuiss cum est civit is data*] | AVT SIQVI CA[*elib cum is quas postea*] DVXISS DVM[*tax sing sing*] | A [*d*] | [*.*] ANTONIO [*]*] [*co*]H II GA[*ll*].⁵³ Despite being such a small fragment, the diploma can be dated to A.D. 140, in what can now be recognised as the suffect consulship of Quintus Antonius Isauricus, former legate of the Sixth Legion at York (*RIB* 644). Its recipient, whose name is lost, served in the Second Cohort of Gauls, first attested in Britain by the diploma of A.D. 122.

⁵¹ During excavation by Northern Archaeological Associates before the motorway upgrading by Highways England of the A1 (Dere Street) from Dishforth to Leeming. It will be published in their forthcoming report by Paul Holder, who sent photographs and a copy of his very full account which is briefly summarised here.

⁵² CAPITALS are surviving letters; *lower case italics* are letter-by-letter restoration of letters lost. Abbreviations not resolved. (i) preserves part of the titulature of Antoninus Pius as *consul* III, i.e. after A.D. 139 but before 145.

⁵³ (ii) preserves part of a grant of citizenship dated by its formulation to December 139 or later, and part of the suffect consulship of *Antonius*, whom Holder (above) convincingly identifies as Quintus Antonius Isauricus in A.D. 140.



FIG. 28. Healam Bridge military diploma (No. 28), (a) inner face; (b) outer face. (Photos: Northern Archaeological Associates)

29. **Flixton** (TA 041 796) (FIG. 29). Copper-alloy finger-ring, now broken but 20.7 mm long, 8.5 mm wide, 1 mm thick, weight 1.8 g, found⁵⁴ in 2015. The expanded ovate bezel is inscribed in capital letters, now very shallow and worn, above and below a horizontal groove: AVE | VITA, *ave | vita (mea)*. ‘Greetings, my life.’⁵⁵



FIG. 29. Flixton copper-alloy ring (No. 29). (Photo: Portable Antiquities Scheme)

WALES

MONMOUTHSHIRE

30. **Caerleon** (*Isca*, ST 340 906), Roman fortress, in a turret of the southern defences (FIG. 30). Three conjoining sherds of a black burnished (BB1) jar found⁵⁶ in 1982. Incised on the wall after firing: FELIC[...], *felic[iter] . . .*. ‘Good luck!’⁵⁷

⁵⁴ PAS ref. YORYM-DFDFD8, communicated by Sally Worrell.

⁵⁵ For other copper-alloy rings with a two-line inscription divided by a horizontal groove, see *RIB* II.3, 2422.47 (Wroxeter) and No. 14 above (Woodhouse). The horizontal strokes of E can just be seen, but T and I are now indistinguishable; but see *CIL* xiii 10024.86a, b, c and d for other examples of finger-rings inscribed AVE | VITA. *vita* (‘life’) is an endearment addressed to the recipient of the ring.

⁵⁶ During excavation directed by Howard Mason for the Ancient Monuments Division of the Department of the Environment (http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/caerleon_cadw_2010/). The graffito was not noted then, but was identified in 2015 by Mark Lewis, curator of the National Roman Legion Museum, Caerleon, who sent a photograph and other details. The vessel (NMW acc. no. 2014.2H/15.1) is dated by Peter Webster to the mid/late second century.

⁵⁷ Also from Caerleon, compare *RIB* II.8, 2503.116, *[feli]citer (centuriae) Ael(i) Romuli*. The present graffito may therefore not be complete, but would have named the person(s) for whom ‘good luck’ was invoked.



FIG. 30. Caerleon coarseware graffito (No. 30). (Photo with drawing: Mark Lewis)

ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA

(a) **RIB 231** (now in Peterborough Cathedral) (FIG. 31). This fragment has been re-examined⁵⁸ with the help of a drawing made when it was found in 1888. To the left of L is the tip of another L, suggesting that the second line should read: [...].LLO ♠ ET C[...], [*Tertu*]llo et C[*lemente co(n)s(ulibus)*]. ‘... in the consulship of Tertullus and Clemens’ (A.D. 158).⁵⁹

⁵⁸ By Martin Henig for his forthcoming publication with Penny Coombe and Kevin Hayward of Roman stonework from the cathedral. The drawing (FIG. 31) is reproduced by courtesy of the Chapter Library (Irvine Papers, I, folio 28).

⁵⁹ This is a well-attested alternative to the form *Tertullo et Sacerdote co(n)s(ulibus)*, the second consul being identified by two cognomina as Q(uitus) Tineius Sacerdos Clemens. Haverfield suggested the consuls of A.D. 184 (see note to *RIB* 231), but this would require identifying them by praenomen, nomen and cognomen, which would be less likely. The drawing confirms that the incomplete letter in the line above is A, or possibly M.



FIG. 31. *RIB* 231 (Add. (a)). (Drawn by J.T. Irvine in 1888)

(b) *RIB* 1337 + add. Translate: 'Fortunate is the First Cavalry Regiment of Asturians.'⁶⁰

(c) *Britannia* 42 (2011), 441–4, Nos 5 and 6 (Inveresk). These altars dedicated to Mithras and the Sun respectively have now been cleaned, and are published above⁶¹ with new photographs and drawings, together with the mithraeum in which they were found.

(d) *Britannia* 43 (2012), 402, No. 12 (East Farleigh) (FIG. 32). These two fragments of an inscribed lead tablet have now been fully opened and cleaned, making possible a revised drawing and transcript. The text is inscribed in capitals which are sometimes inverted or reversed.⁶²

⁶⁰ 'Second' (for 'First') was by confusion with *RIB* 1466, which had just been cited. The correction was noted by Luke Ueda-Sarson and communicated by Scott Vanderbilt.

⁶¹ This volume, F. Hunter, M. Henig, E. Sauer and J. Gooder, 'Mithras in Scotland: a mithraeum at Inveresk (East Lothian)', *Britannia* 47 (2016).

⁶² V cannot be distinguished from 'open' (unbarred) A. The variations seem to be unsystematic, and the difficulty compounded by transcription errors, for example in (i) 2 and (ii) 7. For further commentary on the names, see *Britannia* 43 (2012), 402–3.

Column (i)	Column (ii)
]AN[or]NV[CVNDAC[.JV.
ATINED[CVNOARITVS
SACRATV[MAVIR[.JVS
].[.]RICV[ONERATVS
]ALILE[MEMORINVS
]OTIS	CONSTITV[
]ECTVS	CONSTANITVS.

A list of personal names: (i) ... | ?Atiden[us] | Sacratu[s] | ... | ... | ... | ?[Atr]ectus (ii) ?Cundac[us] | Cunoaritus | ... | Oneratus | Memorinus | Constitu[tus] | ?Constantius

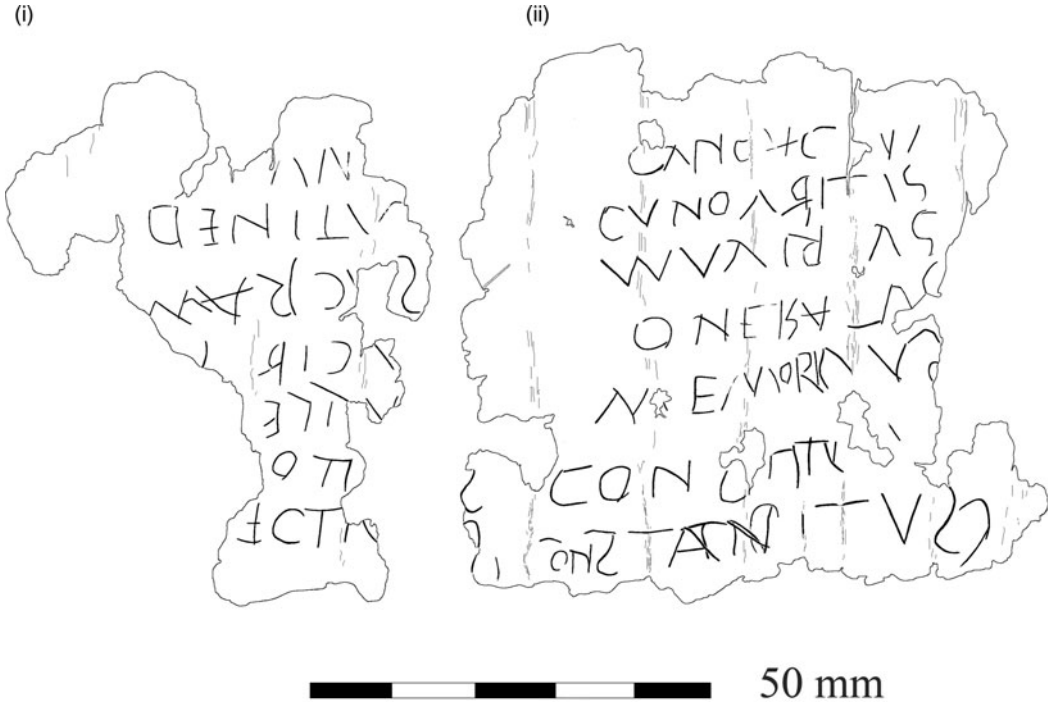


FIG. 32. East Farleigh lead tablet (Add. (d)). (Drawn by R.S.O. Tomlin)

CHANGES OF LOCATION

(a) **RIB 1100; III, 3265–67** (Ebchester). The site museum at Ebchester has been closed, and its stones have been transferred to the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle.⁶³

(b) **RIB III, 3402** (Greenhead). This centurial stone of Cocceius Regulus has been donated to the Vindolanda Trust and is now in the Roman Army Museum, Carvoran.⁶⁴

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doi:10.1017/S0068113X16000404

⁶³ Information from the Bowes Museum, where they are stored in the West Lodge, although this may not be their final location.
⁶⁴ Information from Andrew Birley, Director of Excavations, Vindolanda Trust.