

EXCAVATIONS ON THE SITE OF THE ROMAN FORT AT LANCASTER, 1950

BY I. A. RICHMOND, M.A., LL.D., F.B.A., F.S.A.
(with Notes upon the Pottery by J. P. Gillam, M.A.)

I. THE EXCAVATION REPORT

THE most conspicuous structural relic on the Roman site at Lancaster has always been the Wery Wall,⁽¹⁾ which, while barely noticed by Leland in 1535-40, was well described by Camden, who saw it in 1599, and better by Stukeley, who saw it in 1725. It was submitted to archaeological examination⁽²⁾ in 1927 by Professor J. P. Droop and the late Professor Robert Newstead; but the results, though now considerably more intelligible by reason of information recorded below, were at the time disappointing, and work was transferred to the Vicarage Field, where the remains discovered were difficult to assess and certainly not all Roman.⁽³⁾ In 1950 the Corporation of Lancaster, considering the possibility of establishing a new park covering the Vicarage Field and Castle Ward Allotment Gardens, requested the writer to examine the ground occupied by the allotments, to north of the Church of St. Mary, in order to learn whether it contained any Roman remains that might be worthy of ultimate preservation in the proposed park. Accordingly, over a short period, lasting from 11 April to 22 April, trial trenches were made in some of the paths dividing the allotments and in a fallow patch. The results, which amply justify the attempt, are described below. They comprise the first stratified evidence for the historical sequence of the Roman occupation of Lancaster, and afford the first real understanding of the nature and character of its buildings.

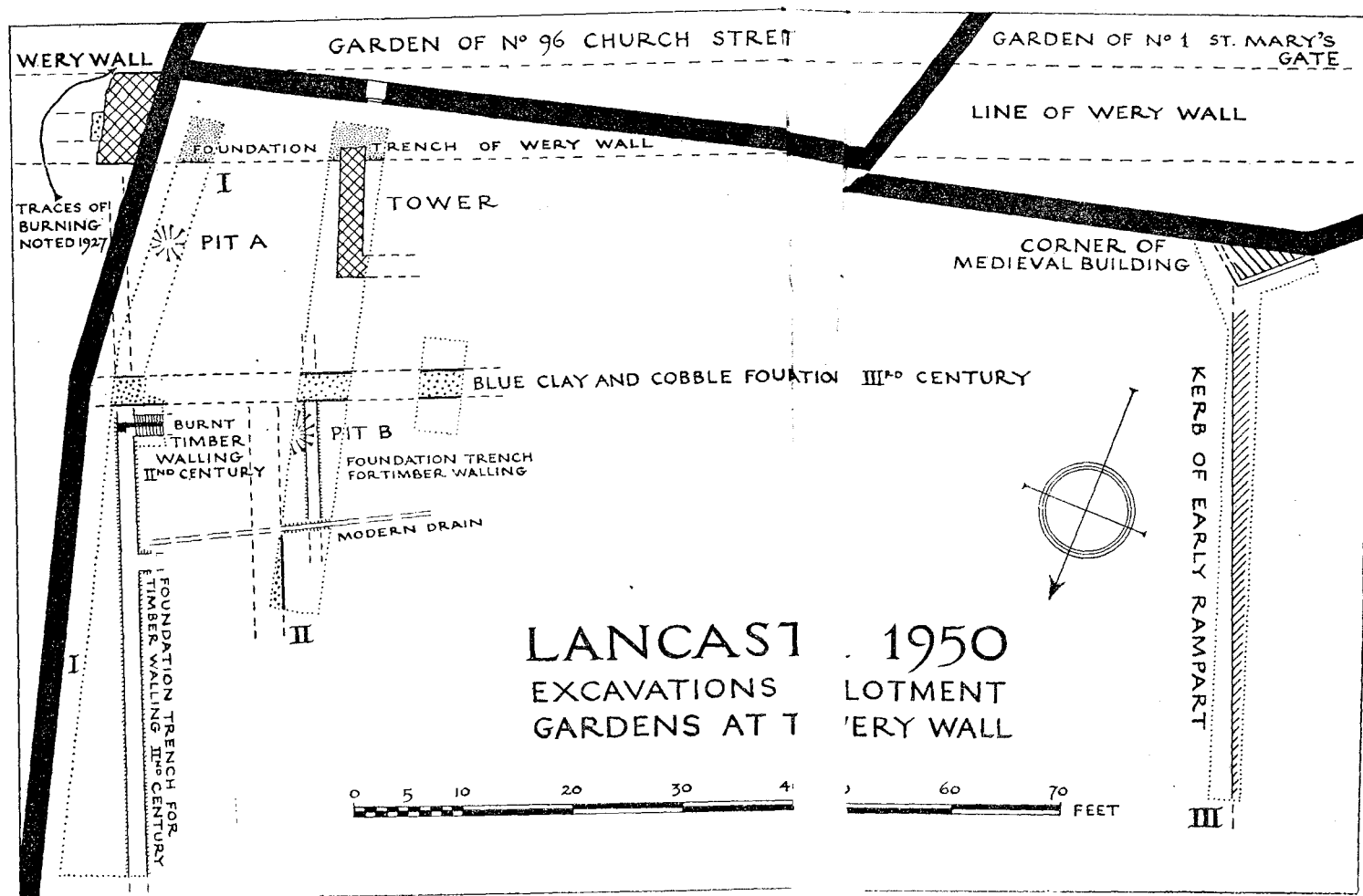
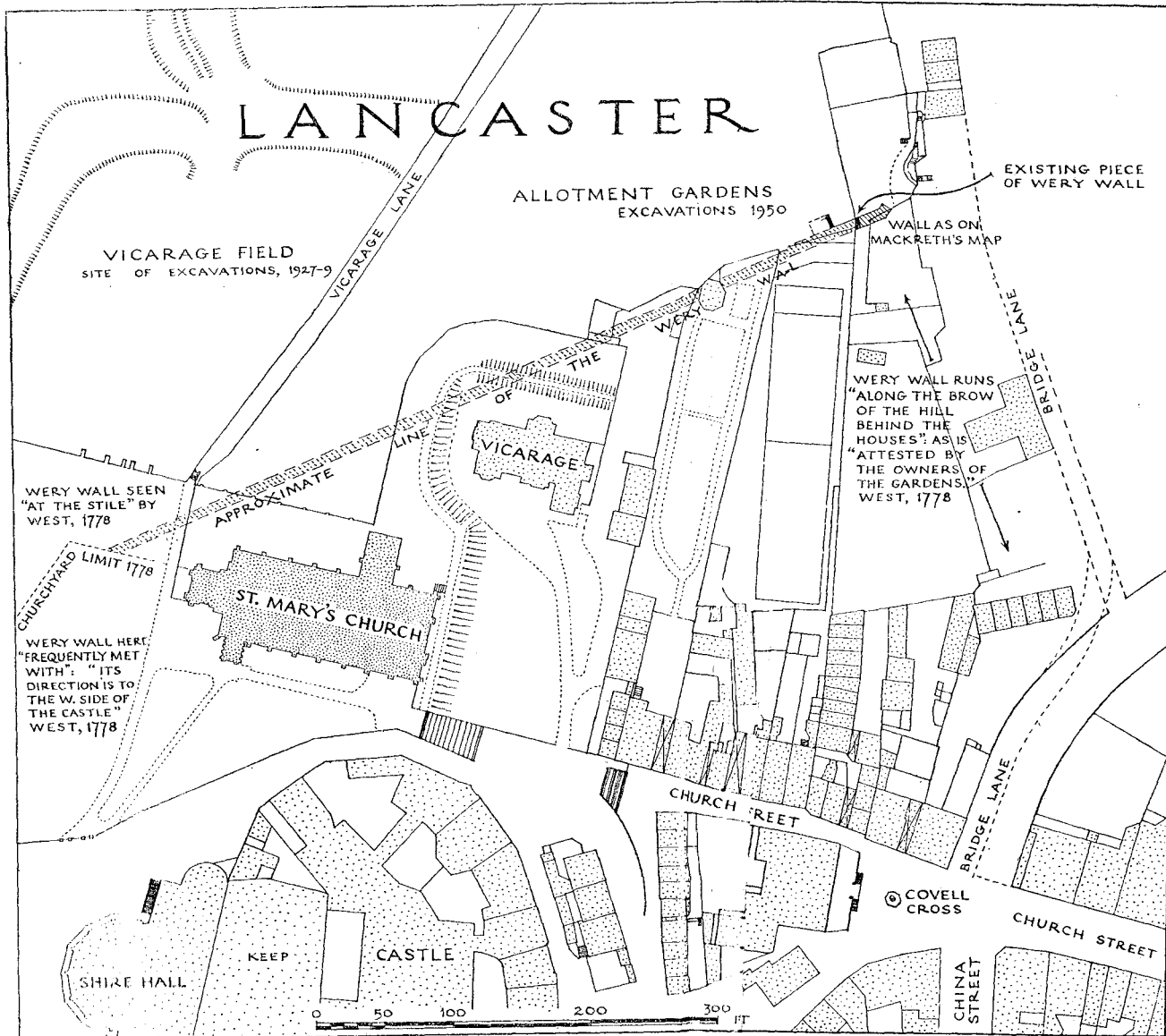
The examination of the Wery Wall in 1927 was confined to the north and south sides of the broken end still visible on the edge of the steep hill over-looking Bridge Lane from the west and underlying the belvedere associated with the gardens and hard tennis court behind Church Institute, now the Post Office Telephones building, at 96 Church Street. The ground to east of this is presumably identical with "the garden of Clement Townsend" mentioned by Stukeley,⁽⁴⁾ while "Mr. Harrison's summer-house", which

⁽¹⁾ See Section III, for quotation of relevant sources.

⁽²⁾ *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. XV, pp. 33-40. An interesting account, extracted from the *Lancaster Guardian*, 8 October 1927, is given in *JBAA*, N.S., Vol. XXXIII (1927), pp. 228-231.

⁽³⁾ For example, see *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. XVI, p. 27.

⁽⁴⁾ See Section III.



Stukeley described⁽⁵⁾ as astride the wall, is presumably the belvedere. Exploration in the allotments would show, firstly, whether any remains of the wall still existed to west of the belvedere; and, secondly, whether, if the Wery Wall was a defensive wall, as Stukeley thought, a ditch existed in front of it to north. An initial cut (Fig. 1, Trench I) was therefore made on the line of the allotment path running along the edge of the hill, in order to keep in closest possible touch with the visible fragment of the Wery Wall.

The first point revealed was that the Wery Wall had here been itself removed. The north edge of the robber trench, filled with scattered stone, mortar and dirty earth, was clearly recognisable in the yellow boulder clay of the natural hillside. Five feet north of the robber trench a post-Roman pit (Pit A) was encountered, 3' in diameter and 2' 3" deep, at first visible as a disturbance which excited hopes of a ditch, but very clearly denied them as the true state of affairs emerged. When the trench was prolonged northwards a massive foundation, 2' 8" wide, built of four layers of river cobbles set in blue clay, came into view, running from east to west. It was set for a depth of 2' in a mass of clean blueish clay filling, through which the foundation-trench had been cut so as to rest upon the undisturbed yellow clay of the hillside. This accounts for the depth observed and indicates the care taken to obtain a firm bedding for the foundation. Two feet further north the line of the trench was crossed from east to west, at the old ground surface of yellow clay, by a burnt mass of wattle-and-daub, associated with a large post-hole, 10" square, containing remains of a charred post, linked with longitudinal timber framing, 4" square and also burnt, at ground-level. Two series of structures had thus emerged (Pl. 1A); the later represented by the foundation of cobbles set in blue clay and associated with a made surface of blueish clay, the earlier marked by the burnt timber-work at original ground-level. As the trial-trench was carried still further northwards it crossed, very obliquely, a line of foundation-trench for timber-work at right-angles to that previously discovered. This was traced as far as the available space permitted, for a distance of 41' northwards from the burnt timbering already described, without coming to an end, and during this operation a second east-to-west cross-division was observed, 14' north of the first example. In the clean filling of the long foundation-trench and associated with its original construction, were found three small fragments of a lattice-patterned grey jar of Hadrianic date (see p. 15). It thus becomes evident that the timber buildings are not earlier than Hadrian and may well be somewhat later, if, as seems likely, the fragments were lying about as rubbish before they got into the filling of the trench.

An attempt was then made to trace the clay-and-cobble walling further westwards. Two short lengths were exposed (see fig. 1),

⁽⁵⁾ See Section III: the summer house is marked upon Stephen Mackreth's map of Lancaster of 1778 (see pl. 3).

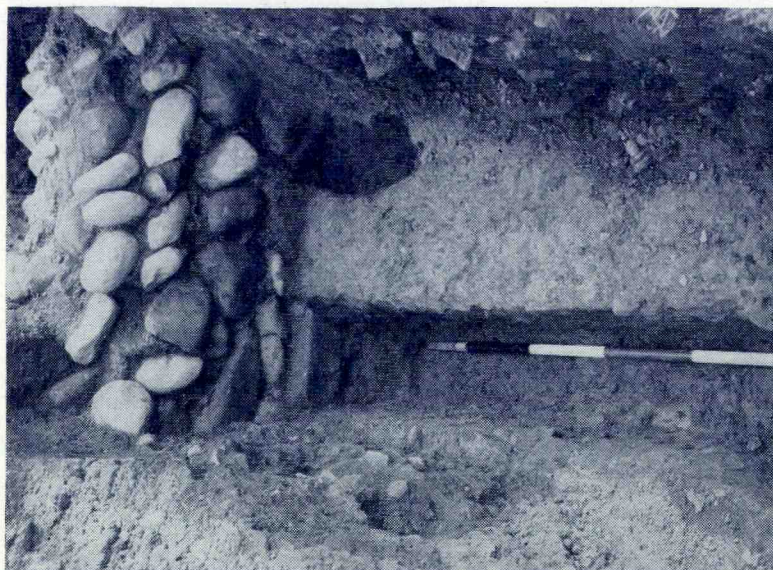


PLATE 1B: LANCASTER

Clay and cobble foundation in Trench II, and earlier foundation-trench for timber building. Rubbish-pit in section to left. Looking South.



PLATE 1A: LANCASTER

Clay and cobble foundation in Trench I, and earlier burnt timber-work in foreground. Looking South

over a distance of 26' 6", and in both the character of the walling was unchanged and four courses of cobbling still remained. The nearer trench (Trench II) happened also to disclose a north-to-south foundation-trench for the wooden buildings, running below the clay and cobble foundation, which cut its top. (Pl. 1B). The relationship between the cobble foundation and the timber buildings was thus demonstrated yet again. At the same time was found the west half of a small rubbish-pit (Pit B), 3' in diameter, which lay hard against the clay-and-cobble wall but hardly penetrated below the top of the foundation-trench for timbers. The pit had in fact been dug in the corner of a room of which the south wall was represented by the cobbled foundation already discovered, while the east wall was represented by a new cobbled foundation which appeared further north and was traced for 7'. Thus, although the floor-level associated with the clay-and-cobble foundations had been everywhere removed, the pit was proved contemporary with them by its position. The contents of the pit accordingly formed a stratified deposit of material contemporary with the clay-and-cobble foundation, and, when examined, proved to be a homogeneous group which dated the cobbled foundations set in blue clay securely to the third century and further indicated that they lasted until its close (see below, p. 16).

Meanwhile, since the masonry of the Wery Wall had been removed in the area available for examination, a return was made to the existing fragment, of which the north and south faces were examined in 1928 by Professors Droop and Newstead.⁽⁶⁾ A modern facing built against its broken end, which had impeded their examination, had been partly removed when or since the adjacent houses in Bridge Lane had been demolished as condemned property, and the area had become a fowl-pen, whose owners kindly allowed us to conduct a thorough examination of the cross-section now exposed at this point. It was totally different in character from the clay-and-cobble foundations so far discovered, being a tightly-packed foundation of massive broken stone-work, much of it reused, set in a very hard white mortar of lime and small pebbles, very difficult to break or remove, as is on record.⁽⁷⁾ The whole mass had been laid in a deep flat-bottomed foundation-trench of the usual kind, penetrating to the natural subsoil of yellow clay. It was not possible to measure precisely its full thickness, since the south edge was not disclosed at the bottom of the trench, but it was evident that the foundation was about 8½' thick. At one point, however, the subsoil at the bottom of the trench was penetrated by a wholly different feature (Pl. 1), a foundation of blue clay and river cobbles, only 2' 8" wide, differing completely in size and materials from the Wery Wall which covered it. There was, on the other hand, the closest resemblance between this foundation set in blue clay and those of the third-century building already

⁽⁶⁾ *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. XV, p. 33.

⁽⁷⁾ See Stukeley's evidence, quoted in Section III, below.

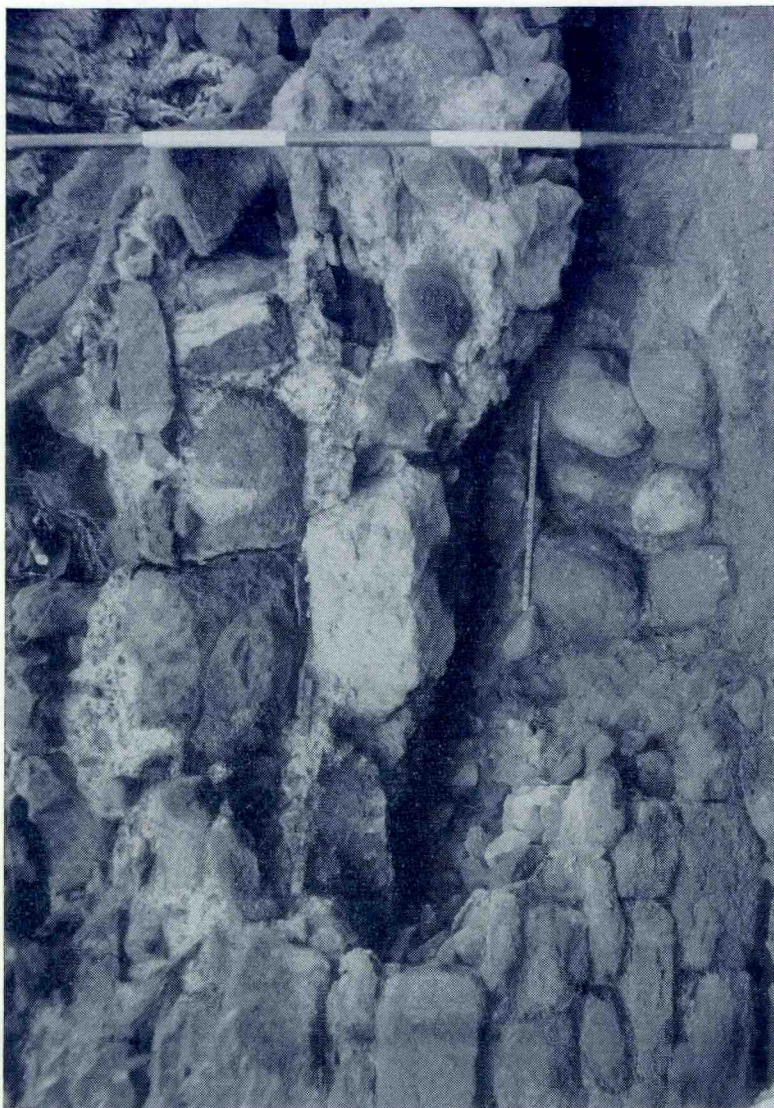


PLATE 2 : LANCASTER : MORTARED CORE OF VERY WALL OVERLYING EARLIER
COBBLE FOUNDATION (BELOW TWO-FOOT RULE). LOOKING WEST

described, the only difference being that those which stood free of the Wery Wall retained four layers of cobbling in position, while that covered by the Wery Wall had been deprived of all but two layers. In short, the Wery Wall overlies and half-destroys one of the wall-foundations of blue clay and cobbles. A complete stratigraphical sequence of the different structures is thus established. The Wery Wall overlies the clay-and-cobble foundations, to which a third-century date has already been assigned. The clay-and-cobble foundations overlie the timber buildings. But, before pursuing the implications of this sequence further, two final discoveries should be recorded.

When the north face of the Wery Wall had been obtained at its broken end and lined up with the edge of the robber-trench from which it had been removed further west, it seemed desirable to prolong Trench II as far as the line of the Wery Wall, in order to see whether either a fragment of walling or the edge of a robber-trench could be discovered. This operation produced not only the edge of the robber-trench, but a masonry wall, seven courses high and $2\frac{1}{2}'$ thick, projecting northwards from it at right-angles and built of small squared blocks set in the very hard white mortar characteristic of the Wery Wall. The wall projected for $10'$ and then turned at right-angles to run westward, parallel with the Wery Wall, into cultivated ground where it could not be pursued. But there can be no doubt as to what the structure signified: in association with a wall over $8'$ thick it can only be the east wall and north-east corner of an external bastion, projecting for $10\frac{1}{2}'$ and at present of unknown frontage. The bastions of *Petuaria* (Brough on Humber), which project for $10'$ and are $25'$ long, afford a ready provisional parallel.⁽⁸⁾

The second discovery occurred in Trench III, cut along the west side of a fallow allotment, again approximately at right-angles to the Wery Wall. In this trench the ancient ground-level was covered with garden-soil to a depth of over $5'$. Almost immediately below this came the subsoil, upon which had been laid a very neat kerb, of Roman hammer-dressed ashlar, facing east and running from north to south. This was traced for over $50'$, and on top of it were vestiges of clean clay. It had no second face and was manifestly the kerb at the edge of a rampart. There was no opportunity, however, either to ascertain the thickness of this rampart or to test for a ditch to east of it, on its downhill side; but its complete lack of relationship to any of the structures so far described may be connected with the fact that even the earliest of them is not earlier than Hadrian, while the Lancaster Museum contains Samian ware⁽⁹⁾ datable to A.D. 100–115 and an

⁽⁸⁾ *JBAA*, ser. 3, Vol. VII (1942), p. 7, fig. 3.

⁽⁹⁾ A. Johnson, *Transactions of the Antiquarian Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, Vol. XXIV, pls. 1, no. 1; 2, no. 6; 4, no. 7; 5, no. 60: cf. Birley, *JRS*, Vol. XXV, p. 73, nos. 110–113, and his addition, 114, from Oswald, *Index*, p. 383.

inscription⁽¹⁰⁾ of Trajan (A.D. 98–117) and also Samian ware of late-Flavian type.⁽¹¹⁾ Structures earlier than any of the three series described above thus await discovery and future work may show that this is one of them. As the kerb approached the line of the Wery Wall it was cut off by deep foundations of massive masonry, partly underlying the modern garden-wall but not aligned with it. The medieval character of this stonework was very apparent; it seemed to have formed the north-west corner of a stone building of some pretensions, presumably belonging to the Priory, of which the Wery Wall was one of the original boundaries (See Section III.).

An attempt may now be made to assess results, first as to sequence and topography. Despite the very limited space available for work, a useful structural sequence has been established, which enables older discoveries to be fitted into the picture. The Wery Wall is shown to be the north defensive wall of a fort later than the third century, a function which suits well both its massive solidity and its equipment of external bastions.⁽¹²⁾ This late fort was a large one, for its north front once continued as far as the stile at the west end of the church, which gave access to the path, known as Vicarage Lane, leading through the Vicarage Fields to St. George's Quay. The wall was observed there in 1778 by the Revd. Fr. John West,⁽¹³⁾ before its destruction about five years later. The stile lay at the north-west corner of the present church tower, which came into existence in 1759, and is marked upon Stephen Mackreth's plan of Lancaster of 1778 (Pl. 3, fig. 1). Father West also recorded the important fact that the wall then turned through the churchyard, where it was frequently found, and aimed for the west side of the Castle, to which the Shire Hall had not yet been added (fig. 1). Towards the north-east it aimed for Bridge Lane, where Camden saw it on the steep slope overhanging the lane in 1599, and where a "great parcel of it" had been removed before 1725, as Stukeley records.⁽¹⁴⁾ The state of affairs as recorded by Stukeley still appears upon Mackreth's map of Lancaster of 1778, which figures the extreme end as making a sharp northward turn of about 45 degrees (Pl. 3). The end as marked by Mackreth also coincides closely with the point where "The Weary Wall" is shown as beginning or ending upon the careful survey of Lancaster in 1684, recently discovered at Towneley

⁽¹⁰⁾ *EE*, Vol. VII, p. 943: the milestone of Hadrian, *CIL*, VII, 1175, should not be forgotten.

⁽¹¹⁾ Late-Flavian Samian ware is figured by Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 29, pl. IV, 1; also in *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. XVI, pp. 32–33, *cf.* pl. xxvii, 29, 30 and xvii, pl. xiv, 1.

⁽¹²⁾ *Cf.* J. Ward, *Romano-British buildings and earthworks*, p. 37: or R. G. Collingwood, *The Archaeology of Roman Britain*, p. 54.

⁽¹³⁾ West, *Guide to the Lakes*, edn. 1 (1778), p. 177: The third edition, of 1784, adds to the notice concerning the fragment at the stile, a footnote stating "This has been lately destroyed." The second edition of 1799 has no such note.

⁽¹⁴⁾ See Section III.

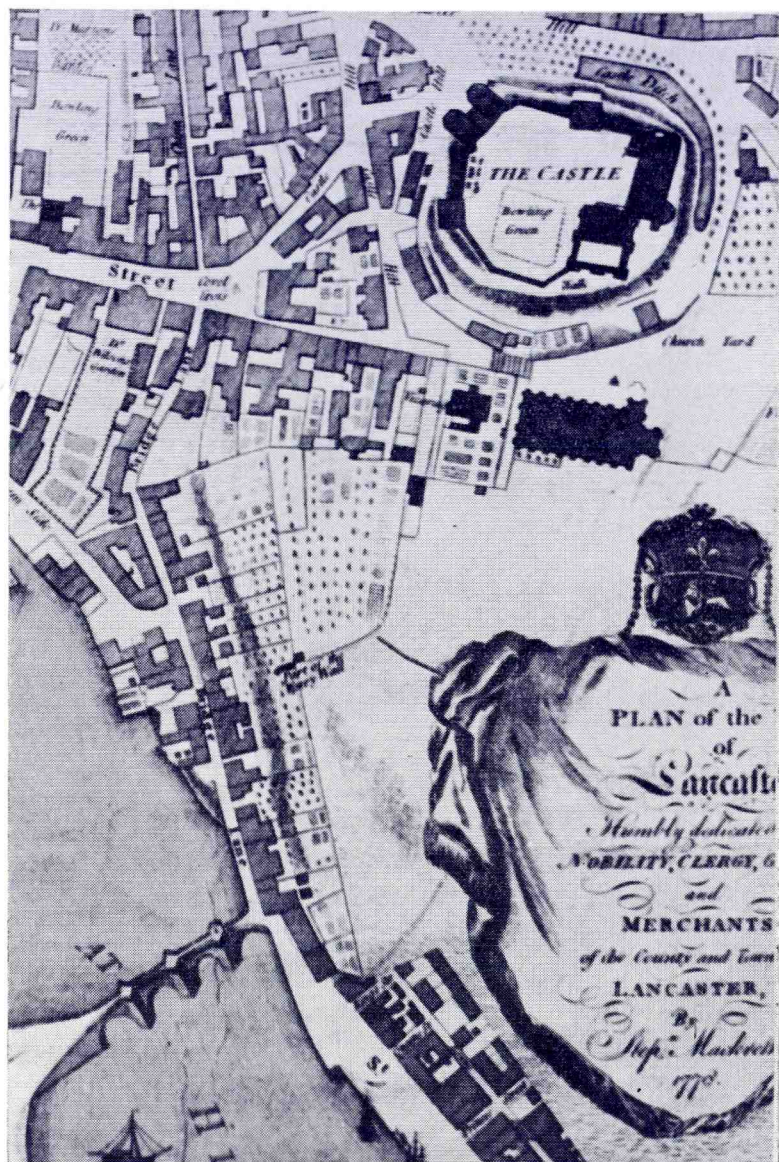


PLATE 3 : STEPHEN MACKRETH'S MAP OF LANCASTER, 1778
SHOWING THE WERY WALL

Hall, Burnley, and copied in facsimile for the Lancaster Public Library.⁽¹⁵⁾ Two points accordingly emerge. First, it becomes clear that, since external towers can now be specifically associated with the Wery Wall, the otherwise exceedingly puzzling turn on Mackreth's plan can be explained as part of a corner bastion, the angle of the fort being brought to this steep end of the hill in order to command as closely as possible the ancient crossing of the Lune. Secondly, the overhanging portion removed before 1725 would lie in a position which would depend upon the plan of the bastion, and must, whatever its exact plan, have been a real menace, such as Camden describes. Roughly computed, the length of this north side of the late-Roman fort represented by the Wery Wall would be about 600'. Of the other dimensions nothing definite can be said,⁽¹⁶⁾ though it might be suspected that the Norman castle keep occupied the south-west corner of the ruined fort, in the same fashion as the Norman keeps of Bowes, Brough-under-Stainmore and Brougham occupy the corners of Roman forts, not to mention examples elsewhere in Britain. As for the east side, Father West records⁽¹⁷⁾ that the Wery Wall ran, on top of a layer of blue clay, through the gardens behind the houses on the west side of Bridge Lane, that is, approximately at right angles to the existing north front. This information coincides remarkably both with the position of the supposed angle-bastion and with information gained in 1927 and confirmed in 1950, that the Wery Wall is in fact laid on top of the blue clay layer associated with the preparation of the site for the third-century fort. On the other hand, the bath-building discovered in 1812 near the junction of Bridge Lane and Church Street, in association with a re-used inscription⁽¹⁸⁾ of the Gallic Emperor Postumus, set up on 22 August between A.D. 262 and 266, was presumably an internal bath-house⁽¹⁹⁾ belonging to the fourth-century fort and situated not far from its east rampart.

⁽¹⁵⁾ This remarkable document was shown to me by the City Librarian, Mr. G. M. Bland.

⁽¹⁶⁾ The Wery Wall was apparently discovered during sewage-works in China Lane, now China Street (Transactions of the Antiquarian Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol. XXIV, p. 5), in such a fashion as suggests that it was crossing this street approximately at right-angles. If so, this would be the south wall of the fort. But no precise details are on record.

⁽¹⁷⁾ *Op. cit.*

⁽¹⁸⁾ *CIL* VII, 287; for the date, E. Birley, *CW*² Vol. XXVI, p. 5. That the stone was in secondary use is proved by the absence of its dexter dolphin border.

⁽¹⁹⁾ The site of discovery is described as both in Bridge Lane (*Lancaster Records*, p. 59) and Church Street (Whitaker, *History of Richmondshire*, Vol. II, p. 213): it was therefore the corner house, though which corner is uncertain. For the plan of Bridge Lane in relation to Church Street, see fig. 1.

For the position in the fort cf. Risingham, *NCH* XV, 83, fig. 13.

It should perhaps be observed that the apse underneath the present choir and north aisle of St. Mary's Church is not on the Roman orientation and that while it is certainly built of Roman stones these are probably re-used, the apse itself being most likely that of the early Saxon church. It has nothing to do with the *basilica* of the inscription.

The limits of the third-century fort, garrisoned⁽²⁰⁾ by the *ala Sebosiana*, together with the *numerus Barcariorum Tigrisiensium*, are less easy to define. It seems clear that it extended northwards beyond the Wery Wall, where the recently-discovered foundations set in blue clay belong to it. Indeed, as Mr. Gillam remarks (p. 17), some of the red ware associated with them may perhaps be recognised as derived from the manufactory of pottery and tiles belonging to the *ala Sebosiana*, found at Quernmore⁽²¹⁾ in 1774. The functions of these newly discovered buildings will not be clear until space is available for further excavation, though their size and regularity stamp them as undoubtedly military. The north defences of the fort to which they belonged, however, presumably lie further downhill to north of them, and again await the opportunity of wider exploration. On the other hand, the relationship of these structures earlier than the Wery Wall to the visible earthworks on the north-west shoulder of the hill, examined in 1927-29, must remain wholly uncertain in view of the slight and obscure nature of those works themselves and their excavators' own conclusion,⁽²²⁾ surely correct, that they formed "no part of the main defence system of a Roman fortress". Similar considerations apply to the defences of the second-century fort, which again appear to await discovery on the north slope. The burnt timber buildings within them certainly represent long barrack-blocks or stables running north and south. And it will be observed that the point on the south side of the Wery Wall, recorded⁽²³⁾ in 1927, "where the yellow clay shows signs of burning", and where a worn and burnt *denarius* of Nero was also found, is no doubt another record of the same structure, across which the Wery Wall will have cut.

Neither structures nor relics clearly assignable to the first century have appeared in the present excavations. It will be recalled, however, that the rampart-foundation of Trench III, which faces east, fits none of the other remains discovered, and may well belong to an earlier fort confined more closely to the crest of the hill. But no decisive proof of its date within the Roman period is as yet forthcoming.

Comment upon these conclusions on a wider historical basis is out of the question at this stage. But it may be emphasised that important new information has been won. The most valuable gain is the secure identification of the Wery Wall as the north wall of a fourth-century fort. It is further demonstrated that this fort represents a drastic remodelling of its third-century predecessor, although the same orientation was retained. The new fort is the only example among those of north-west Britain which conforms to the fourth-century type, with massive curtain-wall and pro-

⁽²⁰⁾ For the garrison, see Birley, *CW*² XXXIX, p. 222 on the *barcarii*.

⁽²¹⁾ The Quernmore tile-kilns are first mentioned by West, *Guide to the Lakes*, p. 21: for the tiles, see *CIL* VII, 1233.

⁽²²⁾ *Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology*, Vol. XVII, p. 61.

⁽²³⁾ *Ibid.*, Vol. XV, p. 35.

jecting bastions, so well known on the Saxon Shore or in Wales. There is, indeed, no quite exact Saxon-Shore parallel⁽²⁴⁾ to the Lancaster hollow rectangular bastion: but hollow bastions as such are not there unknown, while rectangular bastions are common enough. The spacing of the bastions is also considerably closer than at Saxon-Shore forts, but is not unknown elsewhere: an excellent contemporary parallel is provided by Boppard.⁽²⁵⁾ The extension of the new system as far north as Lancaster is of high interest, since it shows that the coast between Cumberland and North Wales was not left defenceless. It is clear that the west coast in general had been more severely harried in the disaster of A.D. 296 than in that of A.D. 197; the legionary fortress at Chester had remained unscathed on the earlier occasion, but after A.D. 296 its north wall had to be completely rebuilt.⁽²⁶⁾ A new vigilance in the west will therefore have been required. The garrison and name of the new fort at Lancaster, like those of the corresponding fort at Cardiff, are as yet unknown, but the proof of their existence adds substantially to knowledge of the Lancaster site and explains why it yields pottery and coins as late as any in northern Britain. The West Coast fleet of the age of Valentinian, attested by the Lydney inscription,⁽²⁷⁾ may well have used the Lune as one of its bases.

Compared with this valuable addition to knowledge, the gain in other periods is slighter, yet for all that not negligible. The uniformity and regularity of the buildings with cobble foundations set in blue clay and the systematic preparation of their site attest their military origin; and for the first time this style of construction at Lancaster can be firmly tied to the third century. That it was employed over a much wider area than that covered by the present excavation is shown by the older evidence for its distribution quoted above.⁽²⁸⁾ It may therefore be recognised as typical of the third-century fort associated with the *ala Sebosiana* and perhaps with the *barcarii Tigrisienses* as well.

Wholly new, on the other hand, is the discovery at Lancaster of second-century timber buildings which perished by fire. These too are plainly military and may be regarded as belonging to a fort: but only further excavation will reveal when, within the chequered years between Hadrian and Severus, they were erected and when burnt down. The planning of the buildings was certainly very different from that of the third-century stone structures which succeeded them, though the orientation of both series was the same.

The supposed still earlier rampart is also an addition to know-

⁽²⁴⁾ For hollow bastions, see Portchester; for rectangular bastions Richborough (Ward, *Romano-British buildings and earthworks*, fig. 11, p. 35.)

⁽²⁵⁾ X. Bericht der R-G Komm., 101, Abb. 5.

⁽²⁶⁾ *Chester Arch. Soc. Journ.*, 1950, pp. 20-21.

⁽²⁷⁾ CIL VII, 137: cf. R. E. M. & T. V. Wheeler, *Report on the Excavation of the prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman site in Lydney Park, Gloucester*, pp. 102-3.

⁽²⁸⁾ See note 17, above.

ledge: but many points about its structure, quite apart from its date within the Roman period, remain to be determined.

The results now described make it evident that the Allotment Gardens site is capable of yielding to careful excavation a great deal of further information about Roman Lancaster. The results already obtained were secured, thanks to the public spirit of the allotment-holders, by work in paths and a fallow patch. But circumstances more restrictive of extended inquiry could hardly have existed and free movement over the whole area would plainly yield much more fresh detail and far wider information about the buildings and defences of the three, if not four, successive forts which have already been discovered. It is indeed to be hoped that the whole area of the Allotment Gardens may in due course become available for further unrestricted work.

In conclusion warmest thanks are offered to all who encouraged and facilitated the investigation. The initiative in this matter, as in so many connected with Lancaster's past, came from the curator of the Lancaster Museum, Mr. G. M. Bland. But no work whatever could have been undertaken without the willing collaboration of the Castle Ward Allotment-holders, through their secretary, Mr. J. Gornall. Tools and workmen were supplied through the City Engineer, Mr. L. Lyons, and his Deputy, Mr. J. S. Williams, both of whom took a welcome interest in the work. Continual help on the actual job and in dealing with the objects recovered was given by Mr. Alan Wilkins, now of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and then a keen member of the classical sixth at Lancaster Grammar School. Lively interest in the work was also taken by the Right Revd. B. Pollard, Bishop of Lancaster, by Alderman Gorrill, at present Lord Mayor of Lancaster, and by members of the local branch of the Historical Association. Finally, the writer is much indebted to his friend and colleague, Mr. J. P. Gillam, for the valuable report upon the pottery which accompanies this article.

II. THE POTTERY FROM EXCAVATIONS 'AT LANCASTER, 1950

BY J. P. GILLAM, M.A.

References used in this section are as follows:

<i>Bewcastle</i>	<i>CW</i> 2 xxxviii, 219,
<i>Birdoswald</i>	<i>CW</i> 2 xxx, 187,
<i>Carrawburgh</i>	<i>AA</i> 4 xxix, 62,
<i>Corbridge</i> 1938	<i>AA</i> 4 xv, 266,
<i>Gose</i>	Erich Gose, <i>Gefäßstypen der römischen Keramik im Rheinland</i> , 1950.

Three fragments, too small to be drawn, from a grey jar or cooking pot, were found in association with the remains of timber buildings in Trench I (see p. 2). They are of much the

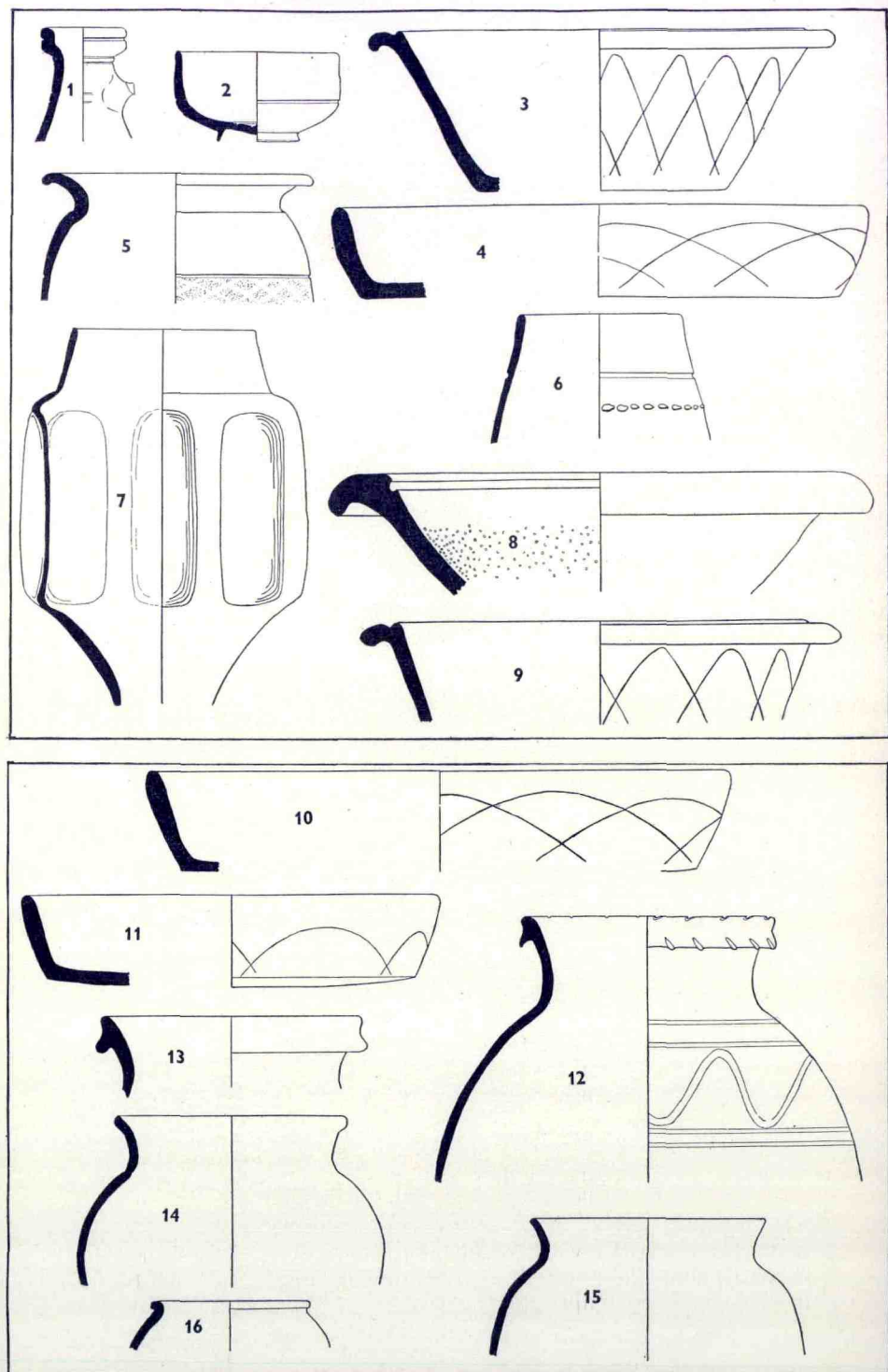


FIG. 2. ROMAN POTTERY FROM LANCASTER..

same character as the commonest vessels in primary deposits on Hadrian's Wall, and it is therefore probable that they were discarded within a decade or two of A.D. 125.

From the same trench, at a higher level, came a further twelve fragments, representing eleven vessels, from which a selection (nos. 1-4) is drawn (fig. 2). While this deposit is not in direct association with the clay and cobble foundation, it is later than the timber building and earlier than the Wery Wall; it is therefore probably contemporary with the occupation of the building with the clay and cobble foundations.

1. Neck of single-handled flagon in brick-red fabric, with blue core and dead white slip.

The two pairs of grooves, immediately below the double lip and on a level with the stump of the handle, are probably the vestigial survival of a ring neck; the vessel belongs then at earliest to the closing years of the second century, when the ancestral form died out.

2. Nearly half a well-made cup, or small bowl, with a neat footstand; very hard fine red fabric, with a black lacquer-like surface. The fabric is identical with that of the Rhenish indented beakers, which were not imported into northern Britain before the third century, and the cup is probably contemporary with them. The general similarity of the form of the cup to that of the rough-cast, mica-dusted and scale-pattern cups of pre-Flavian times is without significance.

3. Two large conjoined fragments from a bowl with rudimentary flange, in the black-coated fabric conveniently called fumed ware: it has lightly scored intersecting arcs on the burnished exterior surface. This is a typical third-century vessel; cf. *Bewcastle* 28, *Birdoswald* 78 and *Corbridge* 1938, fig. 7, 12, all third-century; later vessels have a more pronounced bead.

4. One large fragment from a plain-rimmed dish, in similar fabric and with comparable decoration. This vessel is probably strictly contemporary with No. 3, though the type survived longer without change; cf. *Bewcastle* 30, third-century, and 59, fourth-century.

The fragmentary rim of a grey jar, the plain cut-away base of a cooking pot, the rim of a samian vessel of Dragendorff's form 31, and several insignificant scraps were found in the same deposit as nos. 1-4. The types represented by nos. 3 and 4 also appear in the stratified group in Trench II. The present group taken as a whole is of third-century date.

In Trench II a large group of mutually associated vessels was found in a rubbish pit; the pit was related in plan to the building with the clay and cobble foundation, and is taken to have been both dug and filled during the occupation of that building. It contained pottery both of the usual types met in northern Britain, nos. 5-11, and of unusual types, nos. 12-16 (see fig. 2).

5. Four conjoined fragments from a small but normal cooking pot in burnished black fumed ware, with a scored line above a zone of obtuse angled cross-hatching. The type emerged in the closing years of the third century and survived, with only slight typological development, into the fourth; cf. *Carrawburgh* 29, late third-century.

In the same deposit were found three fragmentary rims, fourteen wall fragments, and two bases from similar vessels, and one base from a beaker of similar form.

6. Three fragments from the lip and wall of a Castor cup, with white body, pinkish fawn coating and traces of barbotine decoration. This type of plain-lipped tall cup, normally decorated with leaves and tendrils, is exclusively of third-century date; cf. *Leicester* fig. 32, 20.

A fragment from the wall of another vessel with tendril decoration was found in the same deposit.

7. Twenty-one fragments from a tall Castor beaker with eight evenly disposed indentations; it has a white body with a dark brown to black coating. This is a British copy of a Rhenish type; cf. *Gose* 207 (from Trier), third-century.

8. Two fragments from a small mortarium, without a bead; it is in light orange fabric with traces of a smooth dark red finish on top of the rim; the grit is small and chocolate brown. This is a Raetian mortarium; Raetian mortaria, not precisely of the same form, have been found in third-century deposits on Hadrian's Wall.

9. Fragment from a bowl of the same form and fabric as, and doubtless contemporary with, no. 3.

Five fragments from one or two further vessels of almost identical type were found in the same deposit.

10. Six fragments from a vessel of the same form and fabric as, and doubtless contemporary with, no. 4. It is heavily caked with soot.

11. A single large fragment from a similar though smaller vessel: there is a scored pattern on the surviving portion of the base. On the interior surface, and at one point on the exterior, the fabric is smooth and black, identical with that of nos. 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10, but most of the exterior surface is rough to the touch and is in colour partly dead white and partly bright orange; the order of appearance of the colours on the surface is black, white, orange. From time to time cooking pots, bowls and dishes are found with an orange or white surface coating, sometimes incorrectly described as a slip. It is clear that originally they were black, and that the compound used to obtain the black shiny surface ("fumed ware") remained stable when exposed to comparatively low temperatures in cooking or when kiln-fired in non-oxidising conditions, but tended to be changed at high temperatures in oxidising conditions, first to a white and then to an orange colour. The vessel is of the same date as nos. 4 and 10.

Thirteen fragments of a vessel of the same type, intermediate in size between nos. 10 and 11, were also found.

Nos. 5-11 form a well-marked third-century group; the latest pieces belong to the closing years of the century. Nos. 12-16 which follow, all of unusual form, were found in the same pit in direct association with the others. They are all in a hard self-coloured, smooth, slightly sandy, orange fabric.

12. Three fragments from the rim and shoulder of a large narrow-mouthed jar with notched decoration on the rim.

13. Fragment from a narrow-mouthed jar with down-turned flange at the lip.

14. Five fragments from a medium-mouthed jar with a gently curved rim.

15. Fragment from a similar jar.

16. Fragment from a bead-rim beaker.

In addition there are four fragments which may come from no. 12 or from no. 14, but which do not appear to join, four fragments from a cheese wring, two bases, one broad and one narrow, and eighteen wall fragments, all in similar fabric.

The very close similarity in fabric between at least six different

vessels suggests that all had a common origin. The absence of parallels to the forms elsewhere in the north of Britain suggests that the origin was near to Lancaster, and that the kiln whose existence is thus inferred produced only for a local market. The stratification of the pieces shows that the kiln was active in the third century. It is possible that the kiln at Quernmore, which produced both pottery and tiles for the third-century garrison of Lancaster, was the kiln which produced these pieces.

In addition to the pieces illustrated, and to fragmentary vessels of similar type, the pit also contained three fragments from one amphora and two from another, a rouletted fragment in light self-coloured fabric, a small piece from the back of a pipe-clay torso, probably male, seven fragments from a samian vessel of form 31, rouletted and bearing the fragmentary stamp —I.M., the rim of a form 37, fragmentary roof-tiles and bricks and the teeth and bones of horses.

III. EARLY REFERENCES TO THE WERY WALL

- (1) *Leland's Itinerary in England*, (ed. L. Toulmin Smith), Vol. IV, p. 11, "The old waul of the circuite of the priory cummith almost to Lune bridge. Sum have therby supposid that it was a peace of a waul of the toune. But yn deade I espiyd in no place that the toune was ever wallid." In V. 45, the same view is repeated, "The ruines of old walles about the bridg were onely of the suppressid priory."
- (2) Camden, *Britannia* (1600), p. 681, "*Sub quo ad pontem pulcherrimum, quo Lonus consternitur, in ipsa praecipiti collis declivitate, parietis antiquissimi, et Romani operis pendet fragmentum praeceps, Wery Wall vocitant illi, recentiori Britannico huius oppidi, i. Urbem viridem dixerunt, a uiridanti forsitan illo colle, sed haec viderint alij.*"

This is the first reference to the wall by Camden, who had no doubt seen it in his journey northwards in 1599 with Sir Robert Cotton.

- (3) Stukeley, *Iter Boreale*, p. 38, "I found a great piece of the wall at the north-east, in the garden of Clement Townsend; and so to Mr. Harrison's summer-house, which stands upon it: it is made of the white stone of the country, and with very hard mortar, and still very thick, though the facing on both sides is peeled off for the sake of the squared stone, which they used in building. A year or two ago a great parcel of it was destroyed with much labour. This reached quite to the bridge-lane, and hung over the street at the head of the precipice in a dreadful manner:"

"Mr. Harrison's summer-house" is no doubt the same as "John Ford's summer-house" described by Clarke in his *History*

of *Lancaster* (1811), p. 6, and "the summer house in the garden of Mr. Willan" of R. Simpson (*History of Lancaster* (1852) p. 124). It is marked on Mackreth's map of 1778 (Pl. 3) in the position of the *belvedere*.

- (4) Pennant, *A tour in Scotland and voyage to the Hebrides*, (1772), part I, (2nd edition, 1776), "On the north side of the churchyard are the remains of an old wall, called the Wery Wall. -----For my part, with Leland, I suspect it to have been part of the enclosure of the *Priory*."

On Leland and Pennant it is enough to observe that a charter of Roger de Poitou, at the time of the foundation of the priory in 1094, already mentions the *vetus murus*, as quoted by Whitaker, *History of Richmondshire*, Vol. II, p. 236, and Roper, *Materials for the history of the church of Lancaster* (Chetham Society), p. 8.

IV. AN ALTAR TO IALONUS, FOUND NEAR LANCASTER

On 26 October 1802, a certain Mr. M. Terry wrote from Lancaster to Mr. Urban, as the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*⁽¹⁾ was styled, to inform him of a Roman inscription recently discovered to the north of the town. The passage is not among Gomme's valuable collection of excerpts from the *Gentleman's Magazine* describing Romano-British discoveries, and is now quoted⁽²⁾ in full, but without the accompanying wood-cut, which hardly did the stone justice. Figure 3 is a new contact-drawing.

"Mr. Urban. . . . The drawing represents pretty accurately a stone pillar now to be seen at Foley, a farm-house about a mile to the North of this town. It was lately found in a field near the above-mentioned house, about 18 inches below the surface of the ground, by some workmen who were digging for the foundation of a lime-kiln. The stone is very entire; and the letters, which are cut *into* it, and not raised, or in *relievo*, are very legible except the two lines marked with asterisks, which are much effaced by time. The stone is about 2 feet 8 inches in height by two feet in breadth. On one side of it is the axe and on the other side the cutting-knife, neatly cut in *relievo*. . . . Yours etc. M. Terry."

After vicissitudes described by W. Thompson Watkin,⁽³⁾ the stone, which is the upper part of a Roman altar, was given to the Municipal Museum at Lancaster, where it now is. The seven lines of text, not in doubt, run as follows: *Deo/Ialono/Contre/sanctissi/mo Iulius/Ianuarius/em(eritus) ex dec(urione) v(otum) [. . . .]* Where the text breaks off, the bottom of the stone has perished, and

⁽¹⁾ *Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1882, p. 993.

⁽²⁾ The printed version has probably misprinted "Foley" for "Folly", an easy mistake in copying from a manuscript letter. The lines marked by asterisks are the fifth and seventh, and do not present difficulty. The original drawing, not here reproduced, is plate I, fig. 7 in the magazine.

⁽³⁾ *Roman Lancashire*, pp. 178-9, with figure.



FIG. 3: ALTAR TO IALONUS, FROM FOLLY FARM
Reproduced one sixth of actual size.

it seems probable that a final formula *V(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*, or the like, is lost.

Since the altar was first described, a hundred and fifty-two years ago, its find-spot has remained unidentified, at least in print. Folly Farm still exists; it lies a mile north of the town, between Scorton and Torrisholme, close to the line of the Roman road from Lancaster to Watercrock uncovered "near the Folly" by Whitaker, the historian of Craven.⁽⁴⁾ A further topographical indication is afforded by Mr. Terry's observation that the stone was found while "digging for the foundations of a lime-kiln". Since limestone is absent⁽⁵⁾ in the immediate neighbourhood of Lancaster, the nearest supplies lying some six miles northwards, near Carnforth, it is clear that in the area of Folly Farm a lime-kiln must be a rarity, identifiable without risk of confusion.

A visit to the spot was accordingly made by the writer on 16 April 1950, with Mr. Alan Wilkins of Lancaster, when we met with the hind at Folly Farm, who quickly furnished an answer to our enquiry. He was able to point at once to a disused kiln and to describe it as positively the only feature of the kind on the farm. The kiln, a large one, occupies the edge of a little knoll which the Lancaster-Kendal canal, constructed in 1797, embraces on its way from Scorton northwards. It has long been disused and robbed of its stonework, and a fair-sized tree occupies its bowl. The remains accord very well with a kiln built in 1802, for two reasons: they are plainly in about the appropriate stage of ruin, while in the early nineteenth century the canal formed the sole means⁽⁶⁾ of conveying stone easily and directly from the limestone area to burn for lime, the commodity then so greatly in vogue for improving either arable or pasture. The Folly Farm kiln would conveniently supply the whole farming area between the north bank of the Lune and Morecambe Bay; and its installation is a good example of what a canal might do for the agricultural districts through which it ran. The identification is unimpeachable (fig. 3).

The find-spot of the altar is thus clear beyond doubt. It lay on the edge of the knoll, with rich meadowland at its feet. But fertility was not the only feature that hallowed this spot in ancient eyes. At the foot of the knoll emerges a powerful perennial spring, to the ancient world a holy thing in itself, deserving of peculiar veneration.⁽⁷⁾ Here the Roman inscription upon the stone becomes relevant. *Ialonus*, the name of the god commemorated, is

⁽⁴⁾ Whitaker, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 213.

⁽⁵⁾ For the siting of the limestone, see *V. C. H. Lancs.* Vol. I, map facing p. 1, and text pp. 6-7. Its transport is mentioned as a specific reason for building the canal in the Act 32 Geo. III c. 101, see *CW*² XVII, 32.

⁽⁶⁾ For emergence of liming as predominant treatment for grass-land, see W. Marshall, *A review of a report to the Board of Agriculture* (1808).

⁽⁷⁾ For the divine nature of springs, cf. Juvenal's sensitive remark, *Sat.* III, 18-20, *Quanto praesentius esset numen aquis viridi si margine cluderet undas nec ingenuum violarent marmora tofum*: or, for a great Celtic sacred spring, see Ausonius *Urb. nob.* XX, 170, *Divona Celtarum lingua fons addite divis*.

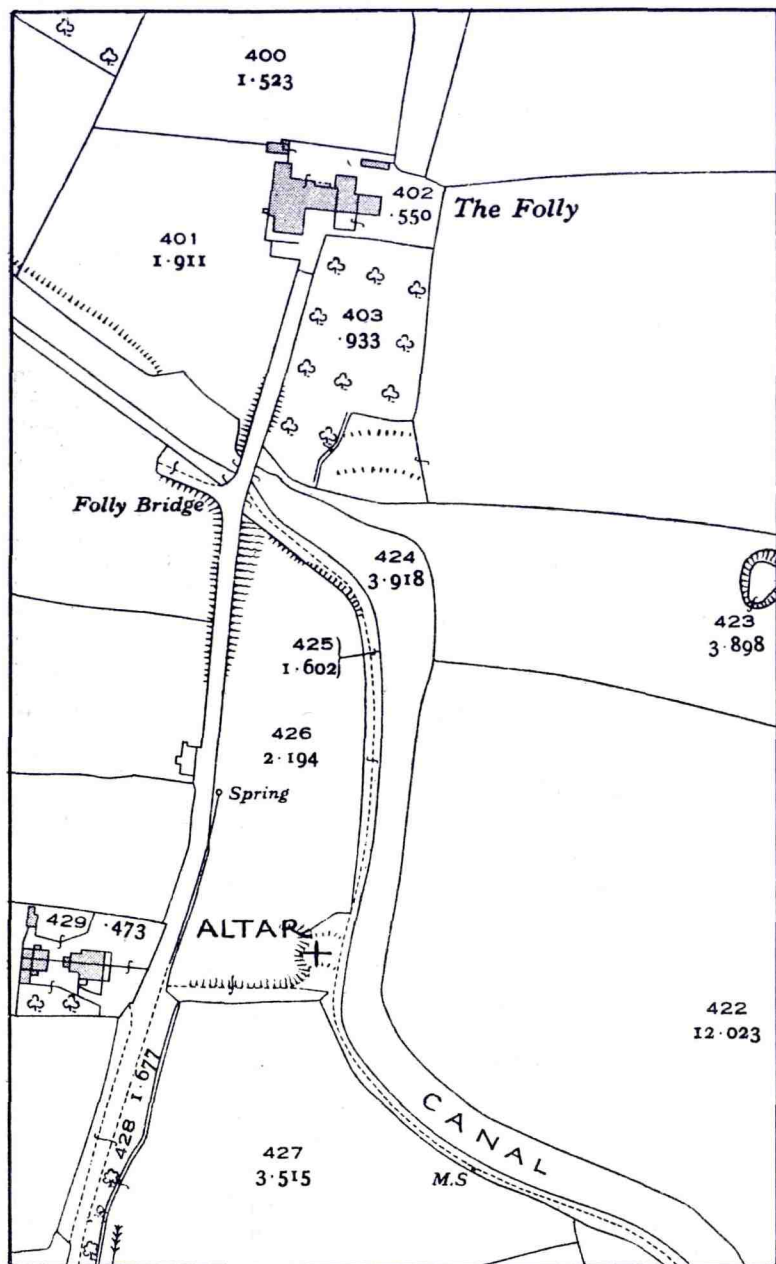


FIG. 4 : SITE OF THE ALTAR TO IALONUS
 Reproduced with permission from Ordnance Survey Map, Lancashire Sheet
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formed from a well-known Celtic root, *ialo-* meaning "an open space, clearing or meadow", with an *-n* suffix of association.⁽⁸⁾ *Deus Ialonus* is, then, "the god of the meadowland", manifesting his power in the form of a beneficent spring. But he is also described as *Contre-*, of which a longer version occurs on an altar⁽⁹⁾ from the neighbouring fort at Overborough, as *Contrebi*, a dative implying a nominative *Contrebis*. This word too is Celtic, compounded⁽¹⁰⁾ from a main stem *trebo-*, "village" or "dwelling", the prefix *con-*, meaning "with" or "together", and the descriptive suffix *-is*; the whole epithet meaning "of those who dwell together". A parallel form is *Condatis*,⁽¹¹⁾ from the place-name *Condate*. *Contrebis*, however, refers to an area rather than a place, that is, to the district covering the lower Lune valley from Overborough to its mouth; it was in fact the district name, exactly like *Contrebia*⁽¹²⁾ in *Celtiberia*. The British name would be related to a local sept, *pagus*, or tribal division,⁽¹³⁾ comparable with the *Setantii* of the Fylde, the *Gavrantuici* of North-East Yorkshire or the *Cancani* of Lleyrn, all mentioned by Ptolemy incidentally. Comparable British religious dedications⁽¹⁴⁾ are *Medocius Campesium*, and *Mogons Cad* (. . . .), while the Continent supplies innumerable similar local epithets,⁽¹⁵⁾ conferred upon the *Matres* and other deities. But *Ialonus* is further described as *sanctissimus*, "most holy"; a superlative not commonly employed, but applied more frequently⁽¹⁶⁾ to the spirits of springs or streams than to any other deities. His epithets make an interesting pair, one of local topographical significance, the other shown by the occurrence of the spring to accord with Roman custom.

The dedicator, *Iulius Ianuarius*, is a Roman citizen and an ex-decurion, once the commander of a squadron in a cavalry regiment. The absence of a *praenomen* suggests a date in the third century for the dedication. If this dating is correct, the *ala* to which *Ianuarius* belonged will have been the *ala Sebosiana*, in garrison at Lancaster⁽¹⁷⁾ during the period in question. The *cognomen* *Ianuarius*, though Roman in form, is probably originally Celtic in origin, the

⁽⁸⁾ Dottin, *La langue gauloise*, 111. The name also occurs in *Narbonensis*.

⁽⁹⁾ *CIL* VII, 290; cf. Birley, *CW*² XLVI, 135-7 with an illustration from Rauthmell, *Antiquitates Bremetonacenses*, pl. iv, i.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Dottin, *op. cit.*, p. 247, p. 293; cf. Holder, *Altceltischer Sprachschatz*, sv. *Contrebia*.

⁽¹¹⁾ *EE* VII, 984; cf. *CIL* VII, 420.

⁽¹²⁾ *Contrebia, caput gentis Celtiberorum*, Val. Max. VII, 4, 5; cf. Birley, *op. cit.*

⁽¹³⁾ Cf. the *pagus*-names from Tungrian territory in *CIL* VII, 1072, 1073 or Nervian territory in *EE* IX, 1159; for the *Setantii*, Ptol. *Geogr.* II, 3, 2; *Gavrantuici*, *ibid.*, II, 3, 6; *Cancani*, *ibid.* II, 3, 3.

⁽¹⁴⁾ *Medocius*, *EE* IX, 1005 = *ILS* 4576; *Mogons*, *CIL* VII 996 = *ILS* 4728.

⁽¹⁵⁾ For topographical epithets, see Lambrechts, *Contributions à l'étude des divinités celtiques* (1942), p. 124, p. 131.

⁽¹⁶⁾ In Dessau, *ILS*, this epithet goes once to other gods (3512, 4007, 4037), but three times to springs (3339, 3862, 3892).

⁽¹⁷⁾ *Ala Sebosiana*, attested by *CIL* VII, 287 of A.D. 262-266 (see note 21, p. 11, above); also tiles, *CIL* VII, 1233.

Gallic form being *Giamonios*.⁽¹⁸⁾ But what is more interesting is the fact that this ex-decurion is an *emeritus*, or honourably discharged service-man, and dedicates the stone in that capacity: for this implies that, after serving in the Lancaster garrison, he had settled in the district and had an interest in the meadowland watered by the spring. When it is recalled that a decurion was a well-paid officer, it will be realized that his social status will have been that of a landowner possessing a *villa*, certainly not that of the soldier-peasant. He may well have been the builder and founder of the shrine.

No other altar in Britain quite matches this Lancaster stone in completeness of information and in directness of association with its locality. The texts of such altars as those in the Calder basin,⁽¹⁹⁾ erected to *Brigantia* or *Bregas*, suggest that ex-soldier settlers are in question, but do not specifically state the fact. On the altar of Ialonus all the facts are there. The god is connected with a local spring, bears the name of the territory and is honoured by a Roman adjective of reverence. The dedicator is an ex-decurion, discharged from the army, and is plainly settling down in the meadowland in which he delighted and whose god he venerated and perhaps even brought from Southern Gaul. If he was an educated man by Roman standards, his worship will have echoed the gay and musical invocation⁽²⁰⁾ of Horace to the *fons Bandusiae*: "*dulci digne mero non sine floribus, cras donaberis haedo!*": "worthy of sweet strong wine, not unaccompanied by flowers, tomorrow shalt thou be given a kid!"

The following abbreviations have been used in this report:

- JBAA*: Journal of the British Archaeological Association.
JRS: Journal of Roman Studies.
Index: Index of Potter's stamps on Terra Sigillata "Samian Ware."
CIL: Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum.
EE: Ephemeris Epigraphica.
*CW*²: Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society, New Series.
V.C.H.: Victoria County History.
 Steph. Byz.: Stephanus Byzantinus.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Dottin, *op. cit.*, p. 259: cf. Holder, *op. cit.*

⁽¹⁹⁾ *CIL* VII, 200 (Greetland), of A.D. 208: it will be noted that the version of the consular dating given in *CIL* is incorrect: the text reads *Antonino III et Geta coss.*; *CIL* VII, 203 (Adel); *EE* VII, 920 (Longwood) where the form is presumably *Breganti*, with nominative *Bregas*, cf. Steph. Byz. s.v.; *EE* IX, 1120 (Woodnook, Castleford).

⁽²⁰⁾ *Odes*, III, 13, 2-3.

