

# University of Keele

From the Department of Classics

Keele, Staffordshire, ST5 5BG

Professor and Head of Department  
J. M. T. Charlton, MA, FSA

Telephone: Newcastle (Staffs) (0782) 621111  
Telex: 36113 UNKLIB G

Professor of Roman Provincial Studies  
A. L. F. Rivet, MA, FSA

16th October, 1979

Dear John,

Many thanks for letting me see the draft of your Interim Note on the mansio at Wall.

This is extremely interesting, but one or two things strike me. First, I think your introductory paragraph may be a little too brief, since it does not make it absolutely clear what role the robbed wall played. This leads on to the second point, your (and Anne Ross's) use of the word 'temple'. It seems to me that you have no good evidence for what the structure was like and 'shrine' might be more appropriate. After all, Roquepertuse, the most impressive tête coupée site in southern Gaul (which some of your carvings recall), had no structure which could be called a temple, but the statues &c were grouped on a terrace with no more than a retaining wall.

Third, I see that in Britannia IX, 436, the Neronian building is placed inside the fort (which seems likely enough) and I presume the Flavian building must ~~have~~ either have been a replacement of this or the first version of the mansio. In either case it seems a little rash to associate baths and mansio with the shrine as though it were a typical Gaulish-type sacred site. Surely it is more likely that the carved stones were simply taken as building material from the convenient quarry of a nearby Celtic shrine (i.e. not on precisely the same site) and the mansio and baths merely part of the official posting system? In any case, most, if not all, the Gaulish sacred sites lie off, not on, main roads.\*

I'm not sure whether you want me to comment on Anne's part too (she does seem to me to be stretching things a little at some points!), but I would like to see the photos of the inscribed stones (the others are adequately dealt with in Britannia IX). Have you yet referred them to Mark Hassall? Both CUINTI and BRUTI look suspiciously Roman to me, which would be odder still!

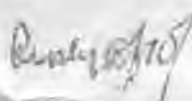
Do you want this copy back? I would like to read it again when the rush of the first week of term has died down.

Best wishes,

Yours,



\*So also Lydney and Gosbeck's and Wycomb, our nearest equivalents (to which I would be tempted to add Borough Hill, Daventry, if only someone would investigate it!)



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Best wishes,

Yours,

*Leo*

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Reply 18/10



# The University of Birmingham

DEPARTMENT OF EXTRAMURAL STUDIES

Reader in Archaeology:

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Telephone Harbury 612425 (STD Code 0926)

Director: A M Parker, MA

19 October, 1979

J.W. Whiston Esq.,  
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Dear John,

Thank you for sending me the interesting paper on Wall. The only points that I would make are that I feel the word 'temple' is a little too strong, since it implies a considerable building and I would think that on the present state of evidence, it might be better to use the word 'shrine' throughout.

Another point is on p. 1 where Anne Ross states that "there are many traces of Celtic religious activity at the important fort at Wroxeter" I presume she means by this the sequence of legionary fortresses, but I know of no religious evidence for this period - there are temples in the city and the one excavated by Bushe Fox may be connected with Celtic horse cult, but this is merely a suggestion. I feel this sentence therefore, should be amended as follows:- "some 12 miles to the west of Wall and 22 miles from the Roman city of Viroconium (Wroxeter), stands the low hill Penkridge". In fact I realise the last statement is wrong to, since Penkridge is a village on the Stafford Road north of Gailey cross-roads!

What she <sup>writes</sup> says about Pennocrucium is also suspect, what Rivet actually says (BRIT 1 (1976), 77) is "Meaning perhaps 'The Place of the Chief Mound' or 'by the Hilly Mound'".

In her first paragraph she indicates that ~~this~~ Wall could have been the chief sanctuary of the Cornovii and this I find very difficult to believe, since it is on the extreme eastern boundary of their territory and I think it is far more likely that it would in fact have been a territorial shrine, probably on an earlier trackway to warn people not to proceed further.

On her p. 5 she suggests that the word 'CUINTI' could be interpreted as the Celtic name of the God, but I think it is more likely to be 'QUINTI' and be a Roman centurial stone. It might be advisable to check this with Mark Hassall, who will be publishing it in Britannia.

In the meantime, I will keep the xerox copy of the paper unless you particularly want it returned.

All the best,

Yours

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20th October, 1979

Dear John,

Many thanks for your further letter and the photographs of the inscribed stones (which I return herewith). I had drafted a reply last night but not completed it, which is just as well since this morning came a further letter, with enclosures, from Jim Gould. I am taking the liberty of sending him a carbon of this one (sorry, but we are rather burdened at present, owing to the decline of serious education in schools!)

I think the first thing to do is to stress again the point I made in my last letter -- the inscriptions must go to Mark Hassall before you publish anything. As you probably know, he is now responsible for the southern half of Britain for RIB II and Addenda to RIB I, and he may well have useful analogies. In the meantime, they still look Roman to me; both the names (CVINTVS for QVINTVS would not be surprising) and the fact that they are inscriptions (if they were pre-Roman they would surely be the first examples, apart from coins, from Britain) suggest this. Beyond this, there is the way in which they inscribed, one with thin lines and the other with a punch. Both of these techniques occur, though the former is more common, the latter rare or absent in Britain (looking rapidly through RIB, the only example of a punch being used on stone (as opposed to metal) seems to be the starred RIB 2383, which Collingwood condemned as spurious partly on the grounds ~~that~~ of "the inherent unlikelihood of the continued survival of the name Junius Brutus, the tyrannicide"! I wonder if he was right?) But these crude techniques are not really appropriate to dedications and ~~I~~ since the stones were found re-used I can't help wondering whether the inscriptions (and perhaps a good deal else) are the work of quarrymen, whether they were quarrying their stone from natural rock or a disused building. Some analogies for this sort of thing are provided by the Hadrian's Wall quarries -- RIB 998-1015 and 1946-1952 (and RIB 1000 actually has drawings of human figures).

So I'm afraid that, to me at least, the evidence for a Celtic temple (or even shrine) is not wholly 'convincing', as it seems to be to Anne (her line 1) and I think any discussion should take account of other possibilities, even if they are to be rejected. But, foolishly, I did not ask you for all the photos, and her No.1 (two horned heads facing each other, which I have not seen) might tip the balance; the head shown in Britannia IX, Pl. XXVC, doesn't look especially horned as reproduced. Pl. XXVB is indeed specifically Celtic, but then so were most of the auxiliaries, and Pl. XXVA could well be auxiliaries (and I like the Britannia suggestion that the two on the left are in bed -- a typically military motif!). The phallus could belong to any culture.

So far as the place-names are concerned Letocetum means Grey Wood and I don't see why that should not be simply descriptive, but Pennocrucium is a puzzle. You must know it better than I, but it has never struck me that it "commands an impressive view of the surrounding

country~~s~~ide". Indeed the fact that it is not in any sense a mound has troubled successively Stenton, Margaret Gelling, Graham Webster and Colin Smith and me (we cite all their suggestions and conclude: "These views seem to cover all the diverse possibilities"!) This, of course, assumes that the RB site is primary and later Penkridge secondary, which I'm sure is right (Anne seems just to slide over this)

I had not known that there was dispute over the dating of the mansio, nor that there was any real doubt whether it was a mansio, but, as you will see, Jim and I are very largely in accord in other matters. I, too, believe Wall to be Cornovian, but if you are going to have a shrine it seems to me much more likely that it was a border shrine with the Coritani than "the chief sanctuary" of the tribe. And I, too, am surprised to learn that Staffordshire ~~is~~ "abounds" with evidence for pre-Roman religious activity (though of course there must have been lots of rocks and stones and trees!) I do not doubt Anne's iconography as such, but she does seem to take a lot for granted (incidentally, I would be grateful if you did not send her an unexpurgated copy of this letter: I want to preserve some relations with the Feachems!)

All in all, I think there is a lot to be sorted out before this paper is published -- if nothing else, a much greater use of the subjunctive. I will try to include xeroxes of our entries on Letocetum and Pennocrucium, though I don't think they will be much help. The book is now due to be published on November 26th -- at the appalling price of £45 (or £29.50 to members of the Ancient History Book Club: I don't know what has happened to the Net Book Agreement -- when we were booksellers an interval of two years after publication was imposed). Do try to see that your local library has it -- no one else (at least in this country) will be able to afford it!

Best wishes,

Yours,



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Copy to: J.T.Gould Esq., F.S.A.,  
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Walsall,  
West Midlands WS9 0SB

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25th October, 1979

Dear John,

Many thanks for letting me see these, and also for the copy of Graham's letter. I am most interested to note that he and I made a number of identical points (and there was no connivance -- I didn't even know that you had consulted him: do let him have copies of my letters).

I fully agree that some of the stones look thoroughly Celtic, but some of them also seem to have been dressed (more likely by Romans than by barbarians, I would think) and I think it needs to be stated in each case which were and which were not. It certainly looks as though a native shrine (not, surely, 'temple') had been looted, but I stand by the belief that the inscriptions (and possibly the outline figures) were added by Romans using it as a sort of quarry. The main question to be settled, especially in the light of Jim's comments, is when all this took place.

In any case, it seems to me that all of you need to sit down and thrash this out before anything appears in print -- if possible reaching a consensus on all the points that have been raised and then referring her part back to Anne. I'm afraid this term is proving too demanding for me to say anything more for the present!

Best wishes,

Yours,



P.S. It looks from the envelope as if you too had had a copy of that marvellous Sotheby catalogue. If only all the junk that comes through the post from publishers were like that I wouldn't mind the expenditure of paper. Of course one can't buy anything, but we are keeping the catalogue with our art books!



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Dear John,

You asked if I had any thoughts about dealing with the Wall Temple papers. The following is the best I can suggest though you may have better ideas yourself.

Bert's paper. You have already sent him my comments. I still feel he should be asked to include a small map and plan (perhaps on one drawing) and include Grid Ref. as well as saying something about the type of stone used. With regard to the robber trench and dating, if he ignores the comments I made then I think he may be in trouble when the knives are out as I think they may well be about dates I am surprised Graham did not pick it up. Anyway so long as he has had the opportunity to modify the paper, that is all I think you can do. It is for him to accept or reject the remarks made.

With regard to Anne Ross, since I do not know her personally I do not know how she takes criticism and I fear she may take offence unless handled very diplomatically. I would feel inclined to write to her stating that there is some local knowledge about which she might not be aware. Then gently tell her that there is indeed a ~~tumulus~~ probable tumulus at SJ903118 at Pennocrucium, some 1200 yards north of the Watling Street that it is on a steeply rising shoulder of land overlooking the Fenk. The tumulus is marked on the O.S. maps. The shoulder does not look impressive on the maps but it is when viewed from the east and even more so when standing on the shoulder and facing the Fenk. It is known locally as Rowley Hill. The tumulus has been virtually ploughed out but slight traces of a ditch remain in temporary pasture. I would then add that this appears to be just the type of site she is looking for. That an enamelled ~~amethyst~~ bronze pinhead(?) has been recently found at Pennocrucium depicting a Celtic head with wide open mouth as on stone no ? . (have not a copy of her article and so do not know the stone number. You can have a slide of the pinhead to send to her if you wish) I would also add that she might like to see Prof. Rivet's comments on the name and include copies of the sheet that Leo sent us.

With regard to Letocetum I would tell her that there are other articles that have been found and begin with the model vase that Linney found. I would add that significantly it was found at SK 108063, close to the Watling St - Rykniel St crossing and also near the peat bog referred to in our Trans vol. 6 (Those details should get her), I would then also list the other articles mentioned in my first letter. I would then add that you have been told that Mark Hassall is commenting on the inscriptions in forthcoming Britannia and if known tell her what he says. following it with the fact that some people take the inscriptions as indicating a Romano-British rather than a native British shrine. As this does not appear to be her opinion I would go on to ask if she wishes to include a rebuttal of the Romano-British idea in her paper. This all I fear will take time but I do not know what else to suggest

P.S. Thanks for Graham's comments.

