

THE WRAXALL VILLA

BY C. M. SYKES and G. A. BROWN

The Wraxall Villa was discovered in June, 1950, by members of the Clevedon and District Archaeological Society, whose attention had been directed to the site by Mr. S. L. Whittle. Excavation was carried out during the summer months from that date until 1953.

Thanks are due to the owners of the Birdcombe Court Estate for their permission to excavate; to those who visited the site from time to time and made helpful suggestions; to Mr. G. C. Boon for his sustained interest and for reporting on the coins; to Mr. Philip Rahtz for the pottery report; to Mr. E. J. Mason for his assistance in survey work, and to Dr. Norman Davey of the Building Research Station, Watford, for the mortar analysis; and, of course, to all volunteer workers.

THE VILLA

SITUATION. The Wraxall Villa stood at 63 feet O.D. on the crest of a slope rising from the South bank of the river Land Yeo (N.G.R. 31/479716). This choice of site is puzzling. Had the Villa been built on the opposite slope of the valley, it would have had a southerly aspect and protection from northerly winds. Moreover, the orientation of the house itself is strange; for, had it been built at right-angles to its actual position, more advantage could have been taken of level ground. (A series of test-holes sunk in the level area east of the Villa revealed no trace of any extension or out-buildings in that direction).

MEDIEVAL OCCUPATION. The wall crossing the Courtyard was constructed of material from the ruins of the Villa; it had neither mortar nor foundation. North of this wall, medieval potsherds predominated. A series of vaguely defined terraces lower down the slope yielded only medieval ware, but no trace of a house of this period was found. The abundance of 14th century pottery is, however, proof of more than temporary occupation.

STONE REMOVAL had, on the whole, been very thorough and, in parts of the bath suite, carried down to a depth of several feet. In contrast, several courses of the wall between Rooms 4 and 5 had survived and were almost visible through the turf. In those places where the walls had rested on the solid rock and not on inserted foundations all trace had vanished. In the Courtyard, Pennant flagstones

less than a foot below the present grass level had been removed, except where they were so badly cracked as to be useless.

A low, grass-covered mound runs along the inside of the hedge on the South side of the field. This is not an enclosure of either Roman or medieval times, but consists of material dumped there during a comparatively recent attempt to clear the ground for ploughing.

PLAN. As far as the walls or foundations could be traced, they resulted in a plan which looks unbalanced and incomplete.

The wall running North from Room 8 could not be traced for any distance, because undisturbed natural rock was encountered only ten inches below turf-level.

In an attempt to find a possible extension northwards, a trench 26 feet long was taken across the "terrace" North of the Courtyard. Nothing was found except levelling material, consisting of large stones and sandy soil. On the other hand, the complete absence of the sherds which were found elsewhere outside the house was, of itself, an indication that the building had probably extended in this direction.

The addition of a room, or rooms, at this end would, in fact, result in a plan not unlike that of the Kingsweston Villa,¹ though considerably smaller. The central area (22½ by 63 ft.) is, however, slightly larger than that at Kingsweston (21 by 56 ft.), and may, therefore, have been a courtyard. Mr. Raleigh Radford, however, suggests that it was a roofed central hall with a flagged floor.

The very fine bath suite on the South side of the Courtyard indicates a high standard of living or, at least, a determination by the owners to spare no expense. In contrast, the rooms in the rest of the building are smaller than might be expected and there were no heated living rooms.

DATING. The rather scanty coin evidence and the almost invariable late 3rd or 4th century dating of the pottery make it unlikely that the building was occupied before 250 A.D. A few Antonine Samian sherds were found in disturbed soil; some of them were mortar-covered and came, most probably, from the core of the primary wall near which they were found. A coin of Marcus

¹ *Trans. Bristol & Glos. A.S.* (1950) LXIX.

Aurelius (1), the only one of earlier date, shows considerable signs of wear.

Of the other twenty-five Roman coins found on the site, eleven belong to the Constantinian period, but only two of these were struck after 330 A.D. There are no coins of the years 337 to 348, so common on other sites. Only one coin, the FEL TEMP REPARATIO imitation (25), dates from after 348 A.D.

It seems probable, then, that the occupation of the villa was declining in intensity before the death of Constantine I. No late 4th century pottery was found, nor was there any trace of the casual or "squatters" occupation usually found on abandoned villas.

No satisfactory reason can be advanced for this exceptionally early abandonment. As on several other sites in this area, a number of stones covered with a green glaze were found. In Appendix G of the Kingsweston report, Dr. Stanley Smith says: "This potash glaze is clearly the result of conflagration and points to the destruction of the villa by fire". At Wraxall, however, the glaze does not occur on collapsed walling, but on small stones found in no great quantity all over the site. There was no other evidence whatsoever of destruction by fire.

CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS. The three long walls running North-South were bonded into the cross-wall which flanks the bath suite. The shorter dividing walls separating Rooms 2 to 6 were not bonded in; the wall between Rooms 3 and 4 appeared to be a later addition.

All the walls were built of dolomitic conglomerate, their average thickness being 21 inches. Where the lowest course had survived, the long walls were 33 to 36 inches thick, this thickness being reduced to 21 inches by a single or double offset. In places, they rested directly on solid rock. Elsewhere, they lay on an inserted foundation, usually not more than 12 inches deep, consisting of weathered fragments of carboniferous limestone.

The roof tiles, as on most sites in this area, were of Pennant sandstone. They measured roughly 10 by 16 inches, varying in thickness from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The majority were pointed at both ends; a few had one end squared. All had a single nail hole placed, as shown by the direction in which the surviving nails had been driven, near the higher angle on the right-hand side. Pennant was

also used for the cheeks of the stokehole, presumably because it was more resistant to heat than either the limestone or the dolomite.

All the materials mentioned above came from the immediate neighbourhood. Fragments of dressed Bath stone were found, including a ridge-stone and part of a finial.

A small amount of tufa was found in Room 11. Preservation of this material, used in many buildings for the construction of half-domed ceilings, varies with local conditions; little was found at Kingsweston, considerably more at Pagan's Hill². Its provenance is not known.

LIVING ROOMS. Most of the living-quarters had been badly disturbed.

In Room 6, the levelling material — soil and chippings of coal-measure sandstone — was covered with a layer of whitish cement that may have supported a tessellated floor, of which, however, no trace remained.

Only Room 5 had been left undisturbed since the building was abandoned. Occupational debris here lay directly upon the levelling material; it contained no precise dating evidence. Above this were fallen roof-tiles, overlaid by collapsed walling, the upper levels of which contained fragments of medieval ware. There was no trace of wall plaster.

ROOM 9 is shown in section in Pl. V. Although mortar analysis consigns its southern wall to Period 2, the Plan suggests that it was part of the primary building. The wall may, in fact, have been rebuilt in Period 2.

There is a gap in the outside drain (Period 3) where it crosses the abandoned apse of this room. This gap results from the fact that stone-removal here was carried down to a depth of over 3 feet, thus, unfortunately, adding to the difficulties of interpretation. At this depth, only the lowest course of the wall of the apse remained.

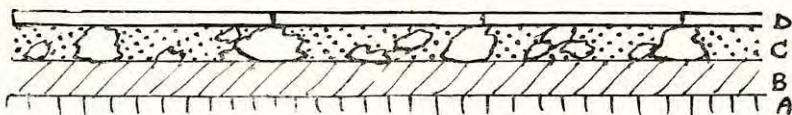
The "floor" of the apse consisted of flat stones radiating from the centre, pitched at an angle and overlapping each other; they rested on the natural clay. This floor may have been intended to support a considerable weight, possibly a water tank.

² *Proc. S.A.S.* XCVI (1952).

Inside the room, some 4 feet of filling, consisting of large stones and sandy soil, lay above the natural clay; it contained no precise dating evidence. It is possible that an intention to insert a hypocaust in this room may have been abandoned during the process of building, perhaps because of flooding — a point for discussion later in this report.

Traces of a layer of mortar were found above the filling of stones and soil and mark an earlier floor level, perhaps tessellated. Above this lay another 9 inches of smaller stones and soil, bringing the floor to its final level. At this level, on the North side of the room, was part of the base of what appeared to be a revetment set against the primary wall, of which only the foundations remained. By the side of this revetment, for a distance of 4 feet, lay a single line of unusually large white tesserae.

THE COURTYARD. Except in a few places where broken flagstones had been left in position only 10 inches beneath the present surface, the whole of this area appeared to have been turned over repeatedly in medieval and in more recent times. In a small patch outside Room 5, however, stratification had been preserved, as shown below:



- A. Levelled surface.
- B. 2-3 inches of mortar, probably the base of an earlier floor.
- C. 2-3 inches of mortar, soil and stones placed to support D.
- D. Flagged floor.

In layer C was found a House of Constantine coin (19), suggesting that the flagging was laid down, or perhaps merely repaired at this point, after *c.* 335, and probably at a date later than the final reconstruction of the bath suite. The position in which it was found rules out the possibility of its having slipped down between the flagstones.

A quarter of a medieval silver penny (26) — that is, a farthing or “four-thing” — was found in disturbed soil resting on D.

THE BATH SUITE AND WELL

STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS. The three Periods shown on the plan represent building alterations. Dating evidence, though scanty, makes it clear that they were all carried out in not much more than fifty years.

PERIOD 1. The stokehole, Rooms 10 (later altered), 11 and 12 belong to this period. The fact that the walls of these rooms, just above the floor-level, are not bonded into those of the main building, does not rule out the probability that they were almost contemporary. Obviously, the construction of the main building came first. Then a rectangular pit was excavated on the South side and the walls of the bath rooms were built up against the existing wall. Below floor level, a stone revetment was laid against the foundations of the main wall; in places this foundation material obtrudes through the upper courses of the revetment. (See Pl. V).

In this period, the walls of Room 10, which may have been a water tank, were lined below floor level with white stucco. The floor, like those of the hypocaust chambers, consisted of a packing of stones and soil containing powdered mortar.

Extending South from Room 10 were traces, at low level, of walls that had been stripped to their foundations during the occupation. This abandoned room may have been heated, although no trace of a hypocaust system remained. The floor was similar to those of Rooms 10, 11 and 12.

PERIOD 2 saw the rebuilding of the South wall of Room 9, together with the addition of a buttress outside Room 12, of the wall surrounding the furnace-room (Room 1) and of the cheeks of the stokehole.

In PERIOD 3, Room 10 was filled in to floor level, and a cross-wall was inserted between this room and the newly-constructed apse. The abandoned room South of Room 10 may have been stripped and filled in at this time. The open ditch and drain outside the building belonged to this period.

In this final reconstruction, a cross-wall was inserted in the hypocaust, Room 12, probably to give added support to the floor and not to support a metal hot-water tank. Such tanks were usually placed immediately above the inlet of hot air through the stokehole, and the room has a recess which could be used for that purpose.

(a)



ROOM 10. PART OF *Opus Signinum* FLOOR REMOVED, REVEALING LOWER COURSES OF EARLIER WALL.

(b)



ROOM 10. (A) LEAD WASTE-PIPE.
(B) STUCCO LINING BELOW FLOOR LEVEL.

PLATE III (a)



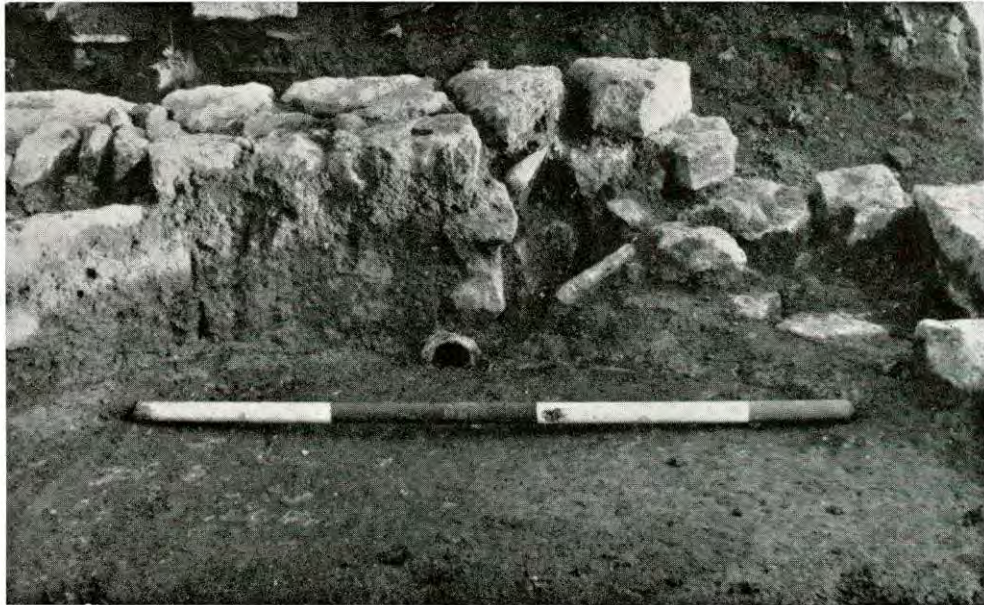
ROOM 11. TEPIDARIUM.

(b)



ROOM 12. CALDARIUM.

PLATE IV



APSE OF COLD BATH.

ROOM 10. The rectangular part of this room had been filled in with builder's rubble — fragments of wall plaster, broken box tiles, tesserae and mortar. This filling was covered with ten inches of clay, bringing the floor level to approximately that of the other rooms. The clay was presumably covered with some kind of flooring, probably Pennant flagstones, which have since been removed.

The apse, used as a cold bath, had a floor of red *opus signinum*, edged with a quarter-round moulding. The walls had a similar covering. A cylindrical lead pipe, 2¼ inches in diameter and flanged at the end inside the room, carried waste water through the wall to the drain outside.

ROOM 11. The blue-and-white mosaic floor of this room had been reduced to rubble, perhaps because its cement base may have rested on Pennant flagstones which, as elsewhere in the building, had been removed during or after the 14th century. The tesserae were of blue Pennant and white lias, both materials of comparatively local provenance.

The bricks of which the pilae were constructed were 8¼ inches square. One fragment of a large brick, 16 inches square, was found. A small amount of tufa was found in this room.

The most interesting discovery was that the box-tiles which lined the walls had been stripped off and thrown into the ditch outside, where they lay beneath the fallen roof-tiles and the collapsed walling. They had been ripped off deliberately, possibly when the building was abandoned, certainly before it began to collapse. They were clearly of less value than the iron holdfasts which kept them in position; only one of these was found.

Fragments of painted wall plaster found in this room were white with green marbling, with the exception of those which came from the base of the wall, where there was a red band.

ROOM 12. No trace of any floor was found here, and it is presumed that it was paved with Pennant flagstones. Except in the apse, the pilae had been stripped almost to their base, probably in medieval or later times; they consisted of squares of Pennant sandstone.

The floor between the pilae in this and in Room 11 was covered with an accumulation of fine wood ash to a depth of 10 inches. (No use was made of coal, which outcrops a short distance away).

THE STOKEHOLE. Only the lower courses of this remained, the walls consisting almost entirely of heat-reddened Pennant stone. The floor, too, was of this material. At one end, a discarded roof-tile had been brought into use. At the other, the flagstones extended as far as the first pair of pilae in Room 12.

Beneath the flagstones was a 4-inch. deep channel of the kind usually described as inlets for fresh air or as drains. This channel did not, however, extend across Room 12, nor could any evidence be found that it had ever done so. There was no extension in the opposite direction, but in the outer wall of the furnace-room there was a vent at floor-level directly in the line with the stokehole. As we shall see, the whole of the southern end of the villa was affected by periodic flooding, and there may well have been a tendency, in wet weather, for water to seep up through the floors of the hypocaust chambers. It is probable, therefore, that the channel beneath the stokehole was nothing more complicated than a drain. At the close of the occupation it was choked with wood ash.

The frequent occurrence of similar channels in bath-suites is discussed on p. 32 of the Kingsweston Report.³

FURNACE-ROOM. This calls for no special comment. The floor consisted chiefly of packed earth, with stone slabs set here and there, apparently at random. On the floor and in the open ditch outside was a much greater accumulation of wood ash than would have been allowed under a strict owner. This carelessness may date from the close of the occupation.

THE DRAIN, which runs round Rooms 8 and 9 and the bath-suite, was an uncovered stone channel, 6 inches deep, at the bottom of an open ditch. It was built of Pennant slabs set in the form of a letter H, the sides being 12 inches apart. It was designed not only to carry off water from the cold bath and rain water from the eaves, but also to deal with the periodic overflow from the well.⁴ In the clay which had been packed against the drain outside Room 10, a coin of Allectus (7), in slightly worn condition, was found. As the drain belongs to Period 3, this suggests that the final reconstruction took place about, or not long after, 300 A.D.

³ *Tr. B. & G. A. S.* LXIX.

⁴ cf. Similar drain at Whittington Court Villa, Gloucs. *Tr. B. & G. A. S.* LXXI, p. 42.

A few very small fragments of window-glass were found below the collapsed material in the drain. This suggests that the glass was removed with some care at the same time that the hypocaust tiles were stripped from Room 11.

THE WELL. Discoloration of the replaced clay, which contained an admixture of wood-ash, showed that the construction shaft near the surface was 18 feet wide. In this shaft had been set a stone-lined well barely 2 feet in diameter.

Clearing this narrow well was both difficult and hazardous, and every attempt had to be preceded by pumping and bailing. It was not possible, in the time allowed by the owners of the land, to reach a depth of more than 20 feet, and the bottom was not found.

The filling consisted entirely of fragments and blocks of undressed stone—not, as on many sites, of material from an abandoned building. Moreover, the mouth of the well was covered by a layer of ashes and household rubbish, proving that it had been filled during the occupation. Precise dating evidence was lacking.

The surface of the replaced clay around the well would have afforded a very uncertain foothold to drawers of water. Not surprisingly, it had been covered with a 12-inch layer of large stones. On and between these stones was a considerable amount of wood-ash, animal bones and broken pottery. Many of the coins found here were imitation radiates. At the base of the stones, and resting directly on the replaced clay, was an almost illegible coin of Victorinus (5).

FLOODING. The ridge on which the villa was built consists of clay overlying the coal-measure sandstones, which tend to outcrop on the northern edge, overlooking the valley of the river Land Yeo.

The primary building was erected on solid rock, but clay was encountered in Room 9, where, as we have said, an intention to insert a hypocaust seems to have been abandoned. The whole of the bath-suite, too, is set in this material.

In rainy weather, pits sunk into the clay soon fill with water. To make matters worse, the sinking of the well seems to have tapped an intermittent spring, which even in recent times — as proved by the insertion of a modern land-drain — has been a source of trouble.

Periodic flooding may have been the cause of the abandonment of the room South of Room 10. In the end, a determined attempt

to solve the problem was made by plugging the well and by flanking the reconstructed bath-suite with an open ditch that carried the flood water away to a natural gully to the West of the building, and perhaps by raising the level of the Courtyard. A certain amount of water may still have seeped into the hypocausts, and have found its way out through the drain beneath the floor of the stokehole.

APPENDIX A

THE COINS

BY GEORGE C. BOON, B.A., F.S.A.

REFERENCES: RIC—Mattingly, Sydenham and others, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*.

M—Maurice, *Numismatique constantinienne*, classified under mint, issue, reverse, and obverse.

ABBREVIATIONS: These follow my list in these *Proceedings*, 96, 127.

M. AURELIUS, A.D. 161 - 180

1. M ANTONINVS AVG TR P XXVII. HIR.
IMP VI COS III RELIG AVG (in ex.) S C. Domed Temple with four columns. Between the middle pair, a statue of Mercury stg.
Mint of Rome, A.D. 172 - 3. Sestertius. Var. of RIC 1074; *Brit. Mus. Cat.* 1441 type. Not a common reverse. Very much worn. *Disturbed levels; courtyard near Room 4.*

GALLIENUS, SOLE REIGN A.D. 260 - 268

2. GALLIENVS AVG. BrcR.
LIBER [AL] AVG. Liberalitis stg.L.,hdg. tessera and cornucopiae.
Mint: s| Rome. RIC 227. Worn. *Disturbed levels; courtyard near Room 4.*

CLAUDIUS II GOTHICUS, A.D. 268 - 70

3. IMP C [CLAVDIVS AVG. BrdR.
VIRT] VS AVG. Soldier stg. L., hdg. branch and spear, shield at foot.
Mint: | (Rome). RIC 109. Much worn. *Filling by drain outside Room 10.*

VICTORINUS, A.D. 268 - 70

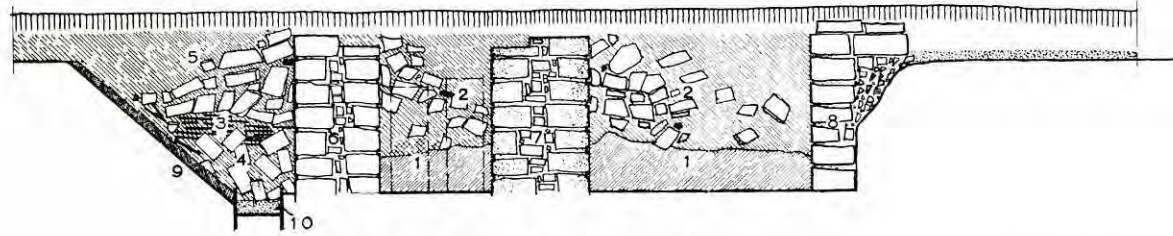
4. IMP C VICTORINVS P F AVG. BrdcR.
INVICTVS]. Sol striding L., looking R., etc.
Mint: | (Cologne). RIC 144. Much worn. *Unstratified outside Room 4.*

5. VICTORINUS. Illegible. *In replaced clay 6 feet E. of Well.*

TETRICUS I, A.D. 270 - 3

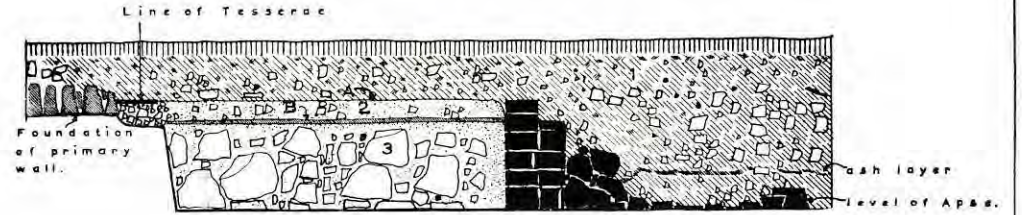
6. IMP TETRICVS P F AVG. BrcR.
HILARITAS AVGG. Hilaritas stg. L., hdg. palm, cornucopiae.
RIC 80. Worn. *Room 6, Unstratified.*

PLATE V



Section Thro' Room 12.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. ash, charcoal layer. | 5. fallen walling | 9. brown clay. |
| 2. earth and rubble. | 6. wall of bath. | 10. black silt. |
| 3. fallen roof tiles. | 7. inserted wall. | |
| 4. box tiles. | 8. revetment wall. | |



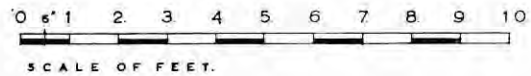
Section Thro' Room 9

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1. earth & rubble. | 'A'. level of final occupation. |
| 2. filling of stones, sandy soil. | 'B'. layer of mortar at earlier floor level. |
| 3. filling of blocks of limestone | |

WRAXALL ROMAN VILLA:

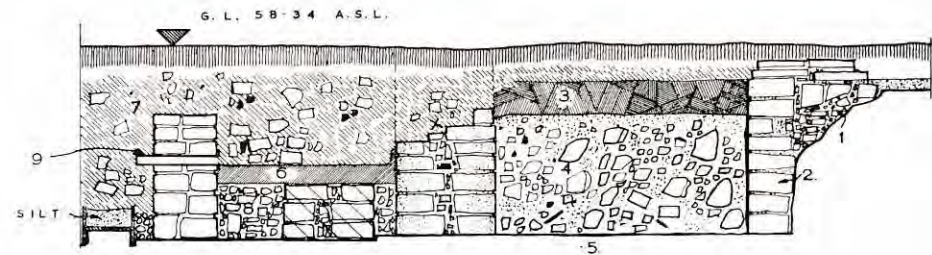
Sections.

G. B. - 1955.



1. footing of foundation of Primary wall.
2. Revetment, faced with stucco.
3. layer of clay.
4. filling of builders rubble.
5. packed stones, grit.
6. 'opus signinum' floor.
7. earth & rubble.
8. stone filling.
9. lead pipe.

Section Thro' Room 10.



ALLECTUS, A.D. 293 - 6

7. IMP C ALLECTVS P F AVG. BrCR.
VIRTVS AVG. Galley sailing L.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{QL}}$ London. RIC 55. Sl. worn — worn.
Filling by drain outside Room 10.

RADIATES

8. Illeg. *Well area.*
9. Imitation. *Rev.* [VIRTVS] AVGG, Soldier stg. L. Unusually heavy flan, not entirely barbarous. *In rubble in stokehole.*
10. Barbarous, 13-mm. *Well surround.*
11. Barbarous, 12-mm. 'Tetricus II'. *Well surround.*
12. Barbarous, 9-mm. *Well surround.*

SEVERUS II CAESAR, A.D. 305 - 6

13. FL VAL SEVERVS NOB CAES. BldcR.
GENIO POPVLI ROMANI. Genius with turretted crown L., with patera and cornucopiae.
Mint: $\frac{\text{s|F}}{\text{PTR}}$ Trier. M,1,V,5. Sl. worn. *Unstratified. Courtyard near Room 4.*

LICINIUS I, A.D. 307 - 24

14. IMP LICINIVS P F AVG. BldcR.
GENIO POP ROM. Genius as above.
Mint: $\frac{\text{s|F}}{\text{MSL}}$ London, A.D. 314-7. M,4,V,4. Sl. worn-worn. *Courtyard near Room 4.*

CONSTANTINE I, A.D. 306 - 337

15. CONSTANTINVS P F AVG. BldcR.
SOLI INVICTO COMITI. Sol. rad., stg., looking L., hdg. orb and raising R. hand.
Mint: $\frac{\text{T|F}}{\text{BTR}}$ Trier, A.D. 313-17. M,4,IV,2. Sl. worn-worn. *Unstratified. Courtyard near Room 4.*
16. CONSTANTINVS AVG. BldcR.
SOLI INVICTO. Sol. as above.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{I/TR}}$ Trier, A.D. 314-17. M,4,IX,1. Sl. worn but chipped. *Well surround.*
17. CONST]A-NTINVS AVG. Bh-cr, cR.
BEATA TRANQVILLITAS. Altar inscr. VOTIS XX in three lines surmounted by a globe and three stars.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{STR}}$ Trier, A.D. 320-4. M,6,V,5. Sl. worn-worn. *Floor level, Room 9.*

18. CONSTAN-TINVS AVG. HIR.
SARMATIA DEVICTA. Victory with palm walking R., captive seated at her feet, arms bound behind back, looking round up at V.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{PTR}}$ Trier, A.D. 320-4. M,6,XIII,1. Sl. worn. *Unstratified. Room 4.*
19. As above, but *Mint:* $\frac{|}{\text{PTR}^u}$ Worn. *Well surround.*
20. CONSTANTINOPOLIS. Bh-cr and 1., wearing imperial mantle, sceptre over L, shoulder, L. Winged Victory L. on prow, etc.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{AQ}^1/1}$ Aquileia, A.D. 335-7. M,8,I. Much worn. *Below flagging in courtyard near Room 5.*

CRISPUS CAESAR, A.D. 317 - 326

21. IVL CRISPVS NOB CAES. BlcL., with spear and shield.
BEATA TRANQVILLITAS, type as 16.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{PTR}^u}$ Trier, A.D. 320-4. M,6,V,24. Worn. *Outside Room 4.*

CONSTANTINE II CAESAR, A.D. 317 - 337

22. CONSTANTINVS IVN N C. Bh-cr,cL.
BEAT TRANQLITAS, type as 17.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{PLON}}$ London, A.D. 320-4. M,6,V,23. Worn. *Floor level. Room 4.*
23. Type as 21; probably Constantine II Caesar.
Mint: probably Lyons. Very much worn and rubbed. *Filling above early apse to E. of main Bath Suite.*
24. CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C. BlcR.
GLORIA EXERCITVS. Two soldiers facing, between them two standards, etc.
Mint: $\frac{|}{\text{PLG}}$ Lyons, A.D. 330-5. M,8/9, III, 2. Worn. *Unstratified. Room 5.*

4TH CENTURY IMITATION

25. FEL TEMP REPARATIO, legionary and horseman, type.
14-mm. Sl. worn? rubbed. *Unstratified.*

MEDIEVAL — HENRY III, 1216 - 72

26. Quarter of a penny, or farthing, Irish type.
RICARD ON D] IVE (Dublin mint). Sl. worn. *Above flagging. In courtyard near Room 5.*

Note: This list was written before the appearance of Carson, Hill and Kent, *Late Roman Bronze Coinage* (1960) and Kent, "The Pattern of Bronze Coinage under Constantine I", *Num. Chron.* 1958. For the purposes of this report, however, any slight redatings of Constantinian pieces are not of archaeological significance.

APPENDIX B

THE POTTERY

BY P. A. RAHTZ

CONCLUSIONS: Most of the pottery from Wraxall falls readily into a local late 3rd—mid 4th century context, as would be suggested by the coin evidence. The occurrence of a few earlier pieces, such as the pie dish (No. 2 below) and the mortarium (No. 6), together with several pieces of Samian suggests an occupation of the site in the 2nd century A.D. Since the building itself shows little evidence of so long a life, it must be assumed that the earlier pottery is derived from occupation nearby.

The sherds I have examined are described below.

REFERENCES: CVL. RP.: Chew Valley Lake Roman pottery series, publication by Stationery Office forthcoming; fabric references are to the series from these sites.

Pagans Hill. Second report in *Proc. S.A.S.* Vol. 101/2.

Downton Roman villa. Publication in *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, forthcoming.

1. Sherds of Samian 18/31.
2. Rim sherd of *pie-dish*, fabric T, CVL. RP 164/167 (probably 1st half of 2nd cent. A.D.).
3. Rim sherd possibly of a *carinated jar* such as CVL. RP 11 - 12 (late 1st - 2nd cent.), but similar form does occur in late levels; cf. CVL. RP 13 (2nd - 3rd cent. in grey); present sherd is in soft fine red with brown colour-coat.
4. Rim sherd of *everted rim jar* in soft red-brown fabric, slightly sandy with grey core, possibly similar to CVL. RP 112 and 115 (late 3rd - 4th cent.).
5. Complete section of *mortarium*, hard cream; similar to CVL. RP 139 (late 3rd - 4th cent.).
6. Rim sherd *mortarium*; soft red-brown ware; similar in form and fabric to CVL. RP 129 (2nd cent.); stamp similar to Caerleon, Prysge Field, 1927-29, p. 78, No. 31 (2nd cent.+).
7. Complete section *oval fish dish*; black sandy, cf. CVL. RP 346 and 184 (late 3rd - 4th cent. and common on late local sites).
8. Complete section *mug*; light grey sandy, similar to Pagan's Hill No. 2 (from well, prob. late 3rd cent.), though this had a black surface; similar fabric to the larger Pagan's Hill mug (No. 102).
9. Small *everted rim jar*; light grey sandy, near to Pagan's Hill No. 3 (from well, prob. late 3rd cent.).
10. Body and base sherds of *beaker*; hard buff-orange, with grey-blue core; brown slip on exterior; decoration in scale and roulette. (New Forest fabric, information from the late Miss M. Collinson; the scale decoration is unusual in New Forest fabric in the Downton villa site, which drew its pottery almost exclusively from that source; should be later than A.D. 330 on present dating, see *Ant. Journ.* Vol. XVIII No. 2, pp. 113 ff.).
11. Rim sherd *cavetto-rim jar* as CVL. RP 336 (late 3rd - 4th cent.).
12. Rather similar, but smaller.

13. Rim and side sherd *pie-dish* in fabric D with reddish core, similar to CVL. RP 180 (3rd - 4th cent.).
14. Rim sherd *pie-dish*, fabric D, near CVL. RP (prob. late).
15. Rim sherd *wide-mouthed bowl*, fabric C, near CVL. RP 351, but thinner rim (late 3rd - mid. 4th cent.).
16. Rim sherd of another, similar in fabric E dark-surfaced.
17. Rim sherd of another, similar in fabric G near CVL. RP 115 (late 3rd - 4th cent.).
18. Rim sherd *beaker*, hard reddish ware, grey core, brown surfaces, with band of rouletting (not New Forest).

APPENDIX C

SMALL OBJECTS IN METAL ETC.

1. Small bronze key with hollow shaft and loop handle. A common type. cf. *Richborough* III, 82, pl. xiii, 41.
2. Bow and incomplete catch plate of bronze brooch; the flat tapering bow is decorated with engraved lines. Collingwood group M (R. G. Collingwood, *The Archaeology of Roman Britain*, fig. 61). Dated examples of the type belong to the late first and early second century.
3. Pierced ornamental setting of bronze for attachment to leather.
4. Glass melon bead. A common type.
5. Bronze pins with ornamental heads.
6. Faceted jet bead with double hole.
7. Part of turned shale armband.

APPENDIX D

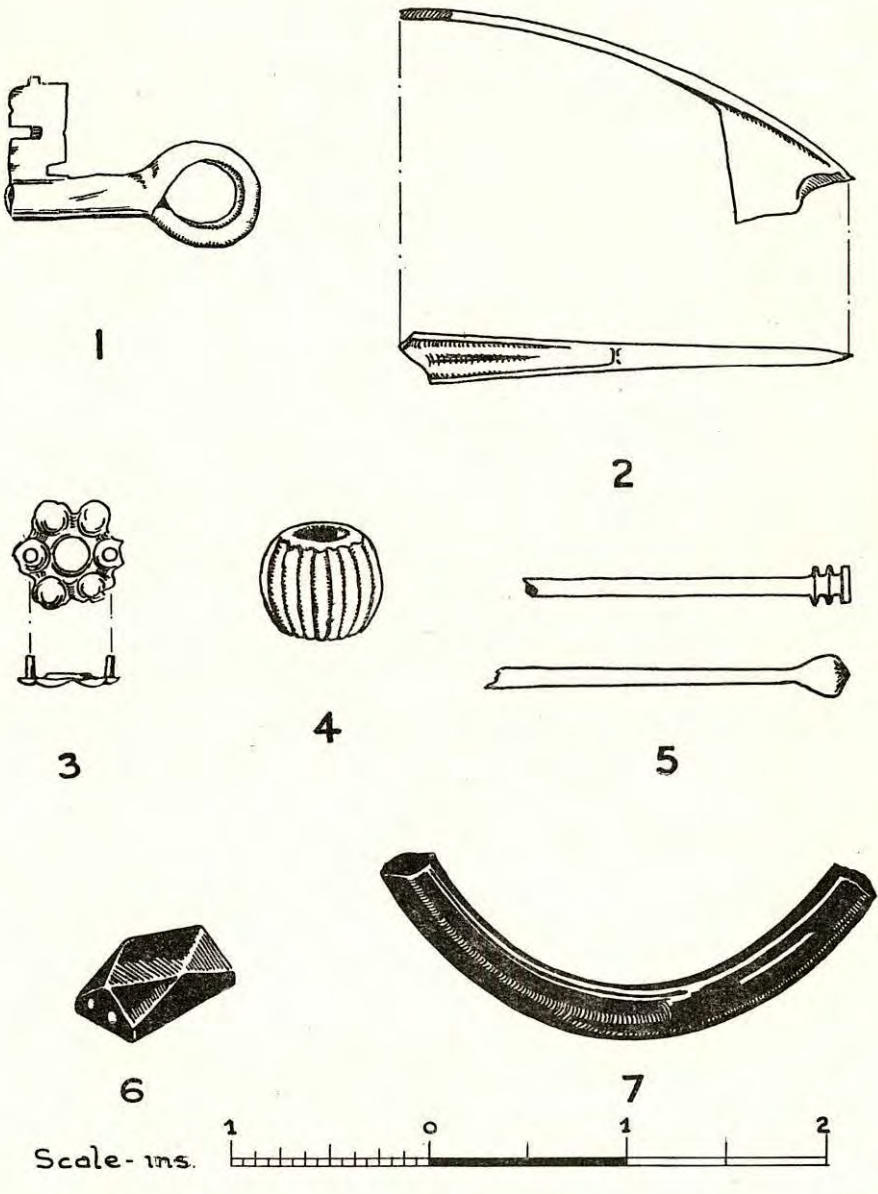
SHELLS AND ANIMAL REMAINS

SHELLS. Both cockle and oyster shells were found, but only the latter could be definitely assigned to the Roman period.

ANIMAL REMAINS. Here, again, only those bones and teeth found in definite contexts could be said to be contemporary with the occupation. The animals thus represented were horse, ox, pig, sheep or goat, and red deer. Two pieces of deer-antler showed signs of wear at the pointed end. One short, thick fragment was perforated probably for suspension; it could not be identified as an implement.

Part of the atlas bone of a Biscayan Right Whale, identified by Mr. R. C. Frazer of the British Museum (Natural History), was found, at a depth of one foot, among the stones surrounding the well. As similar finds have, in the past, been made at Caerwent, it seems reasonable to assign this to the Roman period. The battered condition of one surface is suggestive of use as a chopping-block.

The Biscayan Right Whale was common in Atlantic waters until it was hunted almost out of existence in fairly recent times. This bone probably came from an animal stranded on the coast.



W.S.

FIG. 1. WRAXALL ROMAN VILLA. SMALL FINDS. (APPENDIX C)