ANCIENT CHINESE GOLD

ON THE TRAIL OF THE RISLEY PARK ROMAN SILVER PLATE

FIVE THOUSAND YEARS OF GLASS

ANCIENT JEWELLERY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

NUBIA IN OXFORD

VIKING NEWSLETTER

THE GOLD OF THE HELVETII

THE HARER COLLECTION OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES

Detail of a Chinese gold and silver chariot fitting of the Western Han period, late 2nd-early 1st century BC.
Roman bronze Zeus (Jupiter), nude wearing radiating wreath, chlamys over left shoulder, holding thunderbolt in right hand.
Circa 1st-2nd Century A.D.
Ht 3 1/8 in (8cm). Fine style and patina £4,000

Etruscan bronze balsamarium: head of a goddess with melon coiffure bound in a fillet tied in Herakles knot over forehead, bound behind in chignon. Circa 3rd Century B.C.
Ht 3 7/8 in (9.8cm) £3,500

Egyptian New Kingdom sandstone male head. Wig partially restored.
Early XIXth Dynasty (Circa 1320-1300 B.C.)
Ht 3 5/8 in (9.2cm) £5,000

Apulian red-figure pelike by the Tarporley Painter. Female head left, hair in saccos, hand before her; ladder in field / Female running. South Italy. Circa 400-380 B.C.
Ht 7 3/4 in (19.7cm) £3,500
Ancient Chinese Gold
Exquisite objects from recent finds
Patricia Jellicoe

In Pursuit of Bogius
On the trail of the Risley Park Roman plate
David Keys

Viking Newsletter
New insights into Denmark's past
Christopher Follett

Ancient Jewellery & Archaeology
Conference report from Indiana
Jerry Theodorou

Nubia in Oxford
The Ashmolean Museum's unique collection
Robert Morkot

Gold of the Helvetii
Switzerland's Celtic heritage
Catherine Milner

The Harer Collection of Egyptian Antiquities

Glass in the Making
Five thousand years of glass
Kenneth Painter

NEXT ISSUE
- Etruria and Umbria
- Winter antiquities sales
- Music of the Maya
- Southeast Asian sculpture
The last restrictions on scholars’ access to the Dead Sea Scrolls have finally been removed. Emanuel Tov, the scholar who heads the official team overseeing their publication, has announced that the Israel Antiquities Authority, which controls the scrolls, has dropped a rule that those wishing to use the scrolls or photographic facsimiles agree not to publish in full the texts that they cited. Over the last few months the barriers to access to the Scrolls have gradually been eroded. The process started with the publication of a version reconstructed from a concordance, and a couple of weeks later came the announcement that several centres around the world would allow unrestricted access to complete photographic sets of the Scrolls (see Minerva, November/December 1991, page 5). At last, more than 40 years after they were found, scholars will have the chance to inspect the momentous discoveries for themselves.

Three canoes thought to be 6,500 years old and amongst the oldest found in Europe have been unearthed by archaeologists at a Paris building site. They also found other prehistoric artefacts including bottles, vases and axes. The canoes are solid oak and measure between 11 and 17 feet long. One is virtually intact. The finds prove that the banks of the Seine were inhabited as long ago as the fifth millennium BC. The boats will be shipped to Denmark for preservation and restoration treatment and will then be returned to Paris for display in a specially built museum.
French Diver Discovers Prehistoric Cave Paintings

French diver has discovered a series of prehistoric paintings in a grotto accessible only by an underwater passage. The paintings, dating from as much as 14,000 years ago, are among the best preserved in Europe and are said to rival those at Lascaux. The diver, Henri Cosquer, came across the cave, beneath a creek near Cassis in the south of France, after swimming through 400 feet of underwater passageways. The painted part of the cavern lies just above water level at the far end of a sunken gallery, and scientists have estimated that at the time the paintings were done the sea level was probably over 400 feet lower than it is today, allowing access to the cave from dry land. The excellent state of preservation of the images is attributed to the currents of fresh air which reach the grotto through cracks in the rock.

The remarkable paintings include animals such as bison, horses, red deer, ibex and chamois, as well as numerous impressions of human hands. The significance of the handprints, some of which display terrible disfigurements as if fingers had been cut off, is not yet known.

M. Cosquer says that he found the cave in 1985, but it was not until last summer, after several visits, that he made his find public. It was then kept secret until a team of specialists had completed a preliminary assessment.

Archaeologists Find Sophisticated Iron Age Fortress

A small but sophisticated late Iron Age fortress has been discovered on what used to be an island in the Fens in eastern England. Located near the Cambridgeshire town of Ely, the site appears to have been a chieftain's farmstead surrounded by earthwork defences, including a complicated quadruple banked maze-like entrance system.

It is the most sophisticated fortified Iron Age farmstead ever found in Eastern England. The maze-design entrance complex is a miniature version of those found in great Wessex hillforts such as Maiden Castle.

The site, at Coveney, has been excavated by archaeologists from Cambridge University's archaeological unit, directed by Christopher Evans. Funding has been provided by English Heritage. Finds within the fortress include imported Roman pottery, part of a decorated wooden tankard, and mutton, beef, swan and crane bones.
Experts Race to Investigate Exposed Viking Boat

A team of archaeologists has begun an urgent excavation before further storms and tides destroy what is possibly a very important Viking find. Coastal storm damage on the Orkney island of Sunday, off the northernmost tip of Scotland, has uncovered traces of at least one boat and of bones lying in what may be a Viking cemetery.

The discovery of a skeleton and of several rusted iron rivets, two of them under the skeleton, indicate the presence of a faring, a small Viking vessel used for boat-burials. If all the rivets are from a single vessel, it would have been about six metres long, unusually large. There may therefore be two or more boats. This, together with the discovery of several human teeth about ten metres from the skeleton, supports the suggestion that the site may be a cemetery, since communal burial was a Viking custom. Following up that possibility, the team has already completed a 20 metre exploratory trench.

The skeleton is lying in a crouched position on flat slabs and may be that of a wealthy merchant. A weight made from lead encased in bronze was found there some years ago. Thought then to be the terminal of a car battery, it has since been identified as having been used to weigh Viking silver bullion, and is similar to others known from Scandinavia. It may signify local trading and the excavating team are looking particularly for grave-goods which have survived with the skeleton and which could provide the most direct evidence yet found on Orkney for the trading connections of the time.

Because the burial was in sand rather than the peat which might have preserved it, nothing of the wooden part of the vessel is likely to remain. If the image of the vessel – its outline traced by lines of rivets – remains intact, the team hopes to be able to create a cast of the shape. However, this would be difficult at this time of year since atmospheric dampness inhibits the setting of the casting materials.

Two other factors enhance interest in the site: a nearby mound, known for some time though not yet examined, may be another burial structure; and rock formations close by may be a Viking boat moor, a refuge close to the water into which boats were dragged for safety after use. It is too early to say whether all the finds are contemporaneous.

Geoffrey Barwick

Anglo-Saxon Warrior Found in Canoe-Burial

A remarkable Anglo-Saxon grave (above) in which an aristocratic warrior was buried inside a wooden boat has been unearthed by archaeologists in Suffolk in eastern England. The site, at Snape, near Aldeburgh, is believed to be the predecessor of the remarkable Sutton Hoo Anglo-Saxon royal cemetery excavated 50 years ago.

The warrior was buried with his sword and a large spear and a shield, was placed on top of the bow of the boat. Excavations directed by Dr William Filmer-Sankey for the Snape Historical Trust, and funded by English Heritage, have revealed that the vessel was an 11-foot dug-out canoe. The boat, dating from c. AD 600, formed part of a cemetery which was in use between c. AD 520 and 620. Another body, apparently that of a man judging from the presence in the grave of a spearhead, was buried in a coffin, while a third, possibly a woman, was not.

The warrior in the boat burial was placed in the canoe along with provisions for his journey to the next world – an iron-bound bucket of beer and a wooden platter covered with meat. On top of the grave had been placed a horse's head, complete with bridle and bit.

Scholars have yet to discover why there are several types of burial in the same cemetery at the same period, some people being buried in coffins, some in dug-out canoes and others in graves without coffins. However, the answer may be found in Scandinavia, for the nearest parallel to the Snape dug-out canoe burials is to be found in a cemetery on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic.
Archaeologists in Fife, north-east Scotland, have been working to save for posterity some of the most important cave art in Britain which is in danger of being lost to the elements. The Pictish carvings in Wemyss Caves, dating back at least to the seventh century AD, are of national importance – the caves contain more carvings and symbols than all the other caves in Britain put together. The threat of coastal erosion and fears that the few remaining carvings could be lost for ever have prompted Fife Regional Council, Kirkcaldy District Council and Historic Scotland to commission the National Museums of Scotland to take latex mouldings of them. Now that members of the conservation unit from the National Museums of Scotland have completed the two-week job of taking mouldings from Court Cave and Jonathan's Cave, castings will be made in silicone rubber at the National Museum, using sophisticated new technology.

Since the last of the East Fife collieries closed down and stopped dumping tons of waste coal and slurry on the shore, the absence of an artificial barrier has allowed the sea to smash into and cut away the shoreline, threatening the caves with flooding. Where there was once a total of eight or nine named caves in the complex, displaying an astonishing array of rock art from chipped figures of the Viking gods Thor and Freya to the mysterious linear carvings of the Pictish people who ruled much of eastern Scotland from AD 300 to 850, only three remain in good order and these are threatened with destruction. The rest have either collapsed or have been locked up because of their dangerous condition and it is estimated that more than half of the original Pictish carvings identified last century have been lost.

The sea is now only metres from the lip of the most important, Jonathan's Cave, and it is unlikely that the at least £350,000 needed to save the caves will be found. However, Fife Regional Council has begun shoring up part of the coastal area as a temporary measure to slow down erosion. Now the local authorities have given £20,000 and Historic Scotland £15,000 to make impressions of those carvings that still survive.

It was in 1865 that Professor James Young Simpson, discoverer of chloroform, first published a description of the carvings. Dr David Clarke, Keeper of Archaeology at the National Museums of Scotland, described the caves as the best range of their kind in Scotland. 'My guess is that Wemyss was a site of religious importance to the pagan Picts. Perhaps not a temple, but a site of some significance.'
ANCIENT CHINESE GOLD

Patricia, Countess Jellicoe, in the first of two articles, assesses two major exhibitions of Chinese art held by Eskenazi and by Oriental Bronzes in London last summer. Both exhibitions showed objects of exquisite beauty and great importance, astonishing a general public and opening new vistas of enquiry among scholars.

Gold, or 'yellow bronze' (Huangjin) as it was known, was, under the Shang, Zhou and Han dynasties, an extremely rare material; so much so that the discovery of a gold deposit in 95 BC was recorded in the official history of the Han (Han Shu).

Bronze metallurgy dominated the earliest dynasties of the Xia, Shang and Zhou; few gold or silver objects datable prior to the Han dynasty have been found. Between 1928 and 1938 the first discoveries of Shang gold were made in Anyang consisting of small sheets of gold, and of gold ornaments at Luijiache in Pingyu. From the same site in August 1977 came four gold ornaments - a hairpin, a triangular-shaped earring, and a pair of bracelets of 85% gold and 15% silver and bronze. Such a quantity of Shang gold had never been found before, nor since, marking this as the most important find to date. Nine years later a life-size gold staff was found in Szechuan's tombs of the Shu Culture.

During the Zhou dynasty gold and silver were used mainly for inlay - a technique brilliantly developed during the Warring States period - many examples of which have been excavated. Persons of high rank appear to have been buried with a large number of gold and silver objects. In 1974, 18 pure silver coins and 392 pure gold coins or plaques were found in Henan; in 1978, in Hubei, a repository of gold belt buckles, gold sheets and a gold bowl, ladle, cup and lids - attributed to the Marquis of Zeng - were excavated, and in 1982, in Luoyang, 38 gold items were found inside an inlaid bronze vessel with a cover cast in pure gold in the form of a tiger, as well as gold belt buckles.

Eskenazi, in their exhibition of 70 varied pieces, showed gold, silver and turquoise inlaid vessels and a bell from the Eastern Zhou period, and a plaque from the Erlitou Culture (1900-1600 BC) inlaid with thin rectangular pieces of turquoise around an animal mask design, the bronze plaque encrusted with cuprite and malachite. The mask was a forerunner of the Taotie mask of Shang times, while the decorative technique of inlay remained only on weaponry, to disappear from all types of bronzes during the Western Zhou, though it continued in use through the Shang and Western Zhou on bone and lacquered wood, and in turquoise and shell. In the late seventh century BC, when inlay into bronze was revived, metallic inlays were introduced, but by the fifth century BC copper was entirely superseded by gold and silver, and more abstract designs appeared in place of the earlier figurative. The curvilinear style is known to have been inspired by lacquer painting, and it is suggested in Eskenazi's superb catalogue that textile designs could have been the source of the new diagonally-aligned angular designs, and embroidery the inspiration for the use of stippled areas on costume hooks. The mannered treatment of a bird's wing in Chu embroidery appears to have evolved over the centuries through stylised representations into further references, such as swirling clouds and later, mountain forms.

In the exhibition two dramatic pairs of Eastern Zhou bronze ring handles inlaid in gold and silver are held in the beaks of Taotie-type animal masks; a small confrontational bronze chimaera (Bixie) of the third/second century BC is inlaid in gold and silver and has a rectangular hole on the underside - possibly to fit onto a projecting lug.
on the lid of a vessel. Bronze mounts for the top of a vessel and its cover have the top set with two silver loops to hold the handle and its inner circumference lipped so that the cover mount fits precisely. Stylised zoomorphic motifs inlaid in gold and silver form an overall rich and highly sophisticated design. Of the same Eastern Zhou period, but totally different in character, are three bronze legs, probably from a bronze vessel. Each depicts a semi-human monster, broad-faced with wide cheekbones, deep-set, upwardly slanting eyes, thick lips with aggressively bared teeth, framed by outspread bull-like ears. Leaning forward, its chest covered in armour and its animal-like arms in silver scales, its legs each terminate in three sharp claws. The whole is supported on a sturdy leg inlaid with silver and gold zoomorphic designs and splaying out to a clefted silver inlaid hoof (one leg is incised with a four character inscription). These fearsome creatures must surely be a Chinese vision of the aggressive genii of the Ji Lisbon and other nomadic ‘barbarian’ tribes of Inner Mongolia and the borderlands of northern China.

The increasing contact – military, diplomatic and mercantile – through the nomadic steppes with far flung regions contributed to strong new influences and ideas, while the changing structure of Chinese society saw more secular articles replacing ritual objects as symbols of social status.

Western and Eastern Zhou inlays of gold and silver are clear and colourful, bold and beautiful. Belt hooks or garment hooks (Duiou), were a widely current status symbol and 13 were exhibited of which eight are from the Eastern and late Eastern Zhou periods – seven of bronze and one of inlaid iron. Four of these eight differ from the familiar elongated curved shape, being more rounded and shorter. One, formed by two felines and four snakes, has a snake being bitten by a feline, another grasped with a feline’s forefoot and another trapped under a left hindfoot. Turquoise inlaid felines’ eyes and snakes’ tails add to the gold and silver inlay. A second belt hook portrays a tiger and bird in battle, each held by the other with long claws, talons and open beak. Gold and silver inlay mark out tiger stripes and long feathers studded by seven dominating turquoise roundels. The third belt hook, also of a reddish-brown patinated bronze, its shaft inlaid with sharply and curved symmetrical motifs, has a wider body consisting of an open-work dragon with long muzzle, large teeth, scaly body and sharp claws, coiled in a figure-of-eight to bite its tail, the end of which it grasps in the talons of its left foreleg – an elegant piece, almost rococo in design. The fourth belt hook is an unusual design of asymmetrical form in bronze inlaid with gold and silver, its swelling shaft twisted into a bifurcated body, one half terminating in a petal shape, the lower half in a crescent. These four belt hooks with their rounded shapes, the vitality of movement in bird and beast, and the use of turquoise studs indicate a strong nomadic or ‘barbarian’ connection.

Changes, particularly during the Warring States period as the military chariot gave way to the ceremonial, saw the use of lavish inlay on chariot equipment. Swords were also enriched as status symbols and carried inscriptions in gold on their blades. The sword’s prestige in south-east China was such that the names of the swordsmiths were preserved – whereas the casters of bronze vessels are anonymous. Although apparently it was most unusual in the Eastern Zhou period for a sword to be inlaid in gold, both sides of the sword exhibited are inlaid in gold and silver with a zigzag pattern enclosing the central gold band – the design is almost Greek in its simplicity.

Archaeological discoveries, such as that near Xian of a pair of large bronze models of four-horse enclosed carriages from the burial site of the ‘Yellow Emperor’, have greatly clarified the positioning and usage of chariot items and crossbow items. A very fine axle-cap and linchpin in the exhibition is inlaid in gold and silver in bands of cloud scrolls and interlocking lozenges between raised rings on bronze of a reddish-brown patina; a two-character inscription is in gold. The linchpin is inlaid with a stylised mask and pierced with holes at either end. Three bronze chariot fittings (Fig 3) – two smaller with a central raised ring, the third narrower and longer with four raised rings just below the top – are inlaid in silver in a strong and rich design of interlaced stylised zoomorphic motifs, probably dragons. Bold and simpler than these Late Eastern Zhou fittings is a bronze tubular fitting cast in the form of a tiger’s head with gaping mouth and swirling gold inlay to form ears, cheeks and fangs. Still of uncertain usage are two

(right) Fig 1. Bronze, gold and silver chariot fitting, Western Han period, late 2nd-early 1st century BC. Height – 26.5 cm. A bronze hollow open-ended tubular fitting which was used to join the shaft of a canopy to the chariot. It has extremely fine and elaborate inlaid decoration in gold and silver depicting a multitude of animals, in a mountainous cloudy landscape, some mythical, some actual but all imbued with movement and rendered with tremendous vivacity. The four scenes are united by a landscape which spirals around the whole tube. (opposite above) Fig 2. Detail of the tiger on the second band of the fitting.

(opposite below) Fig 3. Three bronze and silver chariot fittings, Late Eastern Zhou-early Western Han period, 3rd-2nd century BC. Each fitting is similarly and lavishly inlaid in silver with interlaced stylised zoomorphic motifs, probably dragons.
Western Han circular and hollow bronze finials. Both have a surround of petals and one is inlaid in gold and silver with minutely incised confronting long-tailed birds. Its radiating petal shapes contain and are surrounded by sunken reserves once filled with glass, paste or semi-precious stones which would also have topped a round sunken reserve at the centre. Described sometimes as finials to poles used for carrying banners, the discovery in 1958 and again in 1986 of zithers (se), with the finials used for tightening the strings still in place, gives rise to a more intriguing and romantic usage.

In the transformation from military to ceremonial use, the bronze ferrules (zun) fitted to the shaft of halberds also emerged with decorative inlay. Three from the Eastern Zhou period are of similar form with an animal or stylised bird/dragon standing on a hoofed leg. The first of these is heavily inlaid with silver, and turquoise inlays emphasise the centralised profile of a hybrid animal with a bear-like open muzzle, large winged ears and sharp claws. The second zun’s profile is that of a crested bird, its hooked beak and dragon body covered in alternating gold and silver scales - almost Aztec in opulent ferocity. The third is less flamboyant; its bird or dragon profile and tail in silver inlay lies centrally between alternating bands of different widths in stylised designs of classic scrolls and inverted triangles.

With the ceremonial role of the chariot came the addition of the parasol; the earliest were wooden with bronze fittings and parasols could be dismantled or hand-held. By the time of the Western Han they were amongst the most exquisitely decorated of all bronzes - testified by the example in the exhibition (Figs 1 & 2). Breathtakingly beautiful, it is a revelation and its infinitely varied and delicate decoration was made more visible through a well-sited magnifying glass and in the catalogue by a new photographic technique. This example of a chariot parasol fitting appears to be only the third recorded. The 26.5 cm hollow, open-ended, tubular fitting is divided into four by two raised bands centrally, and a further single band midway on the upper and lower sections. The iconography of the designs in gold and silver inlay suggests that they are a record of the auspicious omens (Xiangru), directly identifiable with many of the animals depicted. The multitude of animals - some mythical, many actual - are amazingly vital and rendered with a vivid sense of movement against an elaborate and intricate background of mountains and cloud forms. The top band contains a striding, scaly-bodied elephant, anthropoid figures brandishing spears, a dragon, tiger and winged horse, an ibex, deer, hares and different types of birds. The second has a tiger chasing an archer on a galloping horse complete with saddle bag and reins, a wolf, boar and peacock, deer and other birds. The third band depicts a striding camel with a monkey on its back, a bear, leopards, and further monkeys and birds. The lowest band shows a peacock with outspread wings and tail in full display reaching with open beak for a silver disc, a tiger, deer and birds in full flight. The background landscape spirals up and around the whole tube uniting these four scenes, while the top and bottom of the tube are edged with thin bands of gold chevrons within silver bands of lozenges. The bronze is of a reddish-brown patina which gives a warm and glowing background to the gleaming gold and silver of these elaborate scenes. One of the most beautiful and astonishing of Chinese gold and silver inlaid works, this parasol fitting is a superb example of the perfection reached during the Western Han period.

During the Warring States period the increasing use of gold and silver led to the use of gilding as a less expensive means of achieving a rich effect. It is suggested that the use of gold in conjunction with lacquer may have led to the development of mercury gilding, though the obvious alternative theory is that gilding was the invention of early metalurgists.

A reconstructed 'lacquer' vessel and its cover (zun) displays eleven gilt bronze mounts - three circular rings on the vessel and cover, three seated birds on the cover, three hoofed supports and two animal mask handles. The masks, birds and supports are set with blue and turquoise glass beads. The supports are of semi-human monsters and have wide ears, crested heads, and powerful arms with three-clawed hands merging into a hoofed leg. Though not as terrifying, these Western Han monsters are very similar to those on the three earlier Eastern Zhou bronze legs. The gilding again is worn in some areas, leaving malachite and cuprite encrustations on four gilt bronze legs of the Western Han period of simple stylised animal hoof form. Two small Western Han gilt bronze weights (zhun) are in the form of coiled felines, typical of the Han period when furniture still seems to have been limited and people sat on mats held down by these weights.

Extravagantly rich are several belt hooks. From the third-second centuries BC is a silver curved garment hook with a 'kylin' in high relief; half-crouching, half-stretching, with a long bifurcated horn, one wing, hooves and a long curling bifurcated tail, the horn and tail are inlaid in gold (the hook itself is a replacement).

The most exquisite and elegant garment hook, however, is from the Eastern Zhou period in hollow cast pure gold and (replaced) pale green jade (Fig 4). The hook itself is a tiger's head on the long gold shaft onto which a dragon's head bites, its long pointed ears flowing back onto each side of a square open base. The jade is set into the cavities for its slanting eyes, in a gilded, pointed circle on top of its head, and along the back of its neck to be cut off at the open base. Of gold from the Eastern Zhou period also are two small dragon and feline belt hook heads.

A small gilded bronze horse (Fig 5) from the Eastern Han and a bull and dragon from the late Eastern Han are
perhaps votive offerings or part of decorative assemblages. A strangely compelling small gilt bronze head from the Western Han period is possibly a pendant. Cast in the round, it has well-modelled features (though lacking a lower jaw), and hair drawn upwards above the ears into a long sweeping curve. No similar example is recorded, but spearheads from which slaves with a similar hairstyle are suspended were excavated in 1956 in Yunnan.

A pair of gold bracelets from the third-second centuries BC, very reminiscent of Scythian art, are of gleaming double strands of twisted gold wire, terminating at each end in a bearded human face. The disturbed Six Dynasties period left little, but two pieces exhibit the delicacy of work in gold which culminated in the T'ang: a sophisticated and finely made circular ornament – possibly for a hat or headband – of bronze covered in sheet gold with a raised design resembling radiating waves filled with gold granules and reserves containing coral and turquoise, and a gold ring set with the figure of a sheep’s head with gold granules and tear-shaped reserves, two still inlaid with turquoise. From the Han are a large pair of gold sheet earrings set with alternating coral and turquoise stones surrounded by tiny gold granules seemingly designed to suit a more nomadic or ‘barbarian’ taste.

Valued for their portability, gold and silver have a long tradition in the personal adornment of nomadic tribes, dating from as far back as the equestrian fittings from the frozen tombs at Pazyryk in Siberia. The Ords region of Inner Mongolia is famed for its gold and silver plaques of tigers, horses and gazelle of extraordinary vitality. The Chinese produced pieces for nomad taste and must, in reverse, have been influenced by their designs of animals and animal masks and their frequent use of turquoise. A pair of gold plaques depicting confronting tigers of the Eastern Zhou period come from a tomb in Turfan, Zinjiang, in which 33 gold pieces were found around the body of a woman.

Unforgettable in the exhibition is a unique finial of the Western Han period (Fig 6) in which the sensuous combination of glowing gilt bronze and the silken sheen of pale jade is nowhere more sumptuously nor strikingly shown. The gilt bronze hollow finial of elongated rectangular form is similarly cast on both sides in the form of a being half-human, half-monster, with large cat-like ears, deep eyes, broad nose and thick-lipped wide mouth. In a flowing curve upwards, an incised jade dragon emerges from the monster’s head like a crescent moon.

(Fig 6) Gilt bronze and jade finial. Jade: late Eastern Zhou-early Western Han period. 3rd-2nd century BC. Gilt bronze: Western Han period, 2nd-1st century BC. Height: 16.2 cm. A hollow finial cast in the form of a being half-human, half-monster, with a curved piece of jade in the form of a dragon with tapering body set into its head.

Chinese Dynasties and Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dynasty</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xia</td>
<td>c. 2100 - c. 1600 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shang</td>
<td>c. 1600 - 1027 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhou</td>
<td>1027 - 256 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Zhou</td>
<td>1027 - 771 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Zhou</td>
<td>770 - 256 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring and Autumn</td>
<td>770 - 476 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warring States</td>
<td>475 - 221 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qin dynasty</td>
<td>221 - 206 BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han dynasty</td>
<td>206 BC - AD 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Kingdoms</td>
<td>AD 220 - 280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six dynasties</td>
<td>AD 265 - 581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sui dynasty</td>
<td>AD 581 - 618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tang dynasty</td>
<td>AD 618 - 907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five dynasties</td>
<td>AD 907 - 960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liao dynasty</td>
<td>AD 907 - 1125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song dynasty</td>
<td>AD 960 - 1279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jin dynasty</td>
<td>AD 1115 - 1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan dynasty</td>
<td>AD 1279 - 1368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ming dynasty</td>
<td>AD 1368 - 1644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qing dynasty</td>
<td>AD 1644 - 1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of China</td>
<td>AD 1912 - 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
<td>AD 1949</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IN PURSUIT OF BOGIUS
Shedding Light on the Mystery of the Risley Park Plate

David Keys, Archaeological Correspondent of The Independent, picks up the 1500-year-old trail of the elusive Bogium and Bishop Exuperius in a manner worthy of Sherlock Holmes himself.

In 1729 a ploughman working in a field near Risley, Derbyshire, stumbled upon a great Roman silver tray – a richly decorated piece of early church plate. Within a few years, however, it had vanished. Then, earlier this year, as reported in the last issue of Minerva, the tray, in a manner of speaking, reappeared at Seaby’s antiquities gallery in London. Scientific examination revealed that it had been recast – probably in the eighteenth or nineteenth century AD – using the actual silver from the original 10 lb tray. In 1736 the antiquarian William Stukeley published an account of seven fragments of the tray and of the inscription on the back of it. The inscription, which can clearly be seen on the back of the recast version of the plate, reads Exuperius Episcopus Eclesiae Bogiensis Dedit, which translates as 'Bishop Exuperius gave [this tray] to the church of Bogium' [or ‘to the Estate of Bogius’].

Indeed, where was Bogium, where was the eclesia Bogiensis, and who was Exuperius? I believe that these questions can now, tentatively, be answered. This is the circumstantial, though substantial, evidence.

Proximity to Lead and Silver Mines
The place where the ploughman found the silver tray is just ten miles south of one of three main lead (and probably silver) mining areas in Britain. Moreover, this year’s scientific examination of the recast version has suggested that the original was probably made by a pewter smith. Pewter-working was a predominantly British activity in Roman times, and a prosperous major Roman metal-working centre existed at Derbentone (Derby), seven miles west of the find-spot, until at least the early fourth century.

Part of a Great Hoard?
The high ground on which or immediately adjacent to where the silver was found is still sometimes called by local people Silver Hill. However, examination of old maps reveals that the name pre-dates the 1729 discovery. An estate map of 1722 refers to the area as Silver Hill. Certainly one might expect the tray not to have been buried on its own, for most other examples of Roman-British silver treasure (Mildenhall, Traprain Law, Water Newton) have turned up as hoards. It is also interesting, and possibly relevant, that around 700 yards away was another piece of high ground by which flows a stream still known as Golden Brook.

EXUPERIVSE PISCC USE SELIAE BOCHIENSIDEDIT
and only one Roman sherd (again on the western side). Whether the extra western earthworks were part of an earlier complex is not known. However, scattered across neighbouring fields, quantities of Roman pottery have been found over the years by a local amateur archaeologist, Alan Palfreyman. The whole area has recently been developed as a commercial gameshooting venue.

**Eclesia Bogiensis**
Of course, twelve pieces of late fourth-century Roman pottery scattered in the immediate vicinity, and a piece of Roman church plate 400 yards away, do not necessarily indicate a Roman occupation site, let alone a fourth-century church. But there is one other feature which does begin to make the Wood Hall site look more interesting. Immediately adjacent to it, until around 1960, was an old cottage called Paradise. It is a name which sometimes indicates the presence of an ancient long-lost graveyard. In France it often hints at the existence of a Merovingian cemetery while in England the name is sometimes the only remnant of an early graveyard. It is perhaps also relevant that Risley, although an ancient parish, is not recorded as having a parish church in medieval times. The present church goes back no further than 1593, when it was established as a chapel by the Lord of Wood Hall. Before that, it is suggested by J. Charles Cox (Churches of Derbyshire, 1878) that what might have been the parish church of Risley was, in fact,

**Unusual Earthwork**
Interestingly, the pottery was found within a now barely visible earthwork enclosure, while bulldozers were demolishing it to make farming the area easier. The moated enclosure had been the site of a medieval manor house known as Wood Hall. On the western flank of the complex was an embankment and a ditch. It was in this area that the pottery was found, although a local history society excavation of ten percent of the Wood Hall site in 1970 found mainly fourteenth- to sixteenth-century pottery.

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Hoard may well have been more common in the area than we have believed. Twelve miles north-west at Weston Underwood a medieval charter refers to a place actually called Golphoas (Old English for gold hoards)!

**Roman Evidence Nearby**
There are no published fourth-century Roman sites within three miles of the 1729 find spot. There is, however, just one fourth-century site, and incredibly that is located within 400 yards of the 1729 find spot. In 1949 or the early 1950s twelve pieces of typically fourth-century Romano-British pottery were found there by a farmer who apparently had it identified by a local archaeologist. The find was recorded as a brief sentence in the Ordnance Survey Record. A local farmer remembers the pottery as being dark coloured, large and chunky. The material could have been Late Nene Valley or Oxfordshire redwares.

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located across a parochial border in the neighbouring parish of Sandiacre. It was called the 'Capell de Sta Sytha' (St Scythia, martyred in Essex by the Danes in 860). However, apart from one mention in Valor Ecclesiasticus, 27 Henry VIII, there is no tradition of there having been a chapel of this name and there has to be a question mark over whether it in fact stood in Sandiacre Parish at all. Given the lack of a church in Risley parish before 1593, and the fact that Risley township (as distinct from parish) is known to have possessed one at an early date (Churches of Derbyshire), it may be that Wood Hall was the site of the 'Capell de Sta Sytha', and that it was re-dedicated more than half a century after one of Lichfield's prebends took spiritual responsibility for the parish in 822 (see below 'In Search of the Bishop').

Where art thou Bogius?

Whether or not the Wood Hall earthwork is the site of the ecclesia Bogiensis, the problem still remains as to the location of a place called bogiu or an estate owned by Bogius. In 1921 the French scholar Camille Jullian published a paper in which he suggested that Bogiensis was an adjective for Civitas Boiorum, the area inhabited by a tribe called the Boii (near Bordeaux). The Celtic root of Bogius or Bogium is likely to have been plain Bogi or Boii. It is certainly likely that the 'g' in the 'Bog' of Bogium or Bogius would have disappeared after several hundred years. It is therefore potentially very relevant that just a mile and a half north of the Wood Hall and the 1729 silver tray find-spot is a farm called Boyah Grange. Kenneth Cameron in his Place Names of Derbyshire suggests that Boyah (Boyag in AD 1200) may mean 'Boie's enclosure'. Haga can mean enclosure, although, if in this case it does not, the final 'g' could be the remnant of the 'g' of Bogi and the ending 'Haga' could have become conflated.

In Search of the Bishop

Although ecclesia is often taken to mean, quite literally, a bishop's seat (i.e. a cathedral), by the late fourth century there is evidence to suggest that the term could by then refer simply to a large church. If so, then to which Late Roman or sub-Roman diocese did the ecclesia Bogiensis belong to? The front-runner is probably Letocetum (Wall) near Lichfield, despite the fact that it is 26 miles to the west. Dr Steven Basset, a Dark Ages specialist at Birmingham University, has studied the area around Wall and has concluded from topographical, archaeological and historical evidence that Letocetum was certainly the seat of a major Bishopric by the sub-Roman period (details are about to be published in Pastoral Care Before the Parish, Leicester University Press). By the time the Anglo-Saxons took over the Bishopric in around 660, the seat had been moved two miles to Lichfield.

The earliest records available show that the Derby area (including Risley) was part of the Anglo-Saxon Diocese of Lichfield. Whether this was so in sub-Roman or late Roman times is not known. However, historian Maxwell Craven, Keeper of Antiquities at Derby Museum, has suggested that the Trent Valley — including the Lichfield and Derby areas — may well have constituted a sub-Roman principality, perhaps even the successor to a late Roman civitas. Extraordinarily, the Wood Hall site and the 1729 silver tray find-spot lie at the very heart of an area which from 822 was administered directly by an official of Lichfield Cathedral, appointed by the Bishop. This area was the Prebend of Sawley which had spiritual jurisdiction over the parishes of Sawley, Wiln, Long Eaton, Breaston — and Risley. There is even some evidence that there was a Palace of the Bishops of Lichfield at Sawley, three miles south of Wood Hall. At a very early stage, the Bishop of Lichfield also held the Manorial Lordship of Sawley, including three local parishes — Long Eaton, Hopwell and Draycott. The Prebend of Sawley derived its income from one or possibly several episcopal estates located within its borders. An archaeological discovery made last month by two local archaeologists — John Walker of the Trent and Peak Archaeological Trust and David Barret of Derbyshire County Council — may be of importance in this context. For, in a small piece of ancient woodland, they found that the parish and manorial boundary is actually marked by an earthwork of what is probably considerable antiquity, perhaps even late Roman.

Exuperius Re-Born

In the late Roman period Exuperius was quite a common name and — quite apart from the Risley plate Exuperius — there are at least seven known to historians, all on the Continent. But it is not a name which one would expect to crop up in medieval or early modern Britain. Yet there was one English family for whom the name became common, almost obligatory, and, amazingly, that family, the Turners, hailed from Derby, just seven miles from the 1729 silver plate find-spot. What is more, they go back at least as far as 1580, more
than 225 years before the tray's discovery. It is perhaps significant that the first Turner who christened his son Exuperius was Bailiff (joint mayor) of Derby and that he was an attorney, no doubt involved in dealing with property deeds, wills, charters, and other often ancient legal documents. It is possible that he knew about Exuperius either from a previous silver hoard from Silver Hill or from references contained in early medieval estate documents. Somehow he may well have gained the impression that the Roman Exuperius was a very important ruling figure either in Derby or responsible for the Derby area. Such information could perhaps have been the inspiration behind his decision to christen his son Exuperius. Certainly the family took the name extraordinarily seriously, for in virtually every generation of Turners till this century, there has been an Exuperius. The existence of the sixteenth-century Exuperius Turner was first recorded in modern times earlier this century, and Derby Museum's Maxwell Craven has succeeded in tracing the Turner family's links for the name Exuperius across four centuries. The Turner family christened their sons Exuperius in 1580, 1608, 1648, 1685, 1725, c. 1735, c. 1750, 1825. The last known Exuperius Turner died in Stafford in 1908. If there are any Exuperius Turners alive now it would certainly be fascinating to hear of them.

**Dating**

The original silver tray was probably made sometime between AD 350 and 375, according to a leading Roman silver expert, Kenneth Painter, who has assessed it both art historically and technically. However, it is unlikely that the tray was made for church use. Its iconography is pagan in tone with some of the scenes alluding to events in classical mythology. There is even a pagan temple and a small altar included among the 50 different people, buildings and symbols on it. The tray need not have been given to Exuperius in his role as Bishop. Indeed, it could well have belonged to his family for several generations before he decided to donate it to the 'Eclesia Bogiensis'. It is possible that Bishop Exuperius gave the tray, and possibly other treasures, to the church of Bogius in the very late fourth century or the first few decades of the fifth.

**Reasons for Burial**

In that period there would no doubt have been numerous occasions on which it may have been necessary to hide church plate. However, among the front-runners must surely be three events in which church treasures would almost certainly have come under severe threat.

Between 392 and 395 Christianity ceased temporarily to be the official religion in the extreme western part of the Empire - the Gallic prefecture which consisted of Gaul, Spain and Britain. During those years a pagan usurper, Eugenius, took over control of the Prefecture, and it is likely that Christian interests would have come under pressure.

Then, between 407 and 409, Britain - and indeed all of Western Europe - was plunged into a political and military crisis. On 31 December 406, vast hordes of Germanic barbarians crossed the frozen Rhine and in early 407 headed across northern Gaul towards the Channel. While the barbarians were moving west across Gaul there was an anti-Roman revolt in Britain and a Roman Briton called Marcus was proclaimed Emperor in Britain. Later in the year Marcus was murdered and a town councillor called Gratian was made Emperor. Shortly afterwards, still in 407, Gratian was killed in a military coup by Romano-British army units. This time a soldier was proclaimed Emperor Constantine III in Britain by the army. Constantine, however, had ambitions to become ruler of more than just Britain and took his army abroad to fight the German barbarian occupiers of Gaul. In his absence there was yet another coup, a pro-Imperial one, in Britain. Constantine's rebel administration was overthrown and the Britons appealed to Rome for help, but Rome had troubles of her own and told them that they must defend themselves. That was in reality the end of Roman Britain, although in legal terms it probably continued to be considered part of the Empire for some decades.

The 430s, following St Germanus's visit to Britain in 429, was the period in which the Pelagian heresy would have been suppressed. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, was sent to Britain to stamp out an intellectual and heretical movement which denied the orthodox Christian notion of original sin and opposed all concepts of pre-destination. Although Pelagius, a Briton by birth, lived most of his life in Rome, North Africa and Palestine and died in c. AD 420, his heresy continued to be popular among British aristocrats at least until the 430s. The suppression of the heresy may well have led wealthy Pelagian churches to hide their treasures. Quite apart from these specific events, the early fifth century was an uneasy period in which armies were often billeted with wealthy landowners and gold and silver treasures were
probably frequently requisitioned to pay troops. Both billeting of soldiers and requisitioning of precious metal forced ecclesiastic officials to hide their churches' treasures.

Other Midlands Hoards
There are no other recorded silver plate hoards known from the Derby region. The nearest late Roman coin hoards to the 1729 Risley tray findspot are: post 383 (from Holyoke, Leicestershire, 35 miles east-south-east of Risley); post-410 (from Sproxton, Leicestershire, 27 miles east-south-east), and post-395 (Leicester, 21 miles south-south-east).

Conclusions and Implications
Although all the evidence in this article is circumstantial, the sheer quantity of it does suggest, though not prove:

- that the ecclesia Bogiensis was located in Risley Parish, possibly at the Wood Hall site or nearby, and that it lay within a great late Roman/sub-Roman estate.
- that Exuperius was Bishop of Letocetum (modern Wall, Staffordshire) sometime between 370 and 430.
- that the country seat of Bogius or the administra-
tive centre of the estate of Bogius may well have been on the site of what is now known as Boyah Grange.
- that the silver tray was probably buried as part of a great silver ecclesiastical treasure – and that there may possibly have been other hoards (perhaps of gold plate) nearby.
- that the boundaries of the estate of Bogius continued, with a strong ecclesiastical flavour, becoming an episcopal manor and a prebend, and surviving to this day in local manorial and parochial boundaries.

There is, perhaps, one alternative to the interpretation of ecclesia as church. There is a possibility that, even in the very late fourth century or early fifth, ecclesia could mean quite literally cathedral. If this were the case then the Risley Church at Wood Hill would in fact have been a cathedral, Exuperius's episcopal seat.

Perhaps the most important implication of all this is that it is additional evidence for the survival of Romano-British Christianity and its transition into Anglo-Saxon Christianity. It also indicates a previously unsuspected level of late Roman or sub-Roman ecclesiastical wealth.
Viking Newsletter

Three major projects currently in progress in Denmark are providing Danish archaeologists and historians with new insights into their country's distant Viking past.

Christopher Follett

Danish archaeologists hope this winter to complete the intricate task of piecing together the remains of a thousand-year-old Viking warship found scuttled in a Danish fjord and now sensational believed to have been built near Dublin. The Viking warship is one of five eleventh-century craft raised from the muddy depths of Roskilde Fjord, west of Copenhagen, on Denmark's easternmost island of Zealand, 30 years ago. The five ships — two warships, two trading vessels and a fishing boat — are in various stages of repair and are on permanent exhibition at the Viking Ship Museum in the Danish cathedral town of Roskilde, traditional burial place of Denmark's monarchs.

After making tests recently on the oak hulk of one of the warships, an 85-foot man-of-war of which only about one fifth is left, Danish and Irish archaeologists are in no doubt that the warship's birthplace was the Viking settlement of Woodquay, near Dublin. Dendrochronological tests on the rings in the oakwood keel of what is the oldest extant Viking longship wreck pointed not to a Scandinavian or Baltic place of construction but to Dublin around AD 1050.

The discovery is forcing historians to redate the Viking presence in Ireland. History books have hitherto dated the end of the Viking's 400-year settlement of Ireland to AD 1014, when the Nordic invaders were routed by Irish forces at the Battle of Clontarf. The new Danish tests tell a different tale, extending the period of Viking control in Ireland by half a century at least.

The 'Irish' warship would have had a crew of up to 60 on its voyage from Ireland to Denmark almost one thousand years ago. Along with the four other vessels on display at the Viking Ship Museum, the 'Irish' warship was filled with stones and sunk in the early twelfth century to block the fjord and prevent marauding Norwegian Vikings from attacking Roskilde, then Denmark's capital and main port at the mouth of the Baltic.

The 'Irish' Viking ship is the only one of the five wrecks still remaining to be restored. The ships are giving historians a fresh insight into boatbuilding and seamanship a thousand years ago. According to experts, during the era of the sailing ship no better square-rigged ships were built than Viking ships. They were not dependent on winds from behind. They could tack against the wind, using sails which lifted their bows up in the water and made them glide across the sea.

One of the two merchant vessels, the deep sea trader, is the biggest of its type ever found in Scandinavia, 55 feet long and built of Norwegian pine. The trader was typical of ships used for the first Viking crossings to Iceland, Greenland and Vinland and two arrow marks on its upper planks bear witness to the vessel's stormy past. A second trading vessel, measuring 44 feet and fashioned from a single piece of oak, carried cargo in the Baltic and across the North Sea to England. The smaller 60-foot man-of-war, with its characteristic long, low hull, is a type illustrated in the Bayeux Tapestry, row ports along the sides of the ship indicating the positioning of the 24 oarsmen. The fishing boat, 40 feet long, had a mast and sail like the other ships but apparently no oar holes. The finds are 70 percent intact with the exception of the 'Irish' warship. Inspired by the originals, the
Viking Museum has built seaworthy replicas of two of the thousand-year-old vessels, using ancient shipbuilding techniques.

**Ancient Palace of the First Viking Kings?**

Large tracts of the rolling countryside around the hamlet of Lejre to the west of Roskilde, an area which abounds in ancient burial mounds and Viking stone tombs, have been designated as an archaeological site. Here archaeologists have been excavating since 1986 in the hope of finding the ancient seat of Denmark's first Viking kings. The sagas relate that Lejre was the chief city of Denmark's first Viking royal family - the 'Skjold' or in English 'Slyding' dynasty - dating back to around AD 400-500. Nordic myths tell that King Skjold - Skjold means shield in Danish - was so named because he made his first mysterious appearance asleep in a boat, lying on his shield.

The Slyding dynasty lasted at least a century, through Skjold's successors Halfdan, Roar, Helge and Rolf Krake. The oldest known reference to the dynasty's heroic and bloody exploits is in the eighth-century Anglo-Saxon epic poem Beowulf, often called the first major work of English literature. Set in the period of the Germanic migrations in the fourth to seventh centuries, the poem places the Slyding King Hrothgar's Hall, Hereot, at Lejre. Saxo Grammaticus, a thirteenth-century chronicler who compiled a history of both legendary and historical Danish kings, also identified Lejre as an ancient royal seat. Many modern Beowulf scholars identify Hereot with Lejre and Danish archaeologists think they may have found the site.

The team has discovered a major boat-shaped Viking longhouse, 165 feet long, 33 feet high and 1,800 square feet in area. Only the foundations of the huge hall and outbuildings remain as the construction was of wood, which has decayed. The longhouse building is twice the size of any similar hall discovered in Denmark. The size of the building and the quality of the artefacts unearthed, including ornamental bronze stud decorations for swords and sheaths, brooches, keys, pottery and a large quantity of ornamental pieces and jewellery, indicate that the hall was more than an ordinary farm building, leading archaeologists to hope that they have stumbled on a royal palace from the time of the sagas. The longhouse and outbuildings found so far date from around AD 800, several centuries after the Slyding dynasty, but evidence of two almost identical earlier constructions had been found in lower layers of earth and carbon-14 dated in tests carried out this year to the late seventh century.

The dimensions of the hall were calculated from 200 post-hole marks on the ground from the huge oak beams that supported the walls and roof. There are also signs on the site of dams, windmills and other buildings including smithies, a bronze foundry and workshops, as well as fencing, underlining the importance of the Lejre settlement.

Christopher Follett is a freelance journalist based in Copenhagen and the Denmark correspondent for The Times.
Stolen from Charles Ede Ltd, the London antiquities dealer, at the end of October...

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(above) Cypriot terracotta statuette of a tambourine player, his tubular body wheel-made with flaring base and his arms, head and shoulders hand modelled. The decoration is bichrome and consists of concentric bands of black and red. The figure is bearded and wears a conical cap. The base is pierced on either side. Seventh-sixth century BC. Height: 14.9 cm.

(below) Slender neck amphora with twisted handles and stepped base. Side (a) shows a maenad moving to her left and looking back over her right shoulder. On side (b) a young man, his transverse himation leaving right arm and shoulder bear, leans on his staff. Below each figure is a band of meander interrupted by saltire squares: rows of torches at the shoulder. 475-450 BC. Height: 29.5 cm. Fractures to foot, lip and one handle repaired, with minor restoration, and some re-touching of the background on side (a).

(above) Sizable hand-modelled Cypriot terracotta statuette of a horse and rider. The horse has a tall neck with exaggerated mane, and the rider appears almost to stand on its back, clasping the mane at either side. There is added decoration in brick red to the legs and mane of the animal and to the head and back of the rider. Seventh-sixth century BC. Height: 18.7 cm.

(above) Eros shown standing, wings outstretched. He wears the himation, the folds of which are held up with his right hand and drawn over the chest with his left. Myrina in Asia Minor, 200-150 BC. Height: 14.6 cm.

(above) Greek terracotta statuette of two young eros, wrestling playfully. One lifts the other from the ground in a bear hug while his companion tries to break his grip. Faint traces of white slip and yellow and blue pigment remaining. South Italy, second-first century BC. Height: 10.5 cm.
(left) 'Pappades' figure of flattened form with stubby arms and mouse-like head, crowned by a low polos. The orange clay is covered with white slip and the linear decoration, which consists mainly of wavy vertical lines, is in brown. Boeotia, first half of the sixth century BC.
Height: 15.6 cm.

(right) Statuette of an eagle standing on a bull's head, the whole modelled on a triangular plinth. Clay brown: circular vent in back. Asia Minor, first-second century AD.
Height: 14.9 cm. A small knife cut by the bird's right claw, caused by carelessness before the piece was fired.

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MINERVA 19
Ancient Jewellery & Archaeology

Jerry Theodorou

In Herbert Hoffman’s *Collecting Greek Antiquities* the two pages devoted to detecting forgeries of ancient jewellery start with the cautionary words of an antiquities curator who said, ‘I wouldn’t touch anything made of gold’. Museums, dealers and collectors are justifiably wary of acquiring gold jewellery maintained to be ancient because gold’s inert qualities render it virtually impossible to ascertain its age. Silver and bronze corrode and marble develops root marks with the passage of centuries, but gold never changes. The key to evaluating the antiquity of jewellery lies in connoisseurship – in-depth knowledge of the manufacturing techniques, cultural context, and known examples of the ancient jeweller’s art. The twin goals of increasing knowledge and appreciation for ancient jewellery and aiding in the recognition of dubious items in the market were furthered in Bloomington, Indiana, on 26-28 September with the convening of an international symposium on ‘Ancient Jewellery and Archaeology’.

The antiquity of certain gold jewellery acquired before the 1930s can be evaluated by close examination of granulated portions since the technique used by ancient goldsmiths for affixing minute gold balls on to jewellery was not rediscovered until Little’s patented colloid hard soldering in 1933. The 1965 US exhibition, ‘Greek Gold: Jewellery From the Age of Alexander’ was found to contain several forgeries and many museums subsequently re-examined their holdings of ‘ancient’ jewellery. Ancient jewellery is usually found in tombs, so the best way to be absolutely assured of its authenticity is to know that its provenance is an ancient tomb. Ancient jewellery is a popular collectable today, as is evidenced by the success of exhibitions including the jewellery-rich ‘The Search for Alexander’, ‘Gold of Greece: Jewellery and Ornaments from the Benaki Museum’ (See *Minerva*, October 1990), and the spirited bidding drawn by lots of ancient jewels at the major auction houses. One of the foci of the Bloomington symposium was the archaeological context of jewellery, and the event was geared towards museum curators with unpublished collections.

Bloomington, Indiana, is a fitting site for a conference on ancient jewellery as it is home to the Indiana University Art Museum and its Burton Yost Berry Collection, which contains three and a half thousand pieces of ancient jewellery. Although it is a remarkably large and varied collection, the Burton Berry Collection does contain a number of rare and beautiful works of the ancient jeweller’s art. One of the Berry works, a gold necklace, was included in the 1980–83 ‘Search for Alexander’ exhibition that travelled to Washington, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, New Orleans and New York.

The ‘Ancient Jewellery and Archaeology’ conference featured nearly thirty scholarly presentations by leading experts on ancient jewellery from nine different countries. Among the British speakers were Sir John Boardman, author of numerous works on ancient rings and gems; British Museum Greek and Roman Antiquities’ Curator Dyfri Williams; Jack Ogden; National Museum of Scotland Curator Elizabeth Goring, and British Museum Prehistoric and Romano-British Antiquities’ Curator Catherine Johns. Leo Mildenberg, the Swiss numismatic scholar, collector and founder of Bank Leu Numismatics, delivered the opening remarks on ‘Burton Y. Berry: the Man and the Collector’.

The opening session at the conference dealt with ‘Contexts and Comparisons’, focusing on jewellery found in known excavated sites. Dr Dyfri Williams spoke on the ‘Kyme Treasure’, a magnificent hoard of
jewellery discovered in the Western Asia Minor city of Kyme, the main coastal city of Aiolis. Dr Elizabeth Goring addressed the 1984 discovery of jewellery in a tomb in Kalavasos-Ayios Dimitrios in Cyprus. The 1985 hoard of jewellery and coins found in the southern Gaulish town of Eauze was the subject of the talk by Helene Guiraud of the Universite de Toulouse-Le Mirail. The chronology of ancient coins has been elucidated rather satisfactorily, which aided Guiraud in ascertaining the date of the treasure’s burial. Judging from the technical aspects of the jewellery, she suggested that there was a workshop in north-east Gaul between Trelves and Cologne. The ‘Contexts and Comparisons’ section also included a presentation on Roman Jewellery by Andrew Oliver, former Associate Curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Oliver tackled the often thorny issue of distinguishing between Hellenistic and Roman jewellery, and used as a tool in this endeavor ancient representations of jewellery.

The second session covered the broad theme of ‘Techniques and Interpretations’. Dr Jack Ogden, author of the richly illustrated primer Jewellery of the Ancient World and Director of Independent Art Research Ltd of Cambridge, England, gave an overview of the methods for determining the provenance of allegedly ancient jewellery. Among the techniques covered by Ogden were analysis of the material, style and technical considerations in the jewellery’s manufacture. Sir John Boardman, Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art at Oxford University, looked at the characteristics of ancient jewellery apart from the purely aesthetic. The focus was on jewellery as objects – the materials with which jewellery was made, the value of ancient jewellery to those who wore it, and why and where jewellery was worn.

The cultural context of ancient jewellery, which was worn as finery by ladies of ancient Greece and Rome but also used for votive purposes, was another subject of inquiry in the conference. The discovery of jewellery in dedicatory shrines, revealing its votive function, also furnishes clues to an understanding of ancient beliefs in the afterlife, as the dead were buried in antiquity with their jewellery. Another function of the jewellery of the ancients relates to its amuletic properties. Representations of wheat were associated with fertility and golden jewellery depicting other divine or secular themes was also thought to be talismanic in nature. This topic was explored further by Robert A. Lunsingh Scheurleer of the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam in his discussion of pendants depicting the syncretistic god Harpsocrates. Andrew Oliver delivered a second conference paper on fifth-century Greek wreaths. Other papers in this panel examined bronze matrices in the George Ortiz Collection, the cultural context of gold Mycenaean jewellery, and the meaning of Shamshatu medallions from the ancient Near East.

The final session of the conference was devoted to studying museum collections of ancient jewellery, particularly those which have not been published fully. This presented a rare opportunity to become acquainted with some of the magnificent, albeit rare, works from Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History, Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum, New York's Metropolitan Museum and the Indiana University Art Museum.

In conjunction with the conference a special exhibition entitled ‘Earrings from the Ancient World: Selections from the Burton Y Berry Collection’ (6 August-8 October) displayed two hundred of the finest earrings from the vast Berry holdings in the Indiana University Art Museum. The collection of ancient jewellery formed by Burton Berry is of a type that is not likely to be duplicated. The style of Berry's collecting and the scope of his holdings are both out of fashion and not feasible in today's collecting environment. Whereas today either focus on objects of a particular type or period, Berry was among the magpie diplomat collectors who simply amassed as much as he could. In the unstable years before, during and after World War II, the Indiana-born Berry held an assortment of diplomatic posts in Athens, Istanbul, Naples, Rome, Cairo, Izmir, Bucharest and Bogota – an enviable string of assignments for an incurable collector. Although he was not of unlimited financial means Berry obsessively collected the finest ancient jewellery, ancient coins, bronze statuettes and early textiles his pocket would allow. His choices were by no means indiscriminate, and his acumen as a collector was demonstrated by exhibitions of his textile collection at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, and an exhibition of his antiquities in the Indiana University Art Museum in 1979. The bulk of Berry's ancient coin collection, amounting to approximately 1,500 pieces, was
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donated to the American Numismatic Society in New York, and over a hundred were given to the Indiana University Museum as well.

Much of the jewellery in the Berry collection, including the selected earrings that were on display in conjunction with the symposium, date from the Hellenistic period. The late fourth and early third centuries BC, during which the eastern gold-rich lands fell to the Greeks, ushered in a high point for the goldsmith's craft. In its most advanced stage gold Hellenistic jewellery did not consist simply of settings for precious stones, which is what most gold jewellery is today, but it was rather a true sculptural form, where gold was crafted into intricate figural forms - Greek sculpture in miniature. The earring pendant depicting a siren with a kithara (Fig 1) reveals the use of a variety of techniques to achieve the delicate details in the wings, diadem, feathered legs and the musical instrument. One such technique, filigree, involving the use of delicate gold wire, is featured prominently in the pair of gold earrings with pendants (Fig 2).

The Hellenistic Greek conquests in the East also introduced the discreet use of semi-precious stones in jewellery to create a balanced effect with gold, which remained the primary medium. The earring with a gold Eros riding a garnet dolphin suspended from a granulated golden ear hoop (Fig 3) is a delightful example of the pleasant admixture of gold and stones. The hoop earring with a golden head of a goat and carnelian, emerald and glass beads (Fig 4) dates from the Roman Imperial Period, when stones began to crowd out the finely crafted gold. By the later Roman period, the craftsmanship used for fashioning gold had deteriorated to the point that jewellery often consisted of crude golden settings surrounding coins, large stones or other centre-pieces. The third-century AD gold and onyx cameo earring (Fig 5) typifies the diluted artistic qualities which characterised the waning moments of the Classical world.

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The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford contains by far the largest, the best and the most important collection of Nubian antiquities in Britain. Unlike most other British museums, Oxford has displayed a major proportion of its Nubian collection for a considerable time, and the Taharqo shrine and Aspelta wall have formed an impressive centrepiece to the gallery since its completion in 1941. Even so, the cultures of Nubia have not received the public attention they really deserve. It is to be hoped that the renovation of this gallery, the opening of the British Museum’s new Nubian gallery and the creation of a Sudan Archaeological Research Society will stimulate greater public interest in this important region of north-east Africa.

The gallery in the Ashmolean Museum is named after F.L. Griffith, Professor of Egyptology at Oxford and the founder of Nubian studies in Britain. Griffith, a brilliant philologist, made great advances in our understanding of the Merotic script and language, and his excavations in Nubia produced a wealth of archaeological material which can be found in many British and foreign museums. It is a tragedy for Nubian studies in Britain that no academic position was ever created to ensure the continuity of the discipline. Despite the attempts of individuals to promote Nubian studies, and the renewed institutional interest, in the present economic climate it is unlikely that any university position will ever be created.

(right) From the Merotic cemetery at Faras, this pot with stylised lion masks and uraei on lotus flowers is one of the finest examples of Merotic pottery painting in the ‘academic style’.

The great university collections developed with different intentions from the national museums, but have become, themselves, nationally important. A feature of university collections has been the emphasis on archaeological material of all types, rather than the art objects which formed the core of the national collections. One of the notable aspects of the Oxford Nubian collection is that all of it comes from excavations, and predominantly from those conducted by the University itself, inaugurated by Professor Griffith and completed by M.F.L. Macadam and L.P. (now Sir Lawrence) Kirwan.

The display in the cases is arranged chronologically, beginning with small groups from the A and C group cemeteries at Faras, and of New Kingdom date from Faras and Buhen, but the bulk is of the 25th Dynasty, Napatan and Merotic periods. The very late and post-Meroitic periods are represented by material from the cemeteries of Meroe, Farka and Komasha.

The majority of the objects displayed comes from three contrasting sites excavated by the Oxford University expedition to Nubia. Faras, now beneath Lake Nubia (Nasser), lies on the Egyptian-Sudan frontier, and was excavated by Professor Griffith in the seasons 1910-12. It was the major administrative centre of the Egyptian Viceroy in the reign of Tutankhamun, and the seat of the Merotic Viceroy in late Ptolemaic and early Roman times. There were also earlier cemeteries of the A and C Groups, as well as an important Cathedral complex excavated by the Polish expedition in the 1960s. Kawa, in the Dongola reach of Upper Nubia, also possessed a small temple of Tutankhamun, although the town itself was probably founded by Amenhotep III or Akhenaten. Its ancient name, Gem-Aten, persisted into Merotic times. At Kawa, Griffith cleared only the temple area; the vast city mounds still await excavation. The principal temple was built by Taharqo (690-664 BC) of the 25th
Nubia

Dynasty, and continued to be a major Kushite shrine into the Meriotic period. Sanam, near the Fourth Cataract, also possessed a temple built by Taharqo. Its extensive cemetery dates from the 25th Dynasty, when Sanam may have been part of the town site of Napata, with its main religious centre at Gebel Barkal, and royal cemeteries at Kurru and Nuri.

There is relatively little in the collection illustrating the period of New Kingdom Egyptian control under the Viceroy, but some of the pieces are noteworthy. The fine stela of Amenhotep, Viceroy of Nubia in the reign of Thutmose IV, comes from Buhen and showed the official before the scorpion goddess Isis-Selkot, a consort of Horus. Great care was taken to erase the Viceroy’s figure without damaging the remainder of the relief, presumably after his fall from power. In the Amarna period, the Amun element in the name and titles was more clumsily removed, but later restored. From the small temple built in the name of Tutankhamun at Kawa comes a relief block showing the presentation of a wonderful fat bull, decorated ready for sacrifice, his hooves curving under his great weight. The figure of the bowing official is in the Amarna style, and his name is, apparently, Sehetep-Aten-Khuy.

The period of Nubia’s greatest influence, when its kings ruled Egypt as the 25th (Kushite) Dynasty (712-656 BC), was a high point of culture, and is well-represented in this collection. The 800 years of Nubian civilisation which follow the 25th Dynasty, the Meriotic period, have long suffered from being categorised by Egyptologists as a gradual decline in which the Egyptian style became increasingly debased and corrupt. Fortunately, the development of Meriotic studies over the past two decades has adopted new approaches which have shown how the Egyptian and other foreign influences were absorbed, and adapted for use in a fundamentally different cultural milieu.

The stela of Pe-abtet-emery, mother of the God’s Wife of Amun, Amenirdis I, dates from the beginning of the 25th Dynasty. It comes not from Nubia, but from Abydos where a number of royal women of this period were buried. The figure of the queen is typical for royal Kushite women, and differs from the Egyptian conventions.

From the high point of Kushite power (25th Dynasty) are the two most striking monuments to be seen in the gallery, the Shrine of Taharqo (overleaf) and the Wall of Aspelta (above and opposite), both from the Hypostyle Hall of the temple of Kawa. The recent conservation began with the west wall of the Taharqo Shrine in 1989 (carried out with the assistance of a grant from American Express) and cleaning has revealed the light colour of the stone, as well as traces of the original paint. The reliefs are fairly conventional offering scenes, but executed in bold raised relief of the best 25th Dynasty work. The west wall shows the king before Amun who was worshipped at Kawa as a ram-headed god accompanied by the goddesses Anuket and Satet; he was thus a form of the Cataract god, Khnum. Certain features of regalia distinguish the king as Nubian, not Egyptian: notably the cap-crown and the double-uraeus, the significance of which is still debated. The ear-rings, not worn by Egyptian kings, and the cord round the neck are ornamented with the head of a ram crowned with solar-disk.

The pale grey granite ram from the processional way of the temple of Kawa has a companion in the
British Museum. A hole in the top of the head indicates that originally they each carried a solar disk, perhaps with a pair of wavy horns and decorated with uraei, as is the relief on the shrine. There is a possibility that they are recycled New Kingdom pieces, the figures of Taharqo between the ram’s legs having been reused.

Although the Kushites were driven out of Egypt by the Assyrians and failed, with the reunification of the country under the rule of the Nineveh, their Nubian kingdom flourished. Aselta (c. 591-568 BC) was a contemporary of the 26th Dynasty, and the chapel-wall from Kawa shows the continuance of fine-quality culture during this period. The wall originally closed off a section of the hypostyle Hall of the Kawa temple. Stylastically similar to the Taharqo relief, the king is shown with long kilt with elaborate tasselled cords twisted through his belt. Aselta, like Taharqo, wears the cape-crown and double-uraeus, and the ram-head earrings and cord. This regalia can also be seen on the boldly bearded, life-size grey granite royal head in the wall case. The head, comparable with the series of royal statues excavated at Barkal, was clearly once very impressive. The cape crown, with its fillet and boldly modelled ram’s horn curving round the cheek, is roughened to take gold foil. Many Kushite royal statues, both large- and small-scale, were enriched with gold on the crowns and jewels which, particularly on the colossal blackgranite statues from Barkal, must have created an imposing effect.

The 25th Dynasty kings took many Egyptian workmen to Nubia to construct the temples of Barkal, Sanam and Kawa. An inscription of Taharqo says that sculptors from Memphis were employed at Kawa, where the decoration of the pylon entrance was copied from Old Kingdom funerary temples at Sakkarā. The fine quality of Egyptian work of this period is demonstrated by the large group of bronzes discovered at Kawa. Particularly noteworthy are the handsome handle of a censer in the form of a falcon head with a gift mask, and the splendid figure of Monthu with human ears.

The material from the cemetery of Sanam, possibly the town site of Napata, is contemporary with the 25th Dynasty, and produced a wide range of objects of purely Egyptian type as well as local variants on the same. One of the key pieces of this display is the faience figure of a swimming girl (below). Very similar to the well-known New Kingdom ointment spoon, this was probably used during funeral ceremonies for dispensing incense or wine. The plump hips and thighs, the treatment of facial features and the type of hair all indicate this is a Nubian, rather than Egyptian, piece.

The temple of Sanam was identical in plan, and very similar in decoration, to that at Kawa. The quality of the sandstone was, however, inferior, as can be seen here from the blocks depicting the procession of the Sacred Barques, people on mule-back and mule-drawn cart. These reliefs were certainly painted, a fine surface and detailed modelling being achieved with a thin layer of plaster. The procession may be compared with the block from Taharqo’s temple at Kawa, which showed, on a larger scale, a similar sort of procession. The Kawa block is of much finer quality and is also unusual in that the horse wears a sun-hat.

Although the relief decoration of Sanam temple may not have been as fine as that of Kawa, such fragments of the temple fittings that survive show that it was splendidly appointed. Amongst the fragments of sculpture excavated by Griffith in the temple of Sanam is a large granite serpent head, certainly of the reign of Amenhotep III and originally from the temple of Soleb. It was removed to the Napata region in the 25th Dynasty, along with other pieces, notably the British Museum’s ‘Prudhoe’ lions. A similar, but complete, serpent, from the great temple of Amun at Gebelein Barkal, is in the Boston Museum. Also from Sanam temple is the head of Amun in quartzite. The fragment, well-preserved and retaining its high polish, carries part of one of the names of Tanwenetamani (664-656 BC), last king of the 25th Dynasty. As was cus-
tomary at this time, the king's features have not been transferred to the god who is shown idealised and without Nubian characteristics.

The Meroitic phase is represented by a wide range of objects from the cemetery of Faras, near Abu Simbel, which served as the administrative centre for Lower Nubia. The rich burials produced large numbers of imported objects and pottery and a wealth of locally-made painted vessels. This collection demonstrates the complex and syncretistic nature of Kushite culture. Gold rings decorated with Hellenistic and Egyptian religious motifs are to be found alongside heavy bronze anklets in a purely local tradition.

The pottery is one of the most significant of Meroitic products and, although there are influences in form and decoration from imported pottery and bronze vessels, the interpretation and execution is uniquely Nubian. Wheel-made, painted pots are found alongside hand-made blackware vessels with roulette decoration, which continue a Nubian tradition dating back to prehistoric times. Indeed, it has been suggested that the wheel-made pots, which show much greater foreign influence in style and decoration, were the work of men, and that the more traditional hand-made wares were made by women.

It is certain that the wheel-made pots were manufactured at only a small number of centres, and a number of individual artists have been identified. The Ashmolean collection contains some of the finest examples to have been excavated. Amongst the cartoon-like rows of grinning crocodiles and frogs, guinea fowl and bulging-eyed snakes are the precisely decorated vessels of the 'Academic school', best represented by the spherical jar with masks of the lion god, Apedemak (page 25). Contrasting with this is the easily recognisable work of the 'Prisoner Painter' (below) and the 'Cartoonist', both with sketchy, improvisatory styles.

One of the more bizarre objects in the collection is the massive bronze torpedo-shaped object, with the cartouches of Amanikhabale (mid-first century BC). Excavated at Kawa, it is almost certainly the top of a temple flagstaff. It has been shown that flat bronze plaques in the form of bound captives, sometimes with the names of enemy tribes or rulers, were nailed to the bottom of the flag staves, to be symbolically crushed as the staves were erected.

Although the Meroitic 'State' fragmented in the fourth-fifth centuries AD, the cultural traditions persisted as can be seen in the objects from Firka and Kosha, and some of those from the late occupation of Faras. Bead-work is found in Nubian sites from all periods, and remarkably similar examples were made until very recently.

From the southern fringes of the Kushite world is a collection from the Wellcome excavations at Jebel Moya. Coarse local pottery is found alongside imports and amulets from the Napata-Meroe regions. The lip, nose and ear studs suggest cultural traditions related to the ethnic groups of the modern southern Sudan.

The wide range of imports into Nubia from the Mediterranean world through all periods is shown by the fragments of Late Cypriote I and Mycenaean III pottery from Buhen; Palestinian imitation Cypriote spindle jars from Sanam, and many objects from the cemetery of Faras. During the early Roman period, fragile objects such as imitation Barbarine ware and glass vessels were taken to Nubia. The Ashmolean has a particularly large Roman glass bottle. From an earlier period is the handsome faience aryballos in the form of a head of the river-god, Achelous, from Kawa (left). A Cypriote source has been suggested for this piece, but it could equally have been manufactured in Naukratis. It dates from the sixth century BC, a period when relations between Egypt and Nubia are supposed to have been limited. Also from Kawa came the splendid Hellenistic ivory figure, probably from the decoration of a box. Originating in an Alexandrian workshop during the late Ptolemaic, or possibly early Augustan period source, the carver was certainly influenced by the maenad of Skopas.

Although the Ashmolean's Nubian collection comes from a small number of sites it clearly shows the complex nature of the ancient Nubian cultures, always influenced by Egypt, but absorbing and adapting Egyptian – and later Hellenistic and Roman – iconography and religious ideas, to their own traditions and requirements. No single museum outside Khartoum can be said to be truly representative of all Nubian sites and historical phases, but many museums in Europe and North America possess very fine collections which are now being brought out from storage, dusted off and properly displayed, often after long periods of undeserved neglect (overleaf we look at the new Nubian gallery at the Royal Ontario Museum). The British Museum's new gallery complements what of Oxford, with much material from the same sites, but also with large displays from the Egypt Exploration Society's excavations at Sesebi, Buhen and Qasr Ibrim. For the earliest of Nubia's cultures, Khartoum Mesolithic and Neolithic, a visit to the Petrie Museum at University College London is recommended; there can be found a large collection of pottery, flints and other artefacts from the excavations of A.J. Arkell in the Khartoum region. The Petrie Museum also has a display from its collection of material from the excavations of John Garstang at Meroe itself. However, for the spectacular finds of the joint Boston Museum and Harvard University excavations in the Kushite royal cemeteries and the temples of Gebel Barkal, a visit to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, will be necessary. Boston Museum plans to open its new Nubian Gallery early in 1992.
North America’s First Nubian Gallery

On 23 January, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto is opening North America’s first gallery devoted to the land of Nubia. The museum houses one of the largest collections of Nubian artefacts in North America, the strength of which lies in material from the later periods (AD 200-1820). The new gallery will provide a chronological history of Nubian cultures, beginning with the formation of hunting and fishing villages in 4500 BC and continuing to the present day. Objects in the gallery range from an ancient copper and ivory dagger (2000 BC) to a finely crafted tambour (folk instrument) made for the museum in 1990.

Although each new archaeological find helps scholars gradually to piece together Nubia’s long and rich history, one mystery continues to confound researchers: Meroitic writing. Developed in the third century BC by the ancient Nubian civilisation of Meroe, Meroitic writing is the second oldest writing system in Africa after Egyptian hieroglyphs, yet researchers are still unable to decipher its meaning.

Scholars hope to find a Nubian equivalent to the Rosetta Stone, which unlocked the meaning of Egyptian hieroglyphs by showing the Greek meanings for the Egyptian signs. Dr Nicholas Millet, Curator of the ROM’s Egyptian Department, thought that he had come close in 1963 with his discovery of the Adda stone, on display in the gallery. Unfortunately, while the artefact shows decipherable Egyptian writing for the Meroitic text, there is not enough of the Meroitic writing to permit translation. Once the key to Meroitic script is found, an enormous amount of new information about ancient Nubian history may be learned from the many objects which have inscriptions on them.

Much of the gallery traces the long relationship between Nubia and Egypt, its neighbour to the north. The Egyptian domination of Nubia (1570-1080 BC) is evident in the great number of Egyptian-made artefacts unearthed in Nubia: ancient basalt axes and a bronze knife and spearhead displayed in the gallery give evidence of the effort that the Egyptians made to secure and guard Nubia’s abundant supply of natural resources. A silver Egyptian scarab and sandstone door jamb inscribed with hieroglyphs attest to the influence Egyptians had on everyday Nubian life.

In the eighth century BC Nubian kings conquered their former overlords in Egypt and ruled there for some 75 years. Under the strong control of these Nubian pharaohs, both Egyptian and Nubian cultures were revitalised and art and architecture reached new heights. A fine collection of faience ushabitis discovered in the Nubian rulers’ royal pyramids at Nuri can be seen in the gallery and illustrate how Egyptian religious practices continued to exert influence on Nubian culture.

In addition to exploring the chronological history of Nubia and its close ties with Egypt, the gallery also looks at patterns of everyday life, focusing on archaeological finds from Gebel Adda, a town which was first established around AD 200 and continued until 1800. The site was destroyed in the 1960s by the construction of Egypt’s Aswan Dam, but not before some of its treasures were rescued. The broad range of Gebel Adda artefacts featured in the gallery provides fascinating details on the trade, tools, industries, personal adornment, and furnishings from this once thriving Nubian community.
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The Gold of the Helvetii

Little is known about the religion of the Helvetii, the Celtic tribe that inhabited what is now Switzerland, but it is fair to assume that the sun played an important part. Some of the most impressive of their gold objects are in the shape of suns, and many of these can now be seen in an exhibition travelling around Switzerland.

Catherine Milner

(Fig 1) Gold dish embossed with suns, moons and deer. It was found placed face downwards on a flat stone, underneath a pottery vessel.

(Fig 2) (top) Two-piece gold pendant. The hollow ball is decorated with rough lines of granulation. The crescentic filigree consists of the finest twisted wires and 10 of the original 11 rings move freely where they are suspended.
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turned into objects for only the most special people or the most important occasions. Much of the gold that has been discovered was in graves because it was believed that gold given to the dead found its way to the wielders of divine power.

One of the most spectacular objects, however, is a large bust of Marcus Aurelius, found somewhat ignominiously in a sewage channel in Avenches in 1939 (Fig 4). It is extremely rare to find such a large portrait of an emperor in such a highly prized material so far away from the centre of power and it may well have been made to celebrate some imperial visit. It was probably executed by a native craftsman at the end of the second century AD and was a copy of a Roman original. More than anything else in the exhibition it demonstrates the use of gold as an implement of power, which in this case is political, but was equally used in a religious context suggesting divine power, or merely for social leverage used by the aristocracy to assume a powerful status. From this point of view the significance of gold is much the same today as it was in the days of the Helvetii.

(Fig 3) Detail of one of the torses from the Erstfeld hoard, found high up in an Alpine pass.

(Fig 4) (left) Gold bust of the emperor Marcus Aurelius (AD 161-180). He wears a coat of mail with a Medusa head. In comparison with other portraits of the emperor this one is distinguished by the strictly frontal pose, blind stare, low forehead and decorative treatment of the hair. A native goldsmith seems to have been at work here without having a model to work from.

Catherine Milner is an art historian and freelance journalist.

Gold of the Helvetii: Celtic Treasures from Switzerland is at the Bernisches Historisches Museum in Berne until 5 January and at the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire in Geneva from 22 January to 15 March.

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MINERVA 33
An elaborate and detailed stela, this example may be divided into four basic zones. The uppermost, the lunette, shows a central winged sundisk, below which is a scarab beetle flanked by a pair of crowned uraeus serpents (Nekhbet and Wadjet) and a similar pair of recumbent jackals. Beneath the lunette, and set off by a geometric frieze above and below, is a scene that shows the deceased owner facing a divine boat which carries eight deities. The owner raises her hands in adoration and wears a full wig, surmounted by a lotus bud, and a long, pleated gown. Behind her figure is her ba, her spiritual aspect represented as a human-headed falcon. The deities on the divine boat may be identified as Khepre (in the form of a scarab in the bow of the vessel), ibis-headed Thoth (Lord of Hermopolis), two female divinities, the falcon-headed sun god Re-Horakhty holding a serpent (Apolis?), two male divinities, and falcon-headed Horus the Elder in the stern. Beneath this zone is the main scene, also set off by a frieze. It shows the deceased owner standing, her hands again held aloft in adoration, but this time she worships the mumiform god Osiris, his son Horus, wife Isis, sister-in-law Nephthys, and the jackal-headed Anubis. Below this scene is a hieroglyphic text consisting of six horizontal registers that read right to left. The text registers are alternately painted green and tan, and are set off by blue bands. The entire composition is contained within a frieze which is, in turn, encircled by a band of red paint. A palette of white, red, yellow, tan, green, blue and black was used to create the composition, which blends elements of the solar caji with those of the cult of Osiris.

An impressive collection of nearly 300 antiquities representing the life and culture of the ancient Egyptian civilization goes on display this month at two California sites. ‘Temple, Tomb and Dwelling: Egyptian Antiquities from the Harer Family Trust Collection’ is on display at the University Art Gallery at California State University, San Bernardino, and the San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands, from 8 January to 1 March. With objects spanning from 4000 BC to AD 700, the California State exhibition will focus on specific themes such as mummification and religion while the museum display will feature 170 antiquities representing more broadly Egyptian culture and historical development. Through displays of jewellery, amulets and small statues, including a three-foot-high stone carving of Queen Nefertari, gallery visitors will have the chance to observe Egyptian life and culture. The exhibition will feature objects which were believed to facilitate the connection between the heavens and the Earth, as well as the functional, practical objects used in everyday life. Professor Richard Johnson, Chairman of the California State University Art Department and Gallery Director, calls the exhibition ‘the most important collection of Egyptian antiquities to be displayed in the greater Los Angeles area since the King Tutankhamun exhibition... in 1976’. The exhibition of the Harer Family Trust Collection reflects the taste of the principal collector Dr Benson Harer, a medical doctor, and his passion for antiquities as they relate to ancient medicine. Over the last 14 years Dr Harer has participated in numerous archaeological excavations, collecting objects and researching ancient medical practices. For example, Harer’s research concludes that ancient Egyptians did not have access to opiates for the relief of pain but were aware of the narcotic properties of the lotus.

Block statues, so called because of their compact, cubic form, were mainly used by the ancient Egyptians as temple or votive statues. First introduced into the corpus of Egyptian sculptural types during the Middle Kingdom, block statues continued to be a popular form for private sculpture until the close of the Ptolemaic Period. Such statues typically represent the owner wearing a long full cloak and a shoulder-length wig while seated on the ground with the knees drawn up towards the chest and the arms folded over the knees. This pose reduces the body to a simple cubic mass from which only the head, hands and feet emerge. The resulting sculptural form was particularly appropriate for a private statue intended to represent its owner in eternal vigil within the temple precinct of his god. The compact form minimised the risk of breakage, and the front, back and sides of the statue provided large, flat areas suitable for inscriptions and relief carvings. Wah-ib-re’s statue is decorated only on its front surface. The priest is shown with his arms raised in adoration before the mumiform god Osiris. Both deity and worshipper are carved in sunk relief and both are identified by the vertical hieroglyphic text columns surrounding their figures. Above, the stylised vault of heaven is indicated by a series of five-pointed stars within an elongated hieroglyph (pt) meaning ‘sky’. Interestingly this combination of three-dimensional statue with two-dimensional relief representation tends to unite in one composition the functions of votive statue and votive stela.
Unquestionably the most important work of ancient Egyptian art in the Harer Family Trust collection, this extraordinary sculpture depicts a queen who lived during the reign of Ramesses II. The queen is shown as a participant in a temple procession, and she strides forward with her left leg advanced. A sacred standard is carried in her left arm, its top graced by a bust of the goddess Mut, consort of the principal state deity Amun. Mut’s face is framed by her heavy wig, surmounted by the double crown and uraeus serpent, and the staff of the standard is inscribed. Although the text is not preserved in its entirety, it reads: ‘The good god, the son of Amun, born of Mut in order to rule all that the sun’s disk encircles, the lord of the Two Lands, User-maat-re Setep-en-re [Ramesses II]...’

As a standard-bearing statue, the queen is all the more remarkable. The standard-bearing statue type, while a popular form of temple sculpture during the New Kingdom, was almost entirely restricted to male owners. This example shows the queen wearing a heavy wig, composed of carefully carved curls, over which is a vulture head-dress. Such a head-dress is particularly appropriate, for the vulture, as a symbol of female divinity, was closely associated with both queens and the goddess Mut, whose name was written with a vulture hieroglyph. In addition, the queen wears a pair of disk-shaped earrings, a broad collar, a bracelet on her right wrist, an elegantly pleated gown and sandals. The gown is fringed at its edges and is held in place by a knotted tie incised between, and just below, the breasts. The queen also holds a folded handkerchief in her right hand.

Although the statue base, which might have identified the queen, is missing, the sculpture is otherwise well preserved. Only the queen’s nose and left forearm show loss, and the surface of the stone continues to reflect the contrasting levels of polish favoured by Ramesside sculptors. The queen’s face, neck and hands have received a greater degree of polish, lending the flesh a smoother appearance than the elements of the costume, thus drawing the viewer’s attention directly to the head. A similar contrast may also be noted, to a lesser degree, for the facial features of the bust of Mut on the standard in relation to her crown and head-dress. The differing degrees of surface polish that so strikingly set off the queen’s flesh from her attire reflect the ancient sculptor’s mastery of form and meticulous attention to detail.

Since the queen’s name has not been preserved on the sculpture it is impossible to identify her with certainty, but three queens, each important in the reign of Ramesses II, have been suggested: his mother Tuya, his chief queen and wife Nefertari, and his daughter Merit-Amun, who was elevated to her mother’s position as chief queen following Nefertari’s death. Sculptural images of each queen survive, but owing to significant differences in scale, ancient Egyptian conventions of portraiture at the time, and the likelihood of family similarities, a comparison of the facial features can, in this case, prove illusory. The Mut imagery of the sculpture’s iconography, and Mut’s role as consort to the god Amun is similarly problematic in helping to identify the queen. Since the text states that Ramesses II is the son of Amun and that he was born of Mut, an argument might be made that the queen should be identified with Tuya, Ramesses II’s mother. However, such phrases are rather standard and are an integral element of ancient Egypt’s religious concept of the divinity of kingship. Hence, the inscription should probably not be taken as explicitly representing the degree of filiation between the statue owner and Ramesses II. The sculpture is, in fact, more likely to represent either of Ramesses II’s principal queens, Nefertari or Merit-Amun, despite Mut’s standing as a mother goddess, for the queen represented would hold the same relationship with Ramesses II that the goddess Mut maintained as consort to the state god Amun. In this light, a comparison of this sculpture with the small-scale representation of Nefertari in a group statue of the youthful Ramesses II in turn reveals certain similarities, notably in the treatment of the eyes, the expression of the mouth, and the presentation of the relationship between the robe and the female form beneath it.

A 206 page catalogue, illustrated in colour and black and white, accompanies the exhibition.
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The Ancient Coin Market
As Investors Retreat, Collectors Have a Rare Opportunity

Eric J. McFadden

While the great international auction houses have been fretting over falling sales during the past year, collectors have been breathing a sigh of relief. In the coin market, as in the general art market, the pure investors have largely withdrawn, leaving the collectors to compete only amongst themselves. This is a healthy situation, at least from the collectors’ perspective. Less competition should in theory mean lower prices for collectors.

It is interesting to look at what has actually happened to prices in the past year. Surprisingly, prices for most of the better coins have not dropped. Despite the recession, and despite the withdrawal of investors, competition has remained keen for rare and interesting material. Collectors continue to buy, and buy strongly. Rare and attractive Greek coins, rare Roman emperors, unusual Roman reverse types and rare Byzantine coins have been in great demand. Market prices in these areas, we can now see, have for a long time been basically a product of collector demand. The withdrawal of investors has simply proven the strength of the underlying collector support for the market.

At the same time, commoner coins have not fared so well. The market in lower priced common material is dependent upon the constant influx of new collectors, who tend to start at the more affordable end of the market. In a recession, fewer new collectors enter the field, since very few people are looking for new ways to spend their money. Established collectors already own the common coins in their specialities, so the market for the most readily available material is weak.

Dealers, therefore, now see a twotier market. Collectors are eagerly seeking the better and rarer coins, while many attractive but commoner pieces cannot be sold even at significant discounts. This situation is a wonderful opportunity for the beginner. Good quality common coins can be purchased at historic lows, and this is just the sort of coin a new collector should buy.

Common coin types available to the new collector, with approximate price ranges in various conditions

- Alexander the Great silver tetradrachm, 336-323 BC, £100-£1,000.
- Athens silver tetradrachm, 430-415 BC, £100-£650.
- Tyre silver shekel ('Thirty pieces of silver'), 1st century BC, £75-£300.
- Augustus silver denarius, 27 BC–AD 14, £50-£1,000.
- Hadrian silver denarius, AD 117-138, £30-£300.
- Constantine I bronze follis, AD 307-337, £5-£75.

For anyone who has considered becoming involved in ancient coins, this is a perfect time. For the potential new collector, a few helpful hints are in order.

Hints for the New Collector
• Learn as much as you can. Buy one or more general books on an area that interests you, or check them out of your local library. Any good dealer can recommend the books that are most useful to the beginner.

• Subscribe to a specialist publication in your chosen field. The Celator, published in America (PO Box 123, Lodi, WI 53555, USA), is a high quality general magazine that caters to the collector of ancient coins, with news of events, general interest articles, and advertisements. Several scholarly journals are also available.

• Contact a number of dealers, tell them of your interest, and ask to be placed on their mailing lists. Most will charge a reasonable subscription fee for this service. Look through the price lists and auction catalogues that you receive, trying to get a feel for what interests you most, for the quality of material available, and for prices.

• Attend coin fairs in your area, and examine coins that are on display. This is the best way of becoming familiar with the coins themselves.

• Buy a few coins. You will learn things from handling the coins that no book can tell you, and you will find an added incentive for studying the history behind a piece when you own it. Of course, holding the object in your hand gives that tangible thrill that is the main reason for collecting.

• Do not hesitate to seek advice. Other collectors are usually glad to share their knowledge, and a local numismatic society often affords a convenient meeting-place. Dealers often have a wealth of experience in the field and are usually pleased to help newer collectors.

Photographs courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group Inc.
Dark Age Naval Power

The subtitle ‘A re-assessment of Frankish and Anglo-Saxon seafaring activity’ summarises very well the intention and content of this book which, it would appear, was developed from a doctoral thesis presented at the University of Lancaster. The author’s thesis is that ‘Germanic naval activity can be traced back almost to the dawn of the recorded history of barbarian Europe’. This activity has gone unrecognised partly, the author argues, because it straddles the end of the ancient world and the beginning of the Middle Ages and partly because the numerous finds in Denmark, Norway and Finland of the remains of ships and boats from the so-called Viking period (say AD 700-1050) have concentrated attention on this period and on Fenno-Scandia to the exclusion of other studies. The author might well have added that, as your reviewer has long argued in, for instance, The Evolution of the Wooden Ship, there has been an element of nationalism in the intense study of the Scandinavia ship finds which is not becoming less marked today. The study in Denmark, for instance, of the sailing abilities of replicas of archaeological finds shows signs of moving from archaeological experiment to a specialised branch of naval history. Haywood has produced a stimulating and original work. As he points out in one example, literary evidence shows that the raids of Saxons on the east coast of England between the third and fifth centuries were on the same scale as the Viking raids of three centuries later. On the whole the author is good on his ships. He has little time for instance for the theory that the Utrecht ship represents a forebear of the ho! ho! (it has even been suggested that she is an ancestor of the Swedish two transom pram and the south Norwegian pram.) He argues for the use of the


Henry Blundell (1728-1810) was some nine years older than another Lancashire squire, Charles Townley of Towneley, and like him was barred by his adherence to the Catholic faith from taking part in public life in that ‘enlightened’ age. (Townley, incidentally, was not, as here claimed, ‘educated by the Jesuits in France.’ According to DNB, his school was Douai, then as now run by the Benedictines.) The two men were friends of long standing, and it was on a visit to Rome with Townley in 1776 that Blundell began to collect. This was Townley’s third visit to Rome, and on this occasion he purchased far fewer sculptures than before. For Blundell the appearance on the market of sculptures from the Villa Mattel and the Villa d’Este opened up a new phase in his life. Like Townley he was to become an obsessive collector, acquiring sculptures from other sources in Rome and later from English collections (e.g. Cawdor in 1800 and Bessborough in 1801), again often with Townley’s advice.

Blundell’s collection eventually surpassed that of Townley, at least in numbers of works in marble, if not in quality and scholarly interest. It might indeed have benefited from the kind of ‘weeding’ undertaken by Townley, who was a better scholar and, by the standards of his day, a model collector. It is doubtful whether he would have countenanced the nautical surgery that reduced the Sleeping Hermaphroditte from the Bessborough collection to the Ince Sleeping Venus. The British Museum’s drawing of the masterpiece in its original state is here reproduced without reference to the earlier publication by Seymour Howard (recently reprinted in a volume reviewed in these pages, Sept/Oct 1991, page 39).

Unlike Townley, who left voluminous notes and several manuscripts in his catalogues of his collection but actually published very little himself, Blundell produced two catalogues and had them printed for private circulation. The second (1809-10) was illustrated with engravings, several of which are here reproduced.

Again unlike Townley, who kept his collection in his London house and only toyed with the idea of a gallery at his ancestral home near Burnley, Blundell took his collection to Ince and, for the sculptures that were not displayed in the house itself, added accommodation that included the ‘Garden Pantheon’, described by Michaelis as ‘a large hall with a cupola and circular skylight’.

Michaelis visited the collection in 1873 and 1877, and the entry on Ince in his Ancient Marbles in Great Britain (1882) amounted to some 400 items, not counting a few objects of bronze and other materials. The collection was last catalogued in full by Bernard Ashmole some sixty years ago. In the meantime, archaeological scholarship and standards of publication have both moved on, and the collection itself has changed hands, having been generously presented to the City of Liverpool by Colonel Joseph Weld, kinsman of the collector and heir of the estate. Ince Blundell Hall is now a convent and convalescent home, and the collection has been moved to Liverpool, where the ancient sculptures are housed in the Museum and the modern in the Walker Art Gallery.

This is part I of the first volume of a series of five to be devoted to the classical sculptures. It consists of an introduction to the collection and concordances of the various previous catalogues, by Edmund Southworth, and a catalogue of the Roman female portraits by Jane Fefer, who will also catalogue the male portraits in Part 2. Three subsequent volumes will contain the rest of the collection, and the fifth will add a catalogue of the modern pieces to an account of the collection as a whole in the context of the eighteenth-century art market. It is a work for scholars and libraries; there will surely be scope also for a less exhaustive treatment for the general reader.

B.F. Cook, Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities, The British Museum
The Inscriptions of Roman Britain. Vol. II: Instrumentum Domesticum (Personal Belongings and the Like). Fasc. 3


This is a very welcome addition to the literature on inscriptions from Roman Britain. Its 'big brother', Volume 1 that dealt with inscriptions on stone, was published as long ago as 1965. This fascicle deals with rather more low key items but is extensive for all that, comprising brooches, rings, gems, bracelets, shields, weapons, iron tools, baldric fittings, votives in gold, silver and bronze, lead pipes, roundels, sheets and other lead objects, stone roundels, pottery and bone roundels, and other objects of bone - a formidable list of categories RIB 2421-2441. Bone roundels, frequent finds on excavations, are the most substantial part of the listing (381 items), and are often quite schematic with letters or numbers. Finger rings are next, with 84 entries, followed by brooches (60). Over half of the latter (41) have the well-known AVCISAA inscription moulded across the head of the bow and some of the type have other names but, of course, there are many more brooches of the Aucissa type that have no inscription. Large numbers of this type of brooch, manufactured probably in Gaul, were imported from around the Conquest in AD 43 to about AD 60. It is strange that more inscribed examples have not turned up since the inscription was apparently produced by hammering the head of the bow into a die, and the numerous variant details noted indicates a high production rate.

Certain classes of inscribed objects are of greater interest for the scholar and student by reason of their personal nature, particularly the votives, which often give names as well as comments. The well-known gold ring from Silchester (here 2422.14, now at The Vyne, Basingstoke), inscribed for Senicianus, has often been linked with the curse tablet from Lydney (RIB 306) where a certain Silvianus accuses Senicianus of theft. But, as Dr Tomlin cautiously opines, 'the identity cannot be formally disproved, but seems unlikely'.

Other particularly interesting votives are the series of triangular plaques in silver for fixing to walls, from the Water Newton Christian silver treasure found in 1975. It seems pedantically perverse of the editors to list these as Chesterton (the parish) when all the references and publications of them, and the rest of the treasure (all found within the walled town), always cite it as the Water Newton Treasure. A cross reference is made from the latter to the former in the index, but the perversity was uncalled for and only makes for confusion.

The cut-off date for entries is given as 1986, but it is gratifying to note in places that the editors have
Coins

Do not be deceived by the front cover illustration of some corroded bronze and Roman silver coins, nor by the fact that the author is well-known as a Roman specialist. This book is not solely about Roman coins – it is a book for anyone with any interest or curiosity about coins, what they are, their dating, evidence from their designs, and economic evidence. True, ancient coins are used to some extent by Dr Burnett in his explanations, but then so many of the questions posed concern earlier coins, be they ancient or medieval. Excellent examples are taken from both spheres, as well as archaeological evidence where appropriate.

This book is a masterpiece of intelligent, readable compression and, as the author points out, 'coins are an essential tool for the archaeologist and the historian in extending our knowledge of the past'. Too often both sides have viewed the other with suspicion – here the answers to how coins can be an invaluable aid to both are clearly laid out. Every numismatist, from layman to pundit, should read this book – in the first instance it will guide and with the latter it will certainly clarify thoughts, putting them succinctly into words and print.

Peter A. Clayton


This is a long-awaited publication much talked of amongst curators and collectors, as it has been known for some time that Brian Spencer, formerly Senior Keeper at the Museum of London, was working on it. In recent years the number of pilgrim 'badges' made...
Books Received

Inclusion of a book in this section does not preclude its review in a subsequent issue

Augustus Caesar by David Shotton. Routledge, London, 1991. 98 pp., 5 figs. Paperback, £19.99. A concise view of the first emperor of Rome who found it in clay and left it in marble. This is written largely for students preparing for Advanced Level examinations, but nevertheless it is a good and readable review of Augustus which explores his rise from near obscurity, his reforms and, not least, his legacy to his successors, and that includes modern Europe.

Viking Age England by Julian Richards. Batsford/English Heritage, London, 1991. 143 pp., 84 b/w illus., 11 colour plates. Hardback, £25; paperback, £13.99. The author has first hand experience of Viking archaeology from his work on the Coppergate excavations at York, and he now teaches in the Archaeology Department of York University. Following the excellent style of this series, Dr Richards first sets the scene of the development of the Viking Age from late Saxon England to the Norman Conquest. The impact of the raids is followed by colonisation and he then examines aspects of Viking England in specific chapters on such topics as towns, trade, churches, death and burial, etc. This is a very readable account, well illustrated, of the Vikings in their context and their influence on England in the later first millennium AD. It is a book that will obviously be of use to students for background reading but it will also be very much welcomed by the interested layman.

Russian Copper Icons and Crosses from the Kunz Collection: Castings of Faith by R.E. Ahlborn and V.B.B. Espinola. Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, 1991. 85 pp., 20 colour plates, 57 illus. Paperback, £17.75; £11.95. The 50 icons presented here were collected in the late nineteenth century by George Kunz, and are now in the National Museum of American History. The book traces the historical and religious significance of copper icons, discussing their imagery, spiritual function and place in the daily life of the pre-reform Russian Orthodox Church and some Old Believer communities active in the United States today. All the pieces are illustrated in a detailed catalogue that is preceded by a series of short essays assessing their use and manufacture.

The Cycadic Spirit: Masterpieces from the Nicholas P. Goulandris Collection by Colin Renfrew. Thames and Hudson, London, 1991. 207 pp., 183 illus., 142 in colour. Hardback, £32. Cycadic marble figures stand at the beginning of Western European art, spanning roughly 2700-2400 BC and the Goulandris family's interest in and collection of these figures is legendary. Professor the Lord Renfrew is one of the leading exponents on Cycadic art and the combination of his expertise, the pieces from the Goulandris collection and, not least, the contribution of stunning photos of the objects and evocative topographical views by John Bigelow Taylor, make this one of the most attractive books published on this area of art for a very long time. Particularly interesting, and an unusual feature in such a book, is the chapter on Cycadic Art and Modern Taste - some intriguing juxtaposition of illustrations are made, especially with the work of Modigliani and Brancusi but, curiously, not including Henry Moore.

Scribes, Warriors and Kings: The City of Copan and the Ancient Maya by William L. Fash. Thames and Hudson, London, 1991. 120 illus., 120 in colour. Hardback, £24. Suddenly, with the decipherment of the Maya hieroglyphs, new light is flooding onto the hitherto enigmatic and largely misunderstood world of the Mayan civilisation. This book in the New Aspects of Antiquity series is by one of the scholars at the forefront of the new developments. Dr Fash has been closely connected with work at the great site of Copan and is supremely well placed to deliver the most up-to-date account of all aspects of its life from the blood rituals to the sacred ball game, and the spectacular architecture and artefacts that have survived the destruction of man and the native jungle. This book is a 'must' for all Maya buffs.

Kingdoms of Gold, Kingdoms of jade: The Americas before Columbus by Brian M. Fagan. Thames and Hudson, London, 1991. 240 pp. 180 illus., 16 in colour. Hardback, £16.95. Professor Fagan is one of the most prolific of archaeological writers, especially on the subject of ancient America, both north and south. Here he paints a broad canvas of the first hunter-fishers, then the farmer Americans, but the bulk of the book is concerned with the peoples of Meso-America (Olmec and Maya), of the Andes and Peru (Incas, Nazcas, etc.) and of Mexico (the Aztecs), culminating with the pueblos of the south-west and east. As usual, Professor Fagan manages to cover a vast area with skill and erudition in recreating the lost world of the Americas before Columbus.

Pilgrimage in Ireland: the Monuments and the People by Peter Harbison. Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1991. 256 pp. 102 b/w illus., 13 colour plates. Hardback, £18.99. Ireland is a country rich in its archaeological heritage of monuments, especially the early Christian ones prior to the twelfth century. As Archaeological Officer for the Irish Tourist Board, Dr Harbison knows these monuments better than most. It is this in-depth knowledge that has led him to propose a rather radical theory, based on the evidence of the monuments themselves - that they are, in the main, the products of the activities of pilgrims and pilgrimage, rather than of ascetic monks. The book falls into three parts: Pilgrimage People; Pilgrimage Places; and Pilgrimage Things. Examination of the evidence under those three headings has produced an intriguing, indeed enchanting, book which is well illustrated, well researched and a delight to read.
GLASS IN THE MAKING

Kenneth Painter takes an overview of the long history of glass making in the light of a major new publication in the field of glass studies.

Glass has always been made by heating and fusing variations of sand, soda and lime. Iron in the sand gives glass a bluish-greenish tinge; but it can be made colourless by adding a decolourant such as manganese or antimony, and it can be coloured by adding metallic oxides to produce shades of blue, green, red, yellow and white. This is the material with which glass makers work, and the spectacular results of their art can now be studied in a splendid new book, Five Thousand Years of Glass, edited by Hugh Tait. Its first brilliant photographs show an Islamic enamelled and gold-painted pilgrim flask of about AD 1250, a seventeenth-century blue-and-colourless covered goblet from Nuremberg, a little green lion of the ninth or tenth century from China, cobalt blue tableware of 1916 from Vienna, and three nineteenth-century blue and green vessels made in Shiraz in Persia – and all this before the reader even reaches the text! What they have in common is that they form part of the story of fine glass vessels, from anonymous makers of the earliest glass vessels of Mesopotamia and Egypt in the second millennium BC to modern masters such as Gallé, Tiffany, Lalique, Carder and Marinot.

Discoveries punctuate the history of any craft and affect the history of its development. How glass was first made, about the middle of the third millennium BC, is lost to us, but for about another millennium it was used for no more than beads and other small objects. The first major breakthrough came about the middle of the sixteenth century BC, when it was discovered that molten glass could be formed around a core to make vessels. Where the discovery was made is not sure; but the earliest vessels known so far, dating from just before 1500 BC, come from Mesopotamia, while those from Egypt are dated a little later, from the beginning of the next century. The resulting beakers or bottles were not common vessels for everyday use. The colours show that the early glassmakers were imitating the blues of precious or semi-precious stones, such as lapis lazuli or turquoise, or the yellow of gold. Glass vessels in the second millennium BC were a luxury product, produced for an aristocratic market and found not in private houses but in temples, palaces or tombs of major cities. Archaeology has shown that this early industry was so successful in both western Asia and Egypt that at its peak, about the mid-fourteenth century BC, the makers traded both raw glass and finished products over the east Mediterranean, as is shown by the discovery of cobalt-blue glass ingots in the wreck of a merchant ship which sank off the coast near Kas in south-west Turkey in the fourteenth century BC.

Almost from the start the glass industry used the techniques of core-forming, casting, cold-cutting and grinding – every fundamental glass-making process except inflation. It probably never died out, even during the ‘dark age’ of the eleventh to eighth centuries BC, and manufacture both revived.
in western Asia and spread westwards to serve the Greek and Hellenistic worlds. All these vessels were for the luxury trade, whether they were elegant cast and cut colourless bowls or brightly coloured core-formed bottles for perfumes, scented oils and cosmetics. The early Hellenistic vessels of about 200-150 BC, found on sites from southern Italy to the Black Sea, include magnificent fused and slipped mosaics, bowls as well as colourless cast and ground bowls and cups, and they are one of the peaks of achievement. The final great flowering of non-blown glassware, however, came in the first century AD. With the establishment of Roman control over the entire Mediterranean after the defeat of Cleopatra at Actium in 31 BC, all impediments to free trade ceased and glass reached every corner of the Roman world. Factories for non-blown glass were founded in Italy itself, and their products continued to be made into the second century AD.

These older techniques with their luxury products of such colourful diversity were never completely abandoned, however the discovery of the process of glass blowing and the development of this art in the Syro-Palestinian area beginning in the middle of the first century BC was to transform these vessels into objects of everyday use. Its early development was speedy, and the Portland Vase, for example, a supreme example of the blower’s (as well as the glasscutter’s) art, may well have been made about 30-20 BC, within only a few decades of the invention of the technique. Dominance of the glass-market, however, took longer. Study by Professor David Grose of the glass found on archaeological sites in Italy has shown that what introduced the newly peaceful and prosperous Roman world to the virtues of glass was cast wares. ‘Cast tablewares appear in quantity before their blown counterparts and then compete with them in the marketplaces of Italy throughout the first half of the first century AD. Blowing as the primary method of making vessels does not replace the various casting and heat forming techniques until late in the second quarter of that century.’ The speed, diversity and versatility of glass-blowing, however, were irresistible, and the changes brought about by the technique were not to be matched for nearly another two thousand years, with the ‘discovery’ of machine ‘press-moulding’ in America in the 1820s which made true mass production possible for the first time.

Revolutionary changes in methods of production were very few and are separated in time by over a thousand years. There were, of course, other major technological changes which had a profound effect on the glass makers’ art. Two examples come from England. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the glass makers devised a system for using coal instead of wood to fire their furnaces. Coal needed a much greater draught to produce a sufficiently intense heat, and so tall brick cones had to be built. This changed the whole industry, for by the eighteenth century it was generally recognised, on the continent as well as in Britain, that coal-
fired glass furnaces were by far the most efficient and productive. The seventeenth century also saw the invention of a remarkable lead glass with great powers of light refraction. The English glassmakers had long wanted to rival the Venetians; but it was not until 1674-6, as a result of national economic necessity and of the new spirit of enquiry that arose with the restoration of the monarchy, that a new formula was developed by George Ravenscroft. The discovery and successful production of this 'flint' glass supplanted the Venetian glass-metal and created a large indigenous glass industry which was to prosper throughout the eighteenth century.

The most remarkable story of a technical change combined with commercial and political opportunism is that of the Venetian glass industry, told in one of the most interesting chapters in this book. In 1204 the Fourth Crusade, conveyed to Constantinople in Venetian fleets, ravaged that city. Glasses brought back to the Treasury of San Marco may have been part of the inspiration to Venice to set up its own glass industry in competition with the main Islamic glass centres. The foundations were laid in the thirteenth century, when the glass industry was set up under rules which regulated not only its members but also the quality of its output. This strict control resulted in a fine glass, finely ornamented and decorated. It competed successfully with the traditional use of gold and silver plate and also with the fashion for Islamic enameled glass, and it was exported all over Europe. The enameled glasses, for example, include the Aldrevandin Group (perhaps made by ‘Aldrevandino, fialario’ (glassmaker), recorded in 1331 at Murano), of which signed pieces have been found in London, Tartu (Estonia), Mainz, Restormel Castle in Cornwall, and in an area dated 1350-64 in the castle of the Scala family at Verona. Production declined in the later fourteenth century when Venice was in conflict with Genoa; but after Venice prevailed, the glass industry took advantage of the city's status as a major political power and raised its products to a new height. The gilded and enameled cristallo glasses of Murano met with great success not only at every European court but in the Islamic Middle East. Venetian Renaissance skill transformed the art of glassmaking into a courtly art, in which, in spite of growing imitation, maintained the city's supremacy until the eighteenth century.

The book does not pretend that all the problems of the history of glassmaking have been resolved. The masterly chapter on Islamic glass, for example, devotes three pages to the twelfth-century so-called Hedwig glasses. Thirteen intact examples survive of these bucket-shaped vessels (height, 8-14.7 cm), carved distinctively in colourless glass (with tinges from smoky topaz to yellowish green) with lions, griffins and eagles. Three of the glasses are associated traditionally with St Hedwig, the wife of Henry, Duke of Silesia and Poland, who died in 1238 and was canonised in 1267. The Duke was concerned with her health, which he believed was due to her abstinence from wine; but he found one day that the glass which she had filled with water was filled with wine. The three glasses are supposed to be that glass, and the name has been extended to the other ten. All are in ecclesiastical or public possession in Europe, and six can be traced back to the thirteenth century, while excavated fragments from Tuscany and White Russia are dated to the second half of the twelfth century and to the twelfth or thirteenth century. Thus their date is established; but there is no agreement on their place of origin. Some have suggested Egypt, relating them to the relief-cut glass of Persia and Egypt; but there is no Islamic relief-cut glass from as late as the twelfth century, the shape and the tinge do not occur in Islamic glass, the style and decoration are hard to parallel in Islamic art, and not a fragment has turned up in the Islamic world. Other scholars have suggested a Byzantine origin in the
tenth or twelfth century; but no glass resembling the type has come to light in Byzantine lands. Pinder-Wilson cleverly but tentatively points to Sicily and southern Italy, outside but open to the mainstream of Islamic art from the eleventh to the early thirteenth century. He suggests the Romanesque stone sculpture of these regions as a source for the lions, eagles and griffins, and the interiors of the churches as a source for the figures. Although there is no glass industry known in the area, he reminds us of the hardstone carving done at the court of the emperor Frederick II. This inspired guess must surely be right; but Pinder-Wilson cautiously ends by pronouncing the glasses still an enigma.

Less colourful but of even greater importance are the thirty pages of the book which, in multiple pictures and captions, show the techniques of glassmaking and decoration. Historians and archaeologists and even scientists of glass are usually not skilled in the art of glassmaking, and so they have to turn to sympathetic craftsmen for an explanation of the technicalities of the craft. The difficulty in any such consultation is that most craftsmen, in whatever material, usually look only briefly at the ancient object, produce an approximation, and then assert that that is how the ancient object must have been made. William Gudenrath, however, the craftsman and scholar responsible here, is totally different in his approach when considering how ancient glass objects were made. He studies the objects in great detail and returns to them again and again while he tries to recreate them at his own furnace in the New York Experimental Glass Workshop. As a result he often understands the objects better than anyone who has studied them before, as can be seen in the sections on assembling compound objects on the blowpipe or the pontil, which are based on his years of his study of and experiments with Venetian glass. In some cases he has produced authoritative solutions to long-standing problems, such as how the Portland Vase was made. Sometimes he produces solutions to problems not previously recognised. Core-formed glass of the second and first millennia BC, for example, has long been accepted as having been made by trailing glass round a core made of sand. Bill Gudenrath has now driven a coach and horses through this idea, and readers can see his demonstration that these vessels were made by dipping a core made of animal dung and clay into a crucible of molten glass. Gudenrath's observations and reconstructions are important not only for the discoveries he has made, but also because future investigations of glasses and their techniques will have to be done by his methods and to his standards. He has changed and advanced the study of glasses of all periods.

One special characteristic of this book has still to be mentioned. The pieces chosen to illustrate this history of glass, from its earliest beginnings to modern times, have almost all been chosen from the collections of the British Museum. This is probably the only collection, except that of The Corning Museum of Glass, which could have provided such a range of fine examples of all periods. This is because the study has flourished in the ethos of a universal museum, in which the foundations of the glass collection were laid by the collection of Felix Slade (1790-1868), and where there has been a continuous succession of scholars building on the work which he began. No collection, of course, is totally comprehensive, and the scholars of the British Museum are all outward-looking. The book, therefore, is enhanced with discussion and illustration of fine key pieces in other collections, and the mainly British Museum team of writers is strengthened by other scholars. As a result, Five Thousand Years of Glass is both an impressive record of the British Museum's unique collection and an important study in its own right of the history of glass from its invention to the present day.

Five Thousand Years of Glass is edited by Hugh Tait and published by the British Museum Press, London, 1991. 256 pp., 265 colour and 28 b&w plates, 2 maps. Hardback £25. The authors and contents include: Hugh Tait (Deputy Keeper, Medieval and Later Antiquities, British Museum) – Introduction (including Faking), Epilogue, and Europe from the Middle Ages to the Industrial Revolution; Veronica Tattton-Brown (Curator, Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum) – The Roman Empire and Early Medieval Europe AD 400-1066, and with Carol Andrews (Curator, Egyptian Antiquities, British Museum) – Before the Invention of Glass Blowing; Ralph Pinder-Wilson (Former Deputy Keeper, Oriental Antiquities, British Museum and former Director of the British Institute of Archaeology in Afghanistan) – The Islamic Lands and China; Paul Hollister (artist and glass specialist) – Europe and America 1800-1940; William Gudenrath (President, The New York Experimental Glass Workshop) – Techniques of Glassmaking and Decoration.
MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS

UNITED KINGDOM

BOLTON

EVERYDAY LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT. A two-year travelling exhibition from the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, Royal Institute of British Geologists, London. BOLTON MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY, 1 January - 28 February.

FLICKER: FIRST 1000 YEARS OF TILES IN EUROPE. A major touring exhibition of tiles and architectural ceramics. KELVIN GROVE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY (041) 357 3929, 18 January - 1 March (then to Oxford-On-Trent). Catalogue.

GIANT STEPS FOR MANKIND. A new permanent exhibition showing the early stages of man's development. HUNTERIAN MUSEUM (041) 349 8585.

ROMAN SCOTLAND: OUT*POST OF AN EMPIRE. An exhibition which examines Roman attempts to conquer Scotland in the first and second centuries AD, with emphasis on the Antonine Wall. Wall built from Forth to Clyde in AD 142. Material on display, ranging from tools and weaponry to jewellery and cemeteries, illustrates life on Rome's most distant frontier. HUNTERIAN MUSEUM (041) 349 8851. Until further notice.

HARROGATE

THE KENT COLLECTION. Crafts of the ancient Egyptian, Greek, Persian, Roman and Cypriot civilizations. MERRIC GALLERY (0422) 530340. Until January 30.

HULL

A FIRST WORLD. A new permanent exhibition telling the story of the Iron Age in East Yorkshire and including material from the chariot burial of the King's Temple at Wharram Stark. HULL MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY (0482) 222737.

LEEDS

NATURE AMUN: THE KEEPER OF THE BULLS NaSet-Amun, priest, incense-bearer and scribe at the ancient Egyptian temple complex. Now, by adopting the most advanced methods of scientific research, the Manchester Mummy Team have not only discovered how the mummy is holding its life and health, but have also been able to reconstruct its ancient appearance. LEEDS CITY MUSEUM (0532) 478275. Until 8 February.

LONDON


(Book with full catalogue, hardcover, $29.95 (see Minerva, May 1990, p.33).

CHICAGO, Illinois

GRAVE GOODS FROM ANCIENT CULTURES. About 40 objects illustrating the burial customs of Egypt, China, Croce, Iran and Mesoamerica, all from the museum’s collections and new gifts to the Oriental Institute of Chicago (312) 443-3600. Until 25 February

CINCINNATI, Ohio


CLEVELAND, Ohio

TEXTILES FROM EGYPT, SYRIA AND SPAIN: 7TH THROUGH 15TH CENTURIES. Fifty textiles from the Mediterranean area have been chosen from the museum’s important collection of Islamic textiles covering the period from the 7th century until the period to the fall of the last Muslim dynasty in Spain. CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART (216) 241-1151. Until 15 April.

OXFORD

THE ANCIENT WORLD ON DISPLAY. THE CURATOR’S EGG. An exhibition which questions the traditional certainties of classical past and its display. It suggests the possibility of a much wider range of stories and representations of, and around, classical objects than is normally found in either text book or display case. ASHFURN MUSEUM (0865) 278000. Until 17 May.

SHREWSBURY

EVERYDAY LIFE IN ANCIENT EGYPT. A two-year travelling exhibition from the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University of London, ROWLEY’S HOUSE MUSEUM, WREXHAM, SHREWSBURY. Until 10 January (then to Bolton).

UNITED STATES

ANNADEALE-ON-HUDSON, New York

THE ART AND ANCIENT ART. ELECTED IN WORD AND IMAGE. An exhibition of vases, sculptures, mirrors, lamps, scarabs, coins and gems depicting the peoples, creatures and events in this great epic. Featuring rare loaners and private collections in the United States and in Europe. EDITH C. BLUM ART INSTITUTE, Bard College, Annandale-On-Hudson, NY. Until 27 January (then to Cincinnati).

ANN ARBOR, Michigan

THE BEGINNING OF UNDERSTANDING. WRITING IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. Over 200 objects in stone, lead, clay, wood, papyrus and textiles from the University of Michigan collections demonstrating the origins and dissemination of the different language systems in the ancient Mediterranean area from cuneiform tablets to Coptic texts. KELSEY MUSEUM OF ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY (313) 763-6550. 29 January (See Informa, Nov/Dec 1991, page 14).

BALTIMORE, Maryland

NEW MUSEUM OF ANCIENT ART. A permanent installation of some 1,000 objects from the Walters Art Gallery, including major examples of Early Buddhist sculpture from India, growing holdings of Southeast Asian art, and outstanding collections of Chinese and Japanese porcelain, Japanese art, and metalwork. Over 500 objects from the Walters Art Gallery collections. MINNEAPOLIS BIBLIOTHEK (301) 547-9000.

BOSTON, Massachusetts

SHOPE EXHIBITIONS: FRAGMENTS FROM A BURIED PAST. 65 Greek, Etruscan, Roman, Egyptian and Asian art objects, including extensive fragments of the collection in London, together with books, manuscripts and photographs of his library. BOSTON UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY (617) 535-3329. 26 February-6 April. Book with full catalogue, hardcover, $29.95 (see Minerva, May 1990, p.33).

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CINCINNATI, Ohio

FIRST ENCOUNTERS: SPANISH EXPLORATIONS IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE SOUTH. 1492-1570. Artefacts, early European engravings, maps and photographs of excavated sites. CINCINNATI MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (513) 218-3889. 2 February-7 May (then to St Louis). Catalogue. $6.95.

CLEVELAND, Ohio

TEXTILES FROM EGYPT, SYRIA AND SPAIN: 7TH THROUGH 15TH CENTURIES. Fifty textiles from the Mediterranean area have been chosen from the museum’s important collection of Islamic textiles covering the period from the 7th century until the period to the fall of the last Muslim dynasty in Spain. CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART (216) 241-1151. Until 15 April.

The GRIEVEN COLLECTION OF PRE-COLUMBIAN ART. 60 of the most pre-Columbian pieces from the 1900s presented at the pre-COLUMBIA MUSEUM OF ART (TAMO) (503) 285-0684. Until 18 January (then to St Louis). Catalogue. $15.00.

RICHMOND, Virginia

ISLAMIC ART AND PATRONAGE: SELECTIONS FROM KUWAIT. 107 masterworks by Abbasid and Seljuq artists from 1000 years from the Sheikh Nasser Sabah al-Adheem Sabah family collection on permanent loan from the Kuwait National Museum. RICHMOND MUSEUM OF ART (804) 282-2684. Until 18 January (then to St Louis). Cata-logue. $15.00.

SAN BERNARDINO, California


SAN DIEGO, California

MUSIC OF THE MAYA. Pre-Columbian musical instruments, mannequins dressed as traditional people, ceremonial items and a video of the music as it is still being played. SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF MAN (619) 239-2001. Until 3 May.

This LAND WAS OUR LAND. The thoughts and feelings of local Indians about their heritage and relationship to the land, with a display of local Indian artifacts from the museum’s collection. SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF NATIVE AMERICA (619) 239-2001. 18 January - October.

SAN FRANCISCO, California

BEYOND THE JAVA SEA: ART OF INDONESIA. Pre-Columbian wall sculptures, ranging from large stone sculptures to intricate goldjewellery from royal courts. M.H. DE young FOUNDATION, SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART (415) 550-7360 Until 5 January.

THE SCULPTURE OF INDONESIA. The first major exhibition of ancient Indonesian art in the United States from the Bronze Age to the 15th century, including life-size Buddha and Hindu stone sculptures, bronze, gold and silver figures, ASIAN ART MUSE-UM (415) 668-8921. Until 5 January. Catalogue $29.95 (see Minerva, October 1990, p.24).

ST LOUIS, Missouri


WASHINGTON, D.C.

Calendar

THE ARTS OF CHINA. 228 masterworks of Chinese art dating from the 4th millennium BC to recent times, forming the permanent collection, features 108 jades from c. 3000 to c. 1700 B.C. and 66 bronze vessels from the 16th to 2nd centuries BC. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357-5200. Continuing indefinitely.

CIRCA 1492: ART IN THE AGE OF EXPLORATION. An examination of the art of various world cultures at the time of Columbus, includes 60 artworks drawn primarily from the museum's collection. THE TEXTILE MUSEUM (202) 667-6641. Until 3 January. (See Minerva, July/August 1991, p. 42.)

CANADA

OTTAWA CROSSROADS OF CONTINENTS: CULTURES OF SIBERIA AND ALASKA. 500 artefacts reflecting Siberian and Alaskan culture that began when the first Siberian crossed into North America and before their departure from the site are from the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology in Leningrad, the site is also a hallmark of Russian museums. CANADIAN MUSEUM OF CIVILIZATION. Until 26 January. Catalogue.

ISRAEL

ISRAELI ROMAN SCULPTURES FROM BET SHEAN. A group of sculptures recently excavated at the major archaeological site of Sychar (Bethshan), Tel Beth Shean, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Israel Antiquities Authority. THE ISRAEL MUSEUM OF JERUSALEM (701) 27081.

SWITZERLAND

BERNE GOLD OF THE HELVETIUM. Gold treasures of the Celts: about 50 objects and 100 coins, supplemented by a few selected Roman gold treasures which reflect the Celts' artistic tradition, all found in Switzerland. BERNISCHE HISTORISCHES MUSEUM, Until 5 January (then to Geneva) (see p 31).

GENEVA GOLD OF THE HELVETIUM. Gold treasures of the Celts: about 50 objects and 100 coins, supplemented by a few selected Roman gold treasures which reflect the Celts' artistic tradition, all found in Switzerland. MUSEE D'ART ET D'HISTOIRE. 22 January-15 March. (See p 31.)

GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

BIRMINGHAM, Michigan

JEWELLERY ANTIQUE, MODERN, 11 January-2 February. BROOKS DESCRIP'TION DE L'EQUIP. 1 February-20 March. DONNA JACOBS GALLERY, 574 North Woodward Avenue, 48022.

DALLAS, Texas

GODS, BEASTS, AND MEN: IMAGES FROM ANTIQUITY. GERALD PETERS GALLERY, 2800 North Coast Highway 1 July-9 January-1 February. Catalogue. $18.00.

NEW YORK, New York

ART OF THE ANCIENT WORLD: 50TH Anniversary EXHIBITION. ROYAL ATHENA GALLERIES, 153 East 57th Street, 10022. Until 29 February. Catalogue. $15.00.

SHINING VESSELS: ANCIENT GLASS FROM THE ARTS OF CHINA. 228 masterworks of Chinese art dating from the 4th millennium BC to recent times, forming the permanent collection, features 108 jades from c. 3000 to c. 1700 B.C. and 66 bronze vessels from the 16th to 2nd centuries BC. ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION (202) 357-5200. Continuing indefinitely.

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