

The Association for the History of Glass Limited

Fragmentary Tales; a second miscellany of glass

Study Day to be held at the
London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre
Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED

20th November 2015

- 0930 Arrival and Coffee
- 1000 Welcome
- 1010 Sally Cottam: ‘Glass from a rich 2nd-century burial at Kelshall, Hertfordshire’
- 1035 Jennifer Price: ‘Whatever happened to the Colliton Park bowl?’
- 1100 Steven Cockings: ‘A Roman Site at Manton Lane, Bedford’
- 1125 *Break*
- 1155 Justine Bayley: ‘Glassworking at Kirkstall Abbey’
- 1220 Jacqui Pearce: ‘Drinking in style – 16th- and 17th-century table glass from Embroiderers Hall and Tanner Street, London’
- 1245 *Lunch (not provided) and AGM*
- 1415 Elizabeth Foulds: ‘Glass Beads in the North: finds from the A1 Leeming to Barton road widening scheme (A1L2B)’
- 1440 Karen Weston: ‘Post-Medieval deposits from Hungate, York: Rubbish, refuse and recycling in a city ‘slum’
- 1505 Kate Churchill and Vanessa Castagnino: ‘Tales from the garden wall: the discovery of a lost 17th century glass cone’
- 1530 Walter (Jo) Ahmet: ‘A setting of Garnet or Glass: Some new observations on the relationship of garnet and glass in the jewellery of 5th-7th century Kent’
- 1600 *Tea followed by Discussion and Examination of Glass Assemblages*
- 17.00 *Summing up and close*

If you would like to attend, please book by sending your full contact details and a cheque for **£34.00** (non-members), **£24** (Members of the AHG), or **£12** (students – proof required) payable to *The Association for the History of Glass Ltd* to: Denise Allen, 8 St Catherine’s Road, Southampton SO18 1LJ, or email ahgstudydays@gmail.com. Receipt by email or with an SAE. Participants who normally live outside the UK may pay upon arrival at the venue (in UK sterling).

Lunch is not provided. There are few cafés in the vicinity, and you may wish to bring your own lunch with you; tea and coffee will be available.

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ABSTRACTS

Glass from a rich 2nd century burial at Kelshall, Hertfordshire

Sally Cottam
Kings College London

Wealthy burials dating from the second century A.D. have been recorded in southern England since the early 19th century and several of these have come from Hertfordshire. In November 2014, metal detectorists working at Kelshall reported a new find - a cremation burial with a variety of grave goods, including a range of glass tablewares and bottles. This paper is a preliminary report on a remarkable and extensive collection of glassware.

Whatever happened to the Colliton Park bowl ?

Jennifer Price
University of Durham

A late Roman hemispherical bowl with cut decoration showing a Bacchic frieze, was found during excavations in Dorchester in Dorset in 1938 and since has been accepted as one of the finest pieces of this period found in Britain. The recognition that it was divided into two pieces followed its display in the Constantine the Great exhibition in York in 2006 and this has led to a reassessment of the significance of this and some other decorated fourth-century table wares.

'A Roman Site at Manton Lane, Bedford'

Steven Cockings

Excavations of a field bordering Manton Lane have revealed masonry buildings with painted walls, glazed windows, and an underfloor heating system (hypocaust), all rare in Bedfordshire. Most importantly, the presence of stucco work, a type of decorative moulding found at only a handful of locations in Britain, including Fishbourne Roman Palace, suggests the site is potentially of national importance.

Roman villas are sparse in Bedfordshire. Prior to Manton Lane there were only five confirmed examples. Our present excavations may include a bath house. Evidence for this includes *tufa*, combed box flue and hypocaust *pila* tiles, along with *in situ* Roman *bipedales*, possibly from the floor of a plunge pool. The imprint of child's studded sandal, of a type fashionable from the mid to late -third century AD, may help date its construction.

The continued functioning of the bath house towards the end of the Roman period is indicated by the presence of High Iron, Manganese, and Titanium window glass. One study of strontium and lead isotope compositions of HIMT has concluded that it might come from a single source in Egypt, using sand from between the eastern Nile and Gaza, which supplied most of the Roman world in the 4th to 5th centuries. In Britain, this glass is associated with high status late Roman buildings, and is most common from 350 AD onwards.

This HIMT glass was found in association with stucco work. Rare in Britain, it was retrieved from a deposit of painted wall plaster of more than 18 different colours, including blue azurite, the third most expensive pigment in the Roman world. This appears to have been dumped in the void caused by the demolition of an under floor heating system.

Identified as free-style low relief stucco work, which juxtaposes white plaster relief on a multi-coloured background, it is a unique find for Roman Britain. It is particularly suited to decorating the internal surfaces of vaults, especially bath houses, and *in situ* examples can still be seen at Pompeii and Herculaneum. The presence of stucco work marks out Manton Lane as one of only five sites in Britain where such material has been found. The most famous being Fishbourne Roman Palace which, along with St. Albans and Colchester, consists only of architectural mouldings.

While one other example of 'free-style' stucco work has been found at Gorhambury villa near St. Albans, this is in *high relief*, mimicking a marble statue. Manton Lane has provided the only known example of *low relief* 'free-style' stucco work on Britain. This equivalent of 'painting' with plaster is common in Italy, but rare in the North West Roman provinces, the three other locations all being in France. That this stucco decorated both the dry and wet rooms is not only suggested by its attachment to both waterproof and non-waterproof wall plaster, but by the recovery of a possible handle of a 2nd to 3rd century glass oil flask of Eastern Mediterranean manufacture.

While the majority of glass has been from window panes, one fragment has been identified as the rim of a conical beaker that has been finished off by simply cracking and polishing it. The nature of the fabric has placed this vessel's manufacture to the late third or early fourth century AD.

All together the window glass, stucco work and painted wall plaster suggest that Manton Lane represents a villa, or some other type of high status, governmental establishment like an Imperial estate centre. If that is the case, and it had control of an extensive area of land, then that might be the reason for the absence of other villas in the Ouse valley.

Glassworking at Kirkstall Abbey

Justine Bayley

University College London

The substantial remains of Kirkstall Abbey still survive in a park in the western outskirts of Leeds. Excavations in the 1980s in and around the Guest House discovered many potsherds with glassy deposits on one or both sides. They can be reconstructed to show the form of the vessels which were used as crucibles to melt glass, though no furnaces were identified in the excavated areas. There were also considerable quantities of glassy waste which is thought to be a by-product of stripping the lead from leaded window panes. The finds will be described and illustrated and their place in the history of the site explored.

Drinking in style – 16th- and 17th-century table glass from Embroiderers' Hall and Tanner Street, London

Jacqui Pearce

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology)

Fine *façon de Venise* drinking glasses have been found on numerous archaeological excavations across London. This paper focuses on material recovered from two sites, that of the Embroiderers' Hall in the City of London, and Tanner Street, close to St Saviour's Dock in Bermondsey, each very different in character, but showing telling parallels – and contrasts – in their excavated glass assemblages. The full range of glass found on each site in the early post-medieval period will be examined, allowing the fine drinking glasses to be seen in their wider context.

Glass Beads in the North: finds from the A1 Leeming to Barton road widening scheme (A1L2B)

Dr Elizabeth M Foulds

Northern Archaeological Associates

The ongoing excavations along the A1 between Leeming Bar and Barton road in North Yorkshire have uncovered a rich assemblage of artefacts from sites ranging from the Mesolithic to medieval periods. Of particular importance have been the well-stratified sequences of Roman activity at *Cataractonium* Roman town at Catterick and the associated cemetery at Bainsesse. Further evidence for Roman activity ranging from contact period to the late Romano-British period has been found throughout the road widening scheme. Glass finds from the scheme have been prolific and include a wide range of different object types, including vessel glass, gaming counters, bangles, a glass finger-ring, and numerous beads. While many of the beads could be considered to be very typical of Roman period sites (ie: melon, hexagonal, segmented), some are more unusual. This paper will focus on the glass beads from two probable child/infant burials: one from Bainsesse and another burial north of Catterick that probably lay along Roman Dere Street (west of Moulton).

Post-Medieval deposits from Hungate, York: Rubbish, refuse and recycling in a city 'slum'

Karen Weston

York Archaeological Trust for Excavation and Research Limited

Often artefacts are analysed solely from the perspective of the objects themselves, with little reference to context or to the communities who used them. This presentation will examine the post-medieval glass assemblage recovered so far from the ongoing excavations in Hungate, York. It will consider the glass in relation to the finds assemblage as a whole – can we learn anything about consumption and the use of space? Is there evidence for collection and recycling at Hungate? This type of approach to post medieval deposits is only just starting to emerge, and it will hopefully give us a better understanding of the poorer areas of the City of York and help to set a framework for similar post medieval sites.

Tales from the garden wall: the discovery of a lost 17th century glasshouse cone.

Kate Churchill¹ and Vanessa Castagnino²

¹Nexus Heritage and ²University of York

This will discuss the discovery, excavation and analysis of a 17th century glasshouse and its associated finds found in Stourbridge in 2014. The cone was built in the 1690s and collapsed in 1785. It was thought to have been destroyed as a 19th century house was built on the site, but an archaeological evaluation discovered its foundations had been well preserved in the garden. The discovery has shed new light on 17th century glassmaking and this presentation will be the first time the results will be presented.

A setting of Garnet or Glass: Some new observations on the relationship of garnet and glass in the jewellery of 5th-7th century Kent

Walter (Jo) Ahmet

University College London

The sparse and contrasting use of coloured glass inlays in the garnet jewellery of the early medieval period is a well-known and accepted aspect of the period. Glass inlays have, however, tended to be subject only to cursory examination in the wider study of garnet jewellery. The discovery of the Staffordshire Hoard with its many glass inlays has really highlighted this issue, particularly around the use of garnet mimicking red glasses. This discussion presents the results of an investigation re-examining the relationship between the two materials on inlaid objects from three 5th-7th Century Kentish cemeteries. With the assistance of p-XRF and digital microscopy this investigation examined 267 inlays from 46 objects, identifying almost a hundred glass inlays including a number of garnet mimicking settings.
