

# BRITISH EPIGRAPHY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WWW.CSAD.OX.AC.UK/BES/

NS NO 15

SPRING 2006

In this issue:

Forthcoming News and Events	page 1
<b>Reports:</b>	
The BES Autumn Colloquium, Oxford	page 4
Epigraphic Saturday, Cambridge	page 10
<b>News:</b>	
The Lancaster gravestone	page 12
BES AGM minutes	page 13

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## Forthcoming Events: Conferences and Seminars

### British Epigraphy Society Spring Colloquium DISPLAYING INSCRIPTIONS

A one-day colloquium exploring problems and solutions to the challenges of how best to display and make available epigraphic material in museum and other collections.

Saturday, 25 March 2006, Room 336, North Block, Senate House, University of London, Malet Street  
PROGRAMME

10.30-11.30: Registration

11.30: Alan Johnston (London) The state of the problem: the example of graffiti

12.00: Valentina De Martino (University of Naples) The Museum of Naples

12.30 - 14.00: Lunch

14.00: Henry Kim (Oxford) The new Ashmolean

14.30: Robert Pitt (London) Objects versus images - the case of the British Museum

15.00 - 15.30: Break

15.30: John Bodel (Brown University) The US Epigraphy Project

16.00: Gabriel Bodard & Charlotte Roueché (London) The Aphrodisias Project

16.30: Plenary Discussion

Registration fees (includes tea / coffee): BES members £2.00; non-members £5.00. Sandwich lunch (optional, but must be pre-booked) £6.00.

**Booking:** To reserve a place at the colloquium please contact Peter Haarer, by e-mail no later than 10.00am on Friday 24th March, at <peter.haarer@classics.ox.ac.uk>, tel. 01865-723809. If ordering a sandwich lunch, please remember to include details of any special dietary requirements. All fees due should be paid on the day by cheque (no coins / notes if possible) to the Treasurer, Nicholas Milner. See further: <http://www.csad.ox.ac.uk/BES/>

### Epigraphy North 2006

The next meeting of Epigraphy North will take place on Tuesday 2nd May 2006, in Liverpool. The speaker will be Nik Papazarkadas (Oxford). The meetings are aimed particularly at graduate students, and aim to introduce and explore various aspects of epigraphical material and methodology. For further information, including details of travel-funding available to postgraduate students, contact Graham Oliver ([g.oliver@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:g.oliver@liverpool.ac.uk)).

## David Lewis Lecture, Oxford University

24 May 2006

Prof. Ronald S. Stroud (Berkeley)  
'The Athenian Empire on Stone'

### Buried Linguistic Treasure:

**The Potential of Papyri and Related Sources for the Study of Greek and Latin**  
**Christ Church, Oxford, 30 June-2 July 2006**

Conveners: Trevor Evans and Dirk Obbink

The Conference 'Buried Linguistic Treasure' aims to showcase original research demonstrating the massive potential of the papyri and related sources (e.g. ostraka, tablets, inscribed graffiti) for the study of Greek and Latin. Valuable investigations of the relevant material have been appearing since the late 1800s, but progress to date has been concentrated mainly on peculiarities of spelling and form. Great scope remains for further development. Meanwhile, the mass of published papyri continues to grow, new discoveries are frequently made--not only in the Egyptian desert--and a series of advances in provision of research tools, particularly electronic imaging, powerfully enhances our capacity to exploit the material.

The Conference will present current work on a range of topics, including syntax, language contact, orality and literacy, and the social aspects of language. Emphasis will be laid on cross-disciplinary approaches and on the implications for our general understanding of the Greek and Latin languages. A further objective is to stimulate and provide a focus for future research in this field. Papers will be open to the public and delivered at Christ Church, Oxford.

List of Speakers:

Willy Clarysse (Catholic University of Leuven) Mark Depauw (Catholic University of Leuven and University of Cologne) Eleanor Dickey (Columbia University) Trevor Evans (Brasenose College, Oxford) Panagiotis Filos (University of Oxford) Hilla Halla-aho (University of Helsinki) Patrick James (University of Cambridge) Peter Kruschwitz (Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Berlin) John Lee (Macquarie University) Martti Leiwo (University of Helsinki) Raffaele Luiselli (University of Florence) Brian Muhs (University of Leiden) Dirk Obbink (Christ Church, Oxford) Matthew O'Donnell (McMaster Divinity College) Stanley Porter (McMaster Divinity College) Ian Rutherford (University of Reading and Florida State University, Tallahassee) Francesca Schironi (Harvard University)

For further information contact Dr. Trevor Evans, Brasenose College, Oxford, OX1 4AJ.

Email: [Trevor.Evans@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Trevor.Evans@classics.ox.ac.uk)

Phone: + 44 (0)1865 277 228 (Medieval Latin Dictionary Project)



The British Epigraphy Society, in collaboration with the University of Oxford and the British Academy, is pleased to announce the

### **13th International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy:**

#### ***Epigraphy and the Historical Sciences***

to be held under the patronage of the Association Internationale d'Épigraphie Grecque et Latine, at the University of Oxford, Sunday 2--Saturday 8 September 2007

As at 1 March 2006, 250 pre-registrations had been received with proposals for more than a hundred papers and posters. Full registration and accommodation bookings should be active shortly.

For full details of the schedule of plenary lectures and panels so far organised please visit the conference website: <http://ciegl.classics.ox.ac.uk>

Please direct all general enquiries to: [ciegl@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ciegl@classics.ox.ac.uk)

## **Regionalism and Globalism in Antiquity**

Friday, March 16 and Saturday, March 17, 2007

Dept of Classical, Near Eastern, and Religious Studies, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, in association with The Classical Association of the Canadian West (CACW) and the Classical Association of the Pacific Northwest (CAPN). Keynote Speaker: Professor Lord Colin Renfrew (Cambridge University)

The theme of this conference is regionalism and globalism in antiquity. As in the world today, ancient life at the local level was shaped by regional and global phenomena. This conference seeks to delineate regionalism and globalism in antiquity and to explore their effects on the local spatial dimension. We invite papers and thematic panels from scholars, including graduate students, interested in any aspect and time-period in antiquity of regionalism and globalism in the Mediterranean basin and lands beyond. Papers in all fields are encouraged—literature, epigraphy, history, philosophy, oratory, religion, and art and archaeology. We encourage a wide variety of approaches—disciplinary and interdisciplinary, theoretical and empirical, and comparative and cross-cultural—and the participation of a wide variety of scholars, not just classicists, but also Near Eastern scholars, Eurasian prehistorians, and any others interested in the conference theme. Explanations of regional and global phenomena have often been couched in terms of "influences" disseminated from areas of higher and more powerful culture to ones of weakness and lower abilities. Recently, however, there have been more nuanced discussions of the mechanics of interregional and intercultural contact and interaction that could be investigated further. Work elsewhere in the human sciences also suggests a role for psychological and "epidemiological" factors in the creation of regionalism and globalism that deserve more attention in the study of antiquity. Here the brain has been shown to act like a common denominator in sociocultural development and culture to spread like an epidemic or virus. Papers are particularly encouraged on topics related to this theme. Submissions are invited, however, on all subjects of special interest to classicists. Questions and expressions of interest can be sent to the chair of the conference organizing committee, Professor Franco De Angelis (University of British Columbia) at [angelis@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:angelis@interchange.ubc.ca). Abstracts of no more than 100-150 words for talks of twenty minutes should be sent by e-mail attachment by the September 15, 2006 deadline to the programme co-ordinator, Professor Robert Todd (University of British Columbia) at [bobbach@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:bobbach@interchange.ubc.ca). We are seeking funding support for the conference from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, to help offset some of the costs of participating in the conference and of preparing a volume of edited proceedings. Therefore, in order to qualify, abstracts must also be accompanied by the following:

Family name, given name, initials / Institutional affiliation (if any) and department / Degrees received (beginning with the most recent; please specify the discipline) / Recent positions held (beginning with the most recent) / Audio-visual or other requirements / E-mail and postal address

Further details will appear in November at: <http://cnrs.arts.ubc.ca>.

## **Ritual Texts for the Afterlife: A Gold Tablets Conference at the Ohio State University April 28-30, 2006**

The 'Orphic' gold tablets - small pieces of gold foil from ancient graves with inscriptions that talk about the fate of their owners in the underworld - have recently found a growing interest in scholarship. The conference, co-sponsored by the OSU Center for Epigraphical and Palaeographical Studies and The American Society for Greek and Latin Epigraphy brings together international scholars in the field as speakers and commentators. Joining us will be Alessandro Barchiesi, Gábor Betegh, Alberto Bernabé Pajares, Jan Bremmer, Walter Burkert, Thomas Carpenter, Susan Guettel Cole, Derek Collins, Radcliffe Edmonds, Christopher A. Faraone, Fritz Graf, Miguel Herrero de Jáuregui, Richard Janko, Sarah Iles Johnston, Jennifer Larson, Carolina López-Ruiz, Deborah Lyons, Vladimir Marchenkov, Richard P. Martin, Tim McNiven, Dirk Obbink, James M. Redfield, Guy Stroumsa, Yannis Tzifopoulos. This conference is made possible by the generous support of the College of Humanities, the Department of Greek and Latin, and The Institute for Public Humanities at The Ohio State University. For more information about the program, registration, and accommodations, please contact the Center for Epigraphical and Palaeographical Studies, 190 Pressey Hall, 1070 Carmack Road, Columbus, OH 43210, USA. Phone: (614) 292-3280, Fax: (614) 688-4638, or by email at [epig@osu.edu](mailto:epig@osu.edu), on online at: <http://omega.cohums.ohio-state.edu/epigraphy/>

## Reports on Recent Events

### **BES Autumn Colloquium: The Making of Inscriptions**

(including the 9th Annual General Meeting of the Society, Oxford, 19 November 2005)

More than fifty epigraphists gathered in Oxford for the society's Autumn Colloquium on Saturday 19th November. The venue was the Classics Centre, currently housed in the Old Boys' School, George Street, while a new permanent premises is purpose-built for the Faculty on the St. Giles' site. Grand architecture aside, the temporary base includes a robust kitchen in which four undergraduate volunteers (Sarah Cottle, Rachel Tod, Jennifer Redfearn and Lesley Hallam) worked hard to produce teas, coffees, and monumental sandwiches which were much appreciated by all.

The three speakers contributing to the main theme of the day offer summaries of their papers as follows:

#### **I. Peter Northover**

##### ***Writing with Metal (and how you find out how it was done).***

Peter Northover began by sketching the variety of types of writing found in and on different metals, from cuneiform documents written on silver to monumental brasses. He also reminded us of the role metallurgical analysis can play in epigraphic studies in distinguishing fakes manufactured for the antiquities trade, giving as an example the case of an inscription in Etruscan which had been added to a vessel made of bronze of modern composition.

He divided writing with metal into three categories: 1. carved letters, 2. cast letters, and 3. letters written on metal, and focused mainly on the latter. For these the hardness of the metal and the properties of the tool are critical. On the Vickers Pyramid Hardness scale (VPN), ranging from 0 (softest) to 1000+ (hardest), lead typically measures about 10 VPN, untreated bronze 50 VPN, work-hardened bronze and cold-worked iron up to 220 VPN, steel about 300 VPN, and quenched and tempered steel 400 VPN (for comparison, dies used in modern coin production typically measure 900 VPN). These figures show how writing on lead is a relatively easy matter in that it does not require a particularly hard tool [a letter written on lead and discovered recently in the Athenian Agora was written with a reed-stylus – David Jordan, *Hesperia* 59 (2000) 91-104]. For writing on bronze, however, a tool of ca. 200-250 VPN is required: hard bronzes and simple steels would do, but hardened steels would be better (but flint and obsidian should not be ignored!). What also must be considered besides hardness is wear resistance and this is where steels are to be preferred to bronze and iron, especially where the letters are being struck or punched rather than engraved. What is important with a coin die, for instance, is wear from the metal flowing past the elements of the design rather than the

simple strength needed to deform the surface of the blanks. The story of writing with metal on metal, therefore, is ultimately associated with that of the development and spread of the technology of making iron and steel, and manipulating their properties.

The hardness of inscribed objects made of metal is just one of the many aspects which can be revealed through metallurgical analysis using a variety of techniques. Others include the composition and structure of the metal, and the "biography" of an artefact from the winning of the metal, through the processes used in its manufacture and decoration, damage suffered during wear and tear, and the processes of decay down to the present day. X-radiography can sometimes reveal letters concealed under layers of corrosion. However, some techniques are too destructive to be used on ancient artefacts. In particular, it would be possible to reveal letters which had been punched into metal and had then worn away or been removed, as a "shadow" is left in the underlying metal, but this can only be revealed by polishing and etching the existing surface, an action unlikely to appeal to conservators.

Metallurgical analysis, therefore, has much to tell us about inscribed metal objects, especially in terms of how they were made, what they were used for, and what happened to them. This information can be of great interest to the epigrapher as it can reveal useful information about authenticity, and the tools and level of skill required to make inscriptions.

*Peter Northover is Research Lecturer in Metallurgy and Archaeology at the University of Oxford and has enjoyed a long and successful career in metallurgy in academia and in industry. He is currently also engaged on a doctoral thesis at the University of Bristol in landscape archaeology.*

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## II. Kathryn Lomas

### ***Scribes, Artisans and Literacy: The Making of Inscriptions in Early Italy***

The evidence for literacy in early Italy is largely epigraphic, and principally involves inscriptions on items such as bronze objects, pottery and stone, which require specialist knowledge and high levels of craft skills to produce. The presence of inscriptions on some of these artefacts, even if only a relatively small proportion of the total output, raises important questions about the relationship between literacy and craft production, particularly in the early stages of the spread of literacy. What, for instance, is the relationship between the commissioning of an inscription and a decision on what to write, the act of turning it into a written text, and the process of transferring it to a durable medium such as a grave stone, pottery vessel or metal object? This in turn opens up issues about the extent and dissemination of literacy at many different levels of society, and about the act of producing inscribed objects in archaic Italy. It is possible that this was a society in which a social and political elite (not necessarily with a high degree of personal literacy) maintained a specialist class of scribes to produce written documents which could then be transferred to craft-produced artefacts such as stone monuments or pottery or metal vessels by artisans who may be either literate themselves or simply accurate (but illiterate or only marginally literate) copyists. Alternatively, it may have been a society of more widespread literacy, in which a significant proportion of both the commissioning elite and the artisans who produced the inscriptions were literate at least to some extent.

Three regions were used as case-studies, in each of which writing was adopted during the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC using scripts derived from Etruscan or Greek models: A. Puglia, B. the Veneto, and C. north-west Italy. The question of the literacy of artisans was examined in these using four avenues of approach in combination.

1) *First person testimonies to the act of writing by those involved in the production of an artefact (signatures)*. Unfortunately, these are almost entirely lacking in all three regions with the exception of a small number of cases of doubtful significance.

2) *The proportion of artefacts inscribed at the time of manufacture, or commissioned with inscriptions in mind*. Clear evidence in this category was also sparse, but many inscriptions on pottery seem to have been added after firing,

and therefore seem more likely to reflect literacy amongst those using the pottery, rather than those producing it.

3) *The ratio of fully-formed words and phrases to single letters, abbreviations and part-words, using the length and complexity of inscriptions to assess the familiarity of craftsmen with writing*.

4) *Levels of accuracy in inscriptions indicated through levels of mistakes, erasures and corrections, and the incidence of misformed letters or words*.

These avenues of enquiry proved more fruitful. Across the whole area studied, the complexity and level of accuracy in the transcription of letter-forms and words is much higher in inscriptions on bronze or stone than it is on pottery. At the regional level, this was higher in the Veneto than in north-west Italy. An illustration of the possible impact which ability to read could have on an inscription is the coinage of north-west Italy. The Padane drachma was based on the coinage of Massilia, and many issues retain the Greek legend ΜΑΣΣΑ, though this quickly mutated into meaningless variations such as ΣΑΣΣΑ or ΜΛΣΣΛ (by contrast, Lepontic coin legends are all correctly inscribed). This evidence suggests that the craftsmen producing the coin moulds did not read Greek characters and treated the legend as part of the abstract design, rather than as a meaningful word. This example seems to reflect a big difference in accuracy and legibility between those words which were meaningful to the artisan, and which he may have been able to read, and those which were not, because they were written in a different language and script to that of the local population.

Two possible models are suggested by the evidence:

i) that artisans producing inscribed objects were indeed literate, at least to some degree, and that this is reflected in the high level of accuracy of most of the inscriptions which survive in the area studied;

ii) that since the ability to copy complex designs accurately was an essential part of the skills of the smith or mason, the ability to read the letters is likely to make little difference to the accuracy, legibility, and general competence of the output.

In conclusion, the evidence from the three regions surveyed seems to indicate that craftsmen manufacturing complex artefacts which included inscriptions had a basic functional level of literacy. Further, levels of literacy were higher amongst those involved in the more graphically skilled crafts of stone-carving and metal-working than amongst those

concerned with pottery production. We may wonder, however, how levels of literacy among artisans compared with those of their patrons who were the authors of the texts added to artefacts, and whether we should imagine this relationship along the lines of “blue collar – white collar”. Finally, we must set the three regions studied in a wider context, and bear in mind that levels of all forms of literacy (i.e. not just craft literacy) may have been higher in regions with stronger connections to the key regions for the development of alphabetic writing – Etruria and the Greek areas of southern Italy – and weaker, or at least later in development, in areas of secondary transmission such as the Lepontic and Raetic areas of northern Italy and the far north of Puglia.

*Kathryn Lomas is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL*

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### III. Richard Grasby

#### ***The Making of Inscriptions: measurements, lettering and carving.***

Giancarlo Susini wrote ‘Since publication of the works of Jean Mallon and the Gordons, techniques and phases in the genesis of a Roman inscription have been deduced from an examination of the *shape* of the letters and the *directions of strokes*.’ Susini was writing in 1967 and a year later Edward Catich published *The Origin of the Serif*, in which he demonstrated the influence of the sign-writer’s brush on the outline shapes of *scriptura monumentalis*. Since these two books were produced nothing comparable has been written on the making processes behind Roman monumental lettering. The difficulty is lack of evidence not only of the design of letters but also for their fashioning in stone. Having cut letters in stone, I am reassured to find evidence in Roman work to support my own carving approach; this alone makes me acutely aware of the danger of overlooking evidence of other practices. There are enough examples of Roman funerary monuments in different stages of production to suggest that the work of the Roman masons and carvers was little different from ours today. Tombstones, plaques and altars were masoned, held in stock, and lettered on demand. Carving bosses would have been unusual, except on figures requiring portraits. Rosettes and decorative carving were probably carried out at the general shaping stage, along with borders, ansates, bolsters on altars and the like.

Why do so many Roman inscriptions show a rough surface to the lettered field or even a tooled surface created with a claw chisel? How was the handsome letterform *scriptura monumentalis* carved with such precision on bridges, aqueducts and monumental tombs built with very coarse stones? It is possible that the rough surface of stone, the joints and inconsistencies were smoothed out with a layer of stucco or lime wash, the clawed surface improving adhesion of stucco to stone. This would have received fine-drawn lines essential to the precision of the layout, geometric construction and brush painting of the letters themselves. Experiments suggest that carving through this thin layer would have presented no difficulty.

The Greek *stoichedon* system of assigning one letter to each grid square was adopted by the Romans but used differently. In the *Moritix Londiniensium* inscription recently discovered in Tabard Square, London (*BES Newsletter* n.s. 8 (Autumn 2002) 10-12 = *Britannia* 34 (2003) 364 no. 5), the underlying design is well-ordered on the Greek principle but with *M* occupying two squares, and *I* one square or none, being drawn on the grid line (**Fig. 1**).

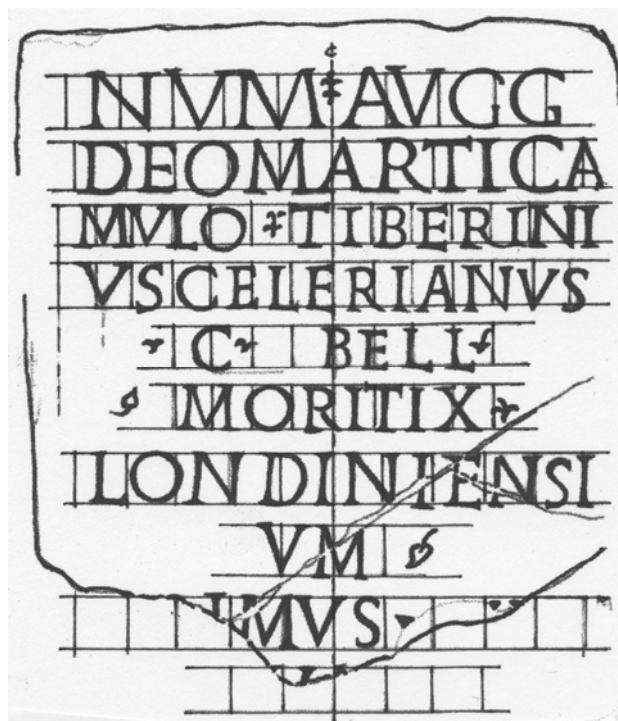


Fig. 1; after R.S.O. Tomlin

Since many crafts of ancient civilisations were dependent upon the ability to square, to make grids, to scale, and to create complex geometric patterns, constructing lines and arcs for capital letters would have been elementary.

A minimal geometry has been proposed for *CIL* VI 941, an inscription to the Emperor Titus. All letters have responded as the letter R shown here, to a simple combination of proportion and unit values. Measurement has exposed coincidences of writing lines with an underlying grid, of letters contained in squares of that grid, and of other squares derived from line heights coinciding with letters. Design, setting out, lettering with a brush, and carving – all work together to create an inscription of excellence. This minimal construction has been identified by measurement in too many inscriptions to be explained as mere coincidence or the product of hand skills alone. However templates and part templates cannot be ruled out for achieving this precision (**Figs 2, 3, 4; *CIL* VI 941**).

*Chasing* is the art of driving a chisel with a mallet up the centre line and round the curves of a letter, alternating passes to left and right in order to create a V-cut in the stone. This technique developed by the Romans is practised today. *Stabbing* (cutting directly down into the surface), *drilling* (to receive paint or fillers) - these may be identified in Greek and Roman work and contemporary carving. Every apprenticed letter-carver learns a sequence of strokes and a carving approach to each letter which does not vary. In effect, this method of letter-making is a combination of information about the letterform, skill, and a fully developed cutting technique.

*Malleus, scalprum, perpendicularum, circinus, stilus* are all present in the fine collection at the National Museum of Wales. All are used today and almost unaltered in construction. The *scalprum* in this collection would not be suitable for letter carving, being too long and with too narrow a cutting edge.

Every study of measurement and making undertaken, from drawing to restoration and carving of replicas, has revealed new evidence of processes and confirmed others. Infilling missing sections of the reconstructed Hadrianic inscription at Wroxeter (*RIB* 288) showed me for the first time the meticulous geometry behind each letter. My complete reconstruction of the Trajanic inscription at Caerleon (*RIB* 330) showed the design as an integral part of the architecture of the legionary fortress, the controlling grid of the letters, letterforms and “chased” carving. The tomb of C. Julius Classicianus (*RIB* 12) is an early example (AD

64/65) of brush lettering over a well ordered underpinning of rectangles defining letter widths (*Britannia* 33 (2002)).

These and many other inscriptions are revealing of such extraordinary precision of layout and letter construction as to put them far beyond the boundaries of craft skill or hand-eye coordination alone. There is now enough evidence drawn from ancient and contemporary sources and tested in practice to support the following propositions:

1. The making of first-century inscriptions of a regulated kind had their origins in quite simple written drafts.
2. Once controlled by the grid, the text of an inscription could be scaled up or down, fitted to a lettered field, transferred directly to that field on the stone, and cut.
3. Allotting one letter to each square of a grid appears to have been a starting point for the *ordinator*.
4. A minimal geometry of construction lines for each letter is being tested on inscriptions of all kinds and is yielding interesting results, which seem to confirm the existence of a blueprint underpinning the letters.

My studies of making processes are limited to inscriptions lettered in *scriptura monumentalis* but they are relevant to all regulated and unregulated inscriptions. On many inscriptions, constructed capitals are to be found combined with freely-drawn letters.

How can this work be of service to epigraphists? Since it is possible to predict with accuracy the unit values and construction of each letter and reconstruct those that are missing, we can propose line lengths and so proportions and dimensions of the lettered field. Against this background might we reconsider some of the restorations of texts? I have now measured some twenty inscriptions and examined many more where restored texts make an indifferent “fit” with the physical dimensions. I would value any opportunity to discuss these things with members of the British Epigraphy Society.

*Richard Grasby is a stone mason, independent researcher, and member of the British Epigraphy Society.*

Tel. 01747-838652.

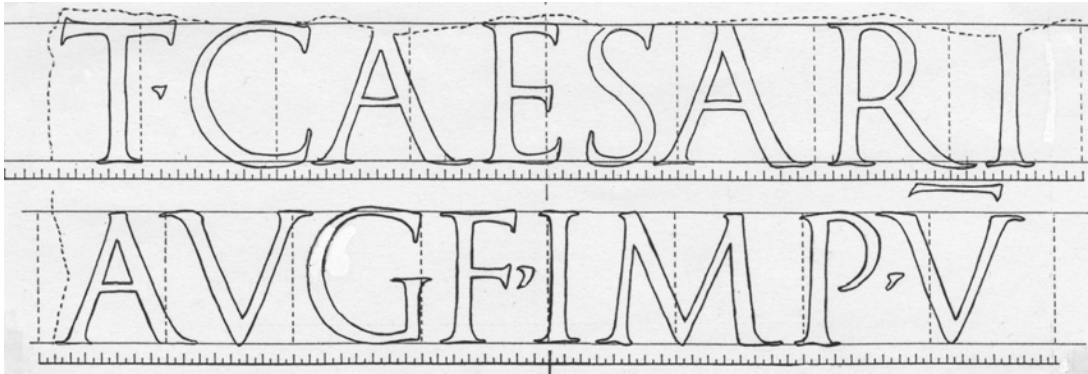


Fig. 2: CIL VI 941: unit values of letters

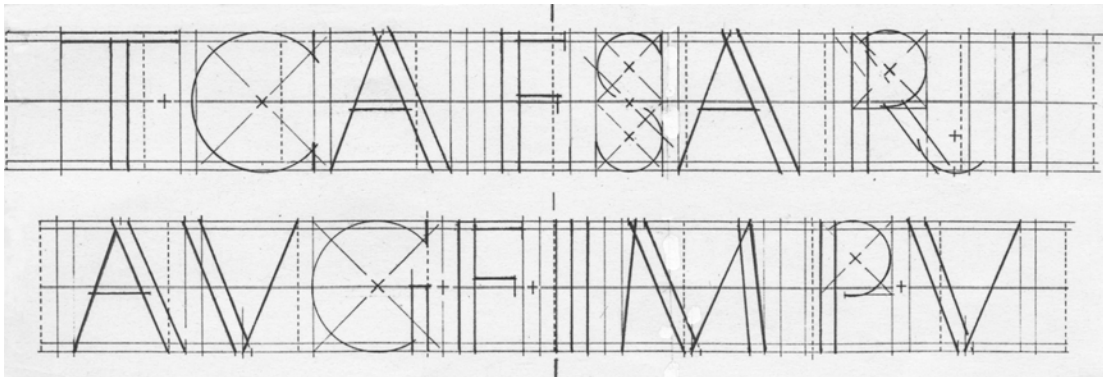


Fig. 3: CIL VI 941: minimal geometric construction of letters

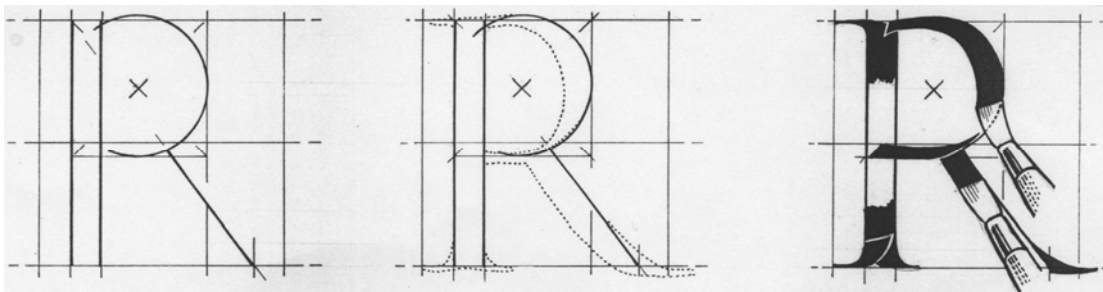


Fig. 4: CIL VI 941: construction lines as guide to brush-letterer

## Short reports

**Charles Crowther reported on the renewed work on IG XII.6.2 (Chios)**, a fascicle with a long and troubled history. Early work was undertaken by a schoolteacher, L. Bürchner, to whom Wilamowitz offered DM 700 (with the suggestion that he try something else!). Little further progress was made until the offer, in 1955, from G. Forrest to contribute, which Klaffenbach (on behalf of IG) readily accepted. Forrest worked on the project until the military coup of 1967; thereafter, he never properly returned to the project, but left behind a great deal of material, including publications, notebooks, photographs, squeezes, and prepared editions. The 'curse' continues, with two earthquakes striking the current project team while working in the museum during October

2005. Under the current team, a corpus of c. 720 inscriptions is being prepared. Of these, some 450 are housed in the Chios archaeological museum, the majority of the rest being 'lost, in various ways'. Many of those outside the museum are walled into buildings in the *kastro* area of the town, and so have become 'lost' under new plaster. Much of the team's work has gone into verifying the stones outside the museum. Chios can be described as archaeologically active, but epigraphically static, but nonetheless there are c. 70 *inedita*. Amongst other texts, Charles highlighted the dossier of Claudia Metrodora, published by L. Robert in 1938, but with a number of errors in the reading. Publication of the fascicle will be in the traditional Latin format of *IG*, alongside a Greek edition of



the museum inscriptions. An epidoc publication is envisaged as a further possibility. Publication is hoped for in 2007; the support of the Moschos family (London/Chios) was noted with thanks.

**Thomas Corsten reported on the current progress of the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*.** Robert Parker noted in introduction that volume IV (Macedonia, Thraces, NW Black Sea region) is now published, and that the website is a vital complementary tool, with both basic information about the project and some basic material from the database, such as global numbers; the website also houses the addenda to vol. II (Attica). See: <http://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/>

Thomas Corsten reported specifically on the next stage of the project, volume V (Asia Minor), in 3 fascicles. All names are to be included (rather than simply those that are 'Greek'). Volume V.A will cover the northern coastal regions, from Pontus round to Ionia and Lydia; vol. V.B Caria and the south coast to Cilicia; vol. V.C central Asia Minor, including Phrygia, Galatia, and Paphlagonia. The projected publication date, of vol. V.A, is 2007. Some statistics from the forthcoming volume were provided as a teaser: with most areas now indexed, excluding Miletos, the total number of names in the first fascicle (45,670) is roughly equal to the whole of vol. IV (a final decision on whether Miletos falls within Caria or Ionia has yet to be taken). Vol. V.B is likely to contain a similar number of names. Fabia Marchand had begun work on vol. V.B, starting with the Maeander Valley, updating Tralles (a gain of 700 names), Amyzon (increased 23-fold) and Aphrodisias. Charlotte Roueché added that the *LGPN* and *EPAPP* projects are in active dialogue as to how, for example, one digital project might harvest another, with obvious gains to both.

**Graham Cunningham reported on the work of the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature**, housed at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford (and to be found online at: <http://www-etcs1.orient.ox.ac.uk/>, now in its second edition). The project is engaged in the transcription and transliteration of cuneiform clay tablets, the first language for which we have written evidence. Sumerian is documented over a period of c. 3000 years, spreading from the area of modern southern Iraq. It died out as

a spoken language c. 2000/1800 BC, becoming instead an élite written language. The script is logosyllabic (although the preferable term might be logophonographic), having begun as pictographic, and becoming logographic (i.e. the signs signify the meaning of a content word). The large number of signs resulting is reduced both by using the same sign for different content words with similar meaning, and by employing the same sign for different content words if the sound is similar. c. 2000 BC many of the signs in Sumerian were rotated 90° anticlockwise. Some signs are in fact used phonographically, and these could in turn be used to write parts of syllables (and hence the suggested term logophonographic). The surviving texts are c. 90% administrative (lists, verdicts, etc.). Early texts frequently include word lists, often creative and including words that are never found in actual use; subsequently these word-lists are accompanied by Akkadian translations and indications of pronunciation. Texts include royal inscriptions (on stone and other materials besides clay), frequently in the form of dedications by kings; incantations and petitionary prayers; literature, including myth, epic, elegies, lexical compositions (e.g. all the known words for fishes), and in particular royal praise poetry. The corpus currently contains 370 compositions (out of a total of 500), and 13 literary catalogues, all dating to c. 2100-1700 B.C. (literary material exists from c. 2500 BC onwards). The texts have been encoded in TEI XML, annotated both at the level of individual signs and at the level of complete words (enabling searching of the texts); the XML is then displayed in HTML. Texts written wholly phonographically present problems, in many cases requiring manual annotation.

The project began in 1997, supported by Oxford University, the Leverhulme Foundation and the AHRB; current funding ends in April 2006, with a follow-up grant pending for work on the royal inscriptions. A parallel project on the administrative texts (California and Berlin) is also underway: <http://www.cdli.ucla.edu/>

**Jonathan Prag**

## Epigraphic Saturday Cambridge, 14 January 2006

The Classics Faculty in Sidgwick Avenue was once again host to a day organised by Joyce Reynolds devoted to recent work in Greek and Roman epigraphy.

**Andrea Raggi, 'The epigraphic dossier of Seleucus of Rhosus'**, offered a detailed analysis of the significance of these texts for the political and legal history of the triumviral and early Augustan period, expanding upon the revised edition and commentary that he has published in *ZPE* 147 (2004), 123-148. The dossier comprises four documents in Greek inscribed on a stele, perhaps originally forming part of a civic monument honouring Seleucus, but later cut down for re-use as part of a tomb. The stone was discovered at Rhosus, in antiquity a significant seaport on the Syrian side of the gulf of Issus, but was transferred in 1931 to the Archaeological Museum in Antakya. Most of the 93 lines is occupied by a triumviral act granting Roman citizenship and additionally exemption from taxation on all property to Seleucus son of Theodotus, his wife, parents, children and descendants, in recognition of his services as naval commander (*nauarchos*). This is prefaced by a covering letter from Imperator Caesar (i.e. Octavian) to the magistrates, council, and people of Rhosus certifying that the document is a copy excerpted from the original inscribed in Rome and instructing them to file it in their public records and to forward it to Tarsus, Antioch, and (possibly) Laodiceia (as the local and neighbouring *conventus* centres?) to do the same. Although the grant of citizenship is not dated, the covering letter is dated by year 8 of the local 'Antonian' era (i.e. 36/35 BC). Raggi argues (against some previous editors, who prefer an eastern context) that the likely scenario is that Seleucus, having been a commander in the navy transferred from Mark Antony to Octavian at Tarentum in 37 BC to help suppress Sextus Pompeius, was rewarded after the victory of Naulochus in 36 BC. Below the grant are inscribed two more letters of Octavian, written in the aftermath of Actium, to the community of Rhosus. In the first, of 31 BC, Octavian thanks them for the ambassadors, including Seleucus, who had come to him in Ephesus and reassures them of the preservation of their city's privileges and his goodwill to them, especially because of the loyalty of Seleucus who has fought alongside him 'throughout the whole time of the war'. The second letter, of 30 BC, is in part a reiteration of the first letter, specifically commending Seleucus to them because he has fought alongside

Octavian 'in all the wars'. Clearly the town had benefited from Seleucus' personal adherence to Octavian in 31 BC rather than to Mark Antony, the community's patron.

The *Lex Munatia Aemilia* (named after the consuls of 42 BC), cited as the law under which Seleucus received his grant of citizenship and privileges, is not otherwise known but many of the clauses have parallels in other legal enactments, a large proportion of it probably being tralatitium. Of interest among the exemptions is one from all *portoria* (customs duties), local and Roman, on goods imported or exported for personal use to and from cities or territories 'of the provinces of Asia and Europe' (line 48). Since Africa is not mentioned, it is not a universal exemption. The same geographical terminology probably occurs in line 36 in a much more damaged section, where the context is probably that of succession to ownership of land. Although Octavian is the only triumvir named in the heading of the grant of citizenship, it is clear from the plural verb that Mark Antony's name was probably present in the original document (cf. the *SC de Aphrodisiensibus* = Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, no 8 of 39 BC) but has been edited out of this version inscribed after his defeat. Perhaps his name also originally stood in the covering letter. Indeed the voting tribe into which Seleucus is enrolled, Cornelia, can be explained as that of Mark Antony; it is that borne by a number of other eastern Antonii (*MAMA* VI 104, *BGU* IV 1083), whereas Octavian's was Fabia and Lepidus' Palatina. This increases the likelihood that Antony was actively involved in the awarding of citizenship to Seleucus and the other eastern sea captains who had served with Octavian in 36. Nevertheless, when forced to choose, Seleucus opted to side with the *imperator* with whom perhaps he felt he had a closer personal relationship.

**David Blackman, 'Varia epigraphica from Sicilian Naxos'**, discussed a number of graffiti from pottery discovered during the excavation of the shipsheds (*neoria*) of the ancient Euboean colony of Naxos near Tauromenium (Taormina). The site of the excavation is now 160 metres from the shore, next to the primary school of the modern town of Giardini-Naxos. The ancient dockyard comprised slipways for four triremes and, although the town was the earliest Greek colony on Sicily (founded 735 BC), this military dockyard seems to date no earlier than 460/450 BC, since it fits into the city grid laid out

in the wake of the (re-)establishment of democracy in 461/460 BC. Certainly the earliest datable material from the shipsheds accords with the date of the street grid, while the latest material dates to the end of the fifth century, when Dionysius of Syracuse destroyed Naxos at the end of the Peloponnesian War to punish the city for its support of Athens. The site is overlain by a much later phase of Roman housing, dating from the third to seventh centuries AD according to the identification of pottery made by John Hayes. Each slipway comprised ramps of sand within retaining walls of stone. Against one of these walls was uncovered a heap of ceramics, including some very high quality pieces of the kind that one would not expect to unearth in such a utilitarian context. The vast majority of these ceramics was not inscribed but a few bore names and other messages scratched on them in a mixture of archaic and classical scripts, those from the emergency excavations of 1981 and 1983 having already made it into the *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* vol. III.A. The current excavations, begun in 2001, have thrown up a few more examples, including Attic black glaze ware of the mid to late fifth century. The nature and quality of this material as well as some jocular graffiti (such as XAIPE scratched in a deliberately disordered fashion in the bottom of a black glaze cup to convince the drinker that he is drunk) suggest a symposiastic context. What might be the occasion for such naval banqueting, a launch party perhaps? On the other hand a couple of fragments of western Greek transport amphorae bear graffiti giving a name with patronym. Could this be evidence of political ostracism, which is known from other cities linked to Athens, or of the drawing of lots for some purpose?

**Simon Corcoran, 'Divvs Diocletianvs?'**, discussed two milestones erected by the city of Heraclea-Perinthus (mod. Marmara Ereğlisi) in the early fourth century AD (*SEG XLVIII* (1998) 913-14 = *AE* 1998, 1180-81). These two stones bear the remains of almost identical inscriptions. As is customary in later imperial milestones the emperors' names appear as honorands rather than as authors of any road building or repair work. However, the inscription presents a conundrum in several respects. Not only has it been partially subject to deliberate erasure but also would appear, as often happens, to represent a palimpsest of at least two, if not three, texts, the earliest dated c. 308/10 by the qualification of Maximinus and Constantine as *fili Augustorum*. The main oddity is that the inscriptions open with an otherwise unparalleled dedication in Latin to three of the original

tetrarchs—*Diuis Diocletiano et Constantio et Galerio Maximiano Augg(ustis)*—followed by a parallel translation in Greek that has suffered *damnatio memoriae* in both cases. Although by this period *diuus* signified a respectable posthumous status rather than a specific senatorial vote in favour of consecration, the mention of deified emperors on milestones is rare enough and then confined to the filiation of the honorand. Moreover, this combination of *diui* is unusual. Constantius (died 306) and Galerius (died 311) are attested as *diui* both in inscriptions and by coins, but Diocletian was not posthumously commemorated on coins and is not otherwise attested epigraphically as *diuus*, although he is so qualified in the fourth-century legal compilation known as the *Fragmenta Vaticana*. The order of the three names reflects the emperors' order of precedence while alive rather than the chronology of their deaths, since Constantius had died first and Diocletian last (probably in 312/3). The omission of Diocletian's colleague, the elder Maximian, in the dedication was probably deliberate since, although he had predeceased Diocletian (in 310), he had disgraced himself by coming out of retirement on one too many occasions and might, then, be rightly deprived of the epithet *diuus*. If 312/3 is a *terminus post quem*, the *terminus ante quem* ought to be Constantine's defeat of Licinius in 324. Still the motivation for devising this unusual formulation remains mysterious.

**Michael Crawford, 'Women's work for Diocletian'**, gave an account of the trials and tribulations of sorting out a new full text for the Aphrodisias copy of Diocletian's Prices Edict, in this instance for the chapter on sieves (*cribra/κόσκινα*) and that listing various purple cloths and garments (chapters 35 and 57 respectively in his new numbering). The incomplete description of the sixth type of sieve listed at Aphrodisias, which had been read '*cribrum CA*[. . . . *text{ile}*]', may be plausibly reconstructed as *cribrum gracile textile* on the basis of the late nineteenth-century transcription of this line in a fragment from Mylasa (*[cr]ibrv[m . .]ecile text{ile}*). If translated as 'slender/flimsy woven sieve', this might be something like a muslin. Where supplementation of the Latin text relies on recourse to the Greek-language version witnessed in various examples from the cities of the province of Achaëa, two levels of difficulty are encountered. First is the obscurity of the specialist vocabulary that seems some times to have presented as much of a challenge for the ancient translators and inscribers as it does for modern scholars. This difficulty of comprehension probably contributed to the

second problem encountered in comparing various copies; that is, that the relationship between the list of items and prices is not always consistent between the various inscribed copies.

Professor Crawford finished off the day by presenting a puzzle relating to another of his current projects, the *Imagines Italicae* (illustrated corpus of inscriptions in ancient Italic languages other than Latin). In particular he issued a general appeal: Can anyone shed any light on the reading and interpretation of two texts scratched on two pieces of Campanian pottery? When the cup and lidded pot were excavated at S. Maria di Capua Vetere in the nineteenth

century the graffiti were transcribed but remained mysterious. Scratched on the base of the pot in the middle of the foot is **KAL**, around the rim of its foot **STATESVAIE·N**. Under the foot of the cup is inscribed **A>EIVEFEVC**.

However, on the basis of typology, the pot can now be dated c. 400 BC, so Latin can certainly be excluded as the alphabet and language of the graffiti; they ought to be Greek, Etruscan, or Oscan. All ideas for reading and interpretation are welcomed.

Please e-mail: [imagines.italicae@sas.ac.uk](mailto:imagines.italicae@sas.ac.uk).

**Benet Salway**

## NEWS

### The Lancaster Gravestone, 2005

A Roman military tombstone, excavated (by a team from Manchester University directed by D. Powers and P. Noble) during building work on the outskirts of Lancaster, late 2005. The stone's future remains uncertain, with newspaper reports to the effect that the developer concerned is interested principally in recovering his costs through sale of the stone. See:

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2-2031508,00.html> [please be sure to transcribe the whole URL which here breaks across two lines] for the report in *The Times*. Also: [http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk/content/News\\_Letters/news90.htm](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk/content/News_Letters/news90.htm) [the same applies to this URL] for a report in the Wigan Archaeological Society newsletter. A preliminary publication appears in *British Archaeology* No. 87, March/April 2006.



[http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk/content/News\\_Letters/news90.htm](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk/content/News_Letters/news90.htm) [URL is wrapped].

The discussion reproduced below was provided to Dr P. Low by Mr Peter Iles, Specialist Advisor (Archaeology), Lancashire County Council Environment Directorate.

Inscription text (as of 18<sup>th</sup> November 2005, based on discussions with David Shotter, Andrew White and Ben Edwards, with comments by others and mistakes added in by me!)

DIS  
MANIBVS L NSVS VODVLLI  
IVS CIVE TREVER EQVES ALA AVG  
ICTORIS CVRATOR DOMITIA

*Dis*  
*Manibus L(ucius) Nisus Vodulli*  
*.ius Cive(s) Trever(i) Eques Ala(e) Aug(ustae)*  
*[T(urma) V]ictoris Curator Domitia [F(aciendum)*  
*C(uravit) OR P(osuit) OR P(onendum) C(uravit)]*

To the memory of Lucius Nisus Vodulli(?)ius  
Citizen of the Treveri tribe, trooper of the Ala  
Augusta  
troop (or squad) 'Victor' (?he held the rank of  
curator?) Domitia (saw to the making of this  
stone OR placed this stone OR arranged for the  
erection of this stone)

#### Notes

(i) The N in NSVS is visibly different from that in MANIBUS and the experts agree that this is actually a ligature i.e. a contracted NI and should be read as such.

(ii) L(ucius) Nisus above could also be T(itus) Nidus (David Shotter also says J(ulius) Nisus is less likely and that the final name could be something like Vodvilleius or Vodvilltius)

(ii) 'Curator' does not really make sense to me here, it is usually translated as "a manager, overseer, quartermaster" etc. Could the troop be named 'Victoris Curator'? this seems unlikely

and it would probably be 'Curatoris'. Curator could be part of a military rank, but one not known to have been applied within an Ala in the first/second centuries, when this stone was probably set up. Curator turmae - a cavalryman with special duties - is possible (see below) but in this case he is also referred to as 'Equus'. If this latter is intended the text would read something like:

'Citizen of the Treveri tribe and Curator in the squad 'Victor' of the Ala Augusta'

(iii) Domitia was probably LNV's wife.

(iv) Bill Shannon notes that Cive(s) should probably be Civis.

(v) It has also been suggested that it could be read:

Dis

Manibus L(ucius) Nisus Vodulli?

[Fil]ius Cive(s) Trever(i) Equus Ala(e) Aug(ustae)

i.e. Son of a Treveri citizen, not a citizen themselves ...

(vi) Traces of red paint have been detected in the lettering, and it is possible that more will be found in the deeper crannies during cleaning and conservation. Most of these stones are thought to have been painted when first erected; see e.g. the reproduction stone at:

<http://www.caerleon.net/history/army/page10.html> [URL is wrapped].

The original and others can be seen at:

<http://www.pyrrha.demon.co.uk/ntombs3.html>

or [http://www.vroma.org/images/mcmanus\\_images/cavalrytomb3.jpg](http://www.vroma.org/images/mcmanus_images/cavalrytomb3.jpg) [URL is wrapped]

**Peter Iles, Specialist Advisor**  
(Archaeology), Lancashire County Council  
Environment Directorate.

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## Minutes of the British Epigraphy Society 9th Annual General Meeting.

Saturday, 19th November 2005, at 2.30pm, Classics Centre, The Old Boys' School, George Street, Oxford OX1 2RL

### 1. Attendance & Apologies

Thirty-one members attended the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Peter Rhodes, Jonathan Davies, Alison Cooley, and Joyce Reynolds.

### 2. Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising

- The minutes for the 8th Annual General Meeting were approved.
- The conference in honour of Peter Rhodes hosted on the island of Rhodes has taken place. Although with much regret the society had been unable to offer any financial support for this event all were delighted that it had been a success.
- There were no other matters arising which were not dealt with elsewhere.

### 3. President's Report

- Robert Parker welcomed the many new members to the society.
- Robert noted that all the society's activities throughout the year have been reported in detail in the Newsletter, and thanked Polly Low for all her hard and excellent work (the society echoed this in a formal vote of thanks at the end of the meeting).

### 4. Secretary's Report (Annual Report)

- Peter Haarer presented his report which was formally accepted (proposer Roueché, seconder Low).

### 5. Treasurer's Report (Nicholas Milner reported):

- Membership

The number of subscription renewals has declined, though losses have largely been compensated for by new members joining the society. In real terms this translates into about eighty paid-up members, some of whom joined shortly before or at the AGM. Of those leaving the society, the highest proportion is made up of those who joined for the first time but did not renew their subscription.

- Payments to AIEGL

77 payments were made to AIEGL, four of which were payments in arrears. The average cost of these over the year after conversion to Swiss Francs was £9.59 per member (£738.43 in total for the Society), providing a worthwhile benefit to members when compared with the cost of subscribing as a private individual.

- Bursaries

Bursaries of £10 were available to student members wishing to attend the FERCAN meeting adopted as the Spring Colloquium 2005, but these were not taken up.

- I & E:

£300 was paid during the year to the University of Oxford for the construction of the CIEGL web-site. In the event of the Congress making a profit, this is a repayable loan.

Budgetable income: £500 (down £60); Surplus: £230; Reserves: £2414.

With regard to bursaries for CIEGL, the society plans to set £200 aside from 2004/5 and needs to accrue a further £800 during 2005/6 and 2006/7. A large part of this money will need to be raised from grant-giving bodies.

- Standing Orders

Members were urged to subscribe by Standing Order, as this method achieves a significant saving to the Society in terms of administrative time and costs.

- Accounts

The accounts presented by Nicholas Milner were accepted (proposer: Rouché, seconder Mitchell).

#### **6. Membership of the Steering Committee**

- Nicholas Milner was re-elected Treasurer.
- Polly Low was re-elected as an ordinary member of the Steering Committee.
- Responsibility for the Newsletter passed from Polly Low to Jonathan Prag.

Membership of the Steering Committee for 2005/6 is therefore as follows: President: Robert Parker (to 2006), Treasurer: Nicholas Milner (to 2008), Secretary: Peter Haarer (to 2007), Ordinary Members: Gabriel Bodard (to 2008), Alison Cooley (AIEGL rep., to 2006); David French (to 2007), Peter Liddel (to 2007), Polly Low (web-site, to 2009), Jonathan Prag (Newsletter, to 2006)

#### **7. AIEGL matters**

A marked deterioration in the situation was noted. BES representatives have experienced difficulties finding out about and attending AIEGL meetings, while reports of the proceedings suggest that the organisation is experiencing structural problems and is not at present focussed as it should be on the promotion of Greek and Latin epigraphy in Europe. In addition, the benefits to BES members of membership of AIEGL are proving nebulous, especially with regard to discounts on epigraphic publications (eg. ZPE, SEG) and it seems symptomatic of the association that its web-site, which had been useful, is no longer live. Most alarmingly, it is difficult to see or discover how AIEGL is spending the monies collected by subscription.

All agreed that any response to this highly unsatisfactory state of affairs must be constructive. In the longer term, it was agreed that the most opportune moment to take action will be in 2007, when the AIEGL committee is elected. There was also some discussion as to whether AIEGL should have a permanent home, for example in the U.K. In the shorter term, it was agreed that:

- Stephen Mitchell will continue to liaise with AIEGL on CIEGL business.
- Robert Parker will contact Angela Donati and ask her for: i. the minutes of the last AIEGL committee meeting, and ii. the most recent set of accounts.

#### **8. International Congress 2007 (CIEGL)**

Stephen Mitchell circulated an updated programme stressing that proposals for thematic panels are still welcome. These should include the names of four to six contributors and details of the theme which itself should relate to the overall theme of the Congress. It is also still possible to offer individual papers which may be slotted into existing panels.

Plenary papers from the Congress will be published in a single volume, but no collective publication of the entire proceedings is envisaged. Organisers of thematic panels will be encouraged to publish the papers from their sessions, but on their own initiative.

A question was raised about facilities during the Congress for displaying electronic materials, and it was thought that a suitable suite would be available in Christ Church.

BES members are urged to pre-register for the Congress, and Stephen noted that our society at present is not well represented. On-line payment will be accepted from January / February and a discounted registration fee (est. £50) will be available for the first six months.

#### **9. Dates of Future Meetings**

No future meetings had as yet been arranged, but it was agreed that the spring meeting 2006 should be held in northern England or preferably Scotland to raise the profile of the BES in these areas.

The next autumn colloquium also proved difficult to tie down due to uncertainties in London over the future of the ICS and in Oxford the date at which the Classics Centre is due to move to its new home. It was agreed that there are more possibilities for finding suitable venues at short notice in Oxford than there are in London, and that therefore the autumn meeting would be held in Oxford, date and theme to be confirmed at a later date. Oxford would, however, happily give way to any concrete proposal from London to maintain the balance of location in the South East between Oxford, Cambridge, and London.

#### **10. Any other business.**

##### **BES Outreach**

The Society has received an informal enquiry from a UK institution with graduate students who are keen to acquire epigraphic skills but without an epigrapher on-site to supply appropriate training. This raised the general issue of the Society's role in outreach and provoked some profitable general discussion.

It was agreed that outreach is a central part of the Society's *raison d'être*. As for what to do, it was suggested that "Epigraphy North" offers an excellent model whereby expertise is pooled between a group of neighbouring institutions. The BES could encourage individual regions to establish similar schemes (though it would not have the resources to run or administer these) and should attempt to identify those areas where there is a need. The latter could be achieved through Anastasia Bakogianni at the ICS who may be in a position to collect information on supply and demand for epigraphic training for graduates at UK universities.