

TRANSLATION OF INSCRIPTIONS AT AQUAE SULIS

This sheet also serves as an answer-sheet for the worksheets on individual tombstones and religious inscriptions.

You will notice that many Latin names and words end with different letters on different inscriptions. That is because Latin is an inflected language: rather than relying on the order of words to convey the sense of a sentence, Latin changes the ending of the words.

e.g. 'ae' 'i' 'is' (plural 'orum' 'um') = GENITIVE CASE and means 'of' or 'apostrophe-s'.

'ae' 'o' 'i' (plural 'is' 'ibus') = DATIVE CASE and means 'to' or 'for'.

'a' 'e' 'u' = ABLATIVE CASE and means 'from'.

Ligatures (joined letters) and reversed or smaller letters, are common on inscriptions after the 1st Century AD.

TOMBSTONES

See web-page for photographs, pdf or powerpoint for line-drawings and decoding leaflets for analysis.

T2

L[ucius] VITELLIUS MA NTAI F[ilius] TANCINUS CIVES HISP[anus] CAURIE[n]SIS EQ[ues] ALAE VETTONUM C[ivium] R[omanorum] ANN[orum] XXXXVI STIP[endiorum] XXVI H[ic] S[itus] E[st]	Lucius Vitellius Tancinus, son of Mantaius, a tribesman of Caurium in Spain, cavalryman of the Regiment of Vettones, Roman citizens, aged 46, of 26 years' service. Here he lies.
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The relief sculpture of a horseman over a defeated enemy is typical of 1st century A.D. tombstones.

The cavalry regiment of the Vettones had all been granted Roman Citizenship by the Emperor Vespasian, presumably for their part in the invasion of Britain in 43 A.D.

Notice that rather than taking his father's first name, Tancinus has the Roman 'Lucius'.

T3

IULIUS VITA LIS FABRICIE[n]S IS LEG[ionis] XX V V STIPENDIOR UM IX AN[n]OR[um] XX IX NATIONE BE LGA EX COLEGIO FABRICE[nsium] ELATU S H[ic] S[itus] E[st]	Julius Vitalis, armourer of the 20 th Legion Valeria Victrix, of 9 years' service, aged 29, a Belgic tribesman, with funeral at the cost of the Guild of Armourers. Here he lies
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The gable top contains a flower - a common symbol of death on this type of 1st century A.D. tombstone. The lack of ligatures (joined letters) is another early feature.

As a member of the Belgic people, Vitalis came either from the territory of the British Belgae in the area of modern Hampshire, in which case he was recruited into the legion very early in the life of the new province, or he was from the Gallic Belgae of Northern France.

The 20th Legion was given the honorary title Valeria Victrix (Courageous and Victorious) following the Boudican rebellion 60-61 A.D. Note the inconsistent spellings of 'fabriciesis' and 'fabricensium'.

T4

SER[gia tribu] A[nt]IGONUS NIC[opoli] EMERITUS EX LEG[ione] XX AN[norum] XLV H[ic] S[itus] E[st] G[aius] TIBERINUS H[eres] F[aciendum] C[uravit]	... from the Sergian voting-tribe, Antigonus from Nicopolis, a veteran from the 20 th Legion, aged 45. Here he lies. Gaius Tiberinus, his heir, had this set up.
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He was a Roman citizen: "Sergia Tribu" means he had the right to vote in Rome even if in practice he hardly ever went there!

T7

D[is] M[anibus] MERCATILLA MAGNI L[ibertae] ALUMNA VIXIT AN[num] I M[enses] VI D[ies] XII	To the Spirits of the Departed; Mercatilla, freedwoman and foster-daughter of Magnus, lived 1 year 6 months, 12 days.
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This little girl had been born a slave and then freed and adopted by her former master, who obviously cared a lot about her. Was she his daughter by one of his slaves?

T8

RUSONIAE AVENT[i] NAE C[ivi] MEDIOMATR[icae] AN[norum] LVIII H[ic] S[ita] E[st] L[ucius] ULPIUS SESTIUS H[eres] F[aciendum] C[uravit]	.. to Rusonia Aventina, a tribeswoman of the Mediomatrici, (<i>Metz in France</i>) aged 58. Here she lies. Lucius Ulpius Sestius, her heir, had this set up.
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Rusonia's stone shows that women could possess enough status and wealth to have an impressive tombstone.

T11

D[is] M[anibus] G[aius] CALPURNIUS RECEPTUS SACER DOS DEAE SU LIS VIXIT AN[nos] LXXV CALPURNIA TRIFO SA LIBERT[a] CONIUNX F[aciendum] C[uravit]	To the Spirits of the Departed; Gaius Calpurnius Receptus, priest of the goddess Sulis, lived 75 years. Calpurnia Trifosa, his freedwoman and wife, had this set up.
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This tombstone is shaped like an altar, presumably in reference to his position as a priest, and it is carved with good, clear Classical lettering, with several reversed letters and ligatures. The ER of 'sacerdos' in small writing may indicate a mistake in the original carving.

Trifosa (this Greek name means 'Delicious') was originally his slave, and he obviously freed her in order to marry her, when she also took the female version of his name: 'Calpurnia'.

RELIGIOUS STONES

See web-page for photographs, pdf or powerpoint for line-drawings and decoding leaflets for analysis.

N.B. Many of these stones have been dedicated to fulfil an earlier promise that the dedicator had made to the god or goddess: Roman religion was based on a contract between the god and the worshipper. After making a sacrifice and adding a request, the worshipper would promise to give the god(dess) an offering when the request had been granted. This is why many stones contain the formula V S L M, which means that the worshipper is keeping his or her promise.

R1

DEAE SULI LUCIUS MARCIUS MEMOR HARUSP[ex] D[ono] D[edit]	To the goddess Sulis, Lucius Marcius Memor, a Haruspex gave [...] as a gift.
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*This inscription can be seen **in situ** in the Temple Courtyard. D D implies that he had offered a gift to the goddess: probably a statue which stood next to this dedication stone.*

A 'haruspex' was a senior priest who interpreted the will of the gods by examining the entrails of sacrificed animals.

This stone stands very close to the sacrificial altar - Memor's place of work - a very prestigious position!

Memor is the only haruspex recorded from Britain. Presumably the original abbreviation of his unusual profession to HAR was not recognised by readers, so VSP was added later to make it clearer (even though it spoils the symmetry).

R2

DEAE SULI MI NERVAE SULINUS MATU RI FIL[ius] V[otum] S[olvit] L[ibenter] M[erito]	To the goddess Sulis Minerva, Sulinus, Maturus's son kept his promise happily and deservedly.
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R3

PEREGRINUS SECUNDI FIL[ius] CIVIS TREVER[i] LOUCETIO MARTI ET NEMETONA[e] V[otum] S[olvit] L[ibenter] M[erito]	Peregrinus, Secundus's son, a Treveran citizen, (<i>Trier in Germany</i>) to Loucetius Mars and Nemetona kept his promise happily and deservedly.
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Loucetius Mars, like Sulis Minerva, is a conflation of a Celtic and Roman deity. The Roman god Mars was popular in

Britain and Gaul and he was known by a number of Celtic epithets. The name 'Loucetius' means 'light' and it is likely that this Mars is connected with healing through the equation of light with the sun and the connections between light, clearness and water. Roman gods were often given Celtic consorts (a relief of Mercury and Rosmerta can also be seen at Bath). Loucetius Mars' Celtic consort, Nemetona, is a goddess associated by her name with sacred groves. A vast religious and healing complex at Trier was dedicated to Lenus Mars and his consort, Ancamma, so Peregrinus may have identified similarities between these deities from his home and Loucetius Mars and Nemetona in Bath.

R4

DEAE SULI [p]RO SALUTE ET [i]NCOLUMITATE AUFIDI MAXIMI > LEG[ionis] VI VIC[tricus] M[arcus] AUFIDIUS LEMNUS LIBERTUS V[otum] S[olvit] L[ibenter] M[erito]	To the goddess Sulis, for the welfare and safety of Aufidius Maximus, Centurion of the 6 th Legion <i>Victrix</i> (Victorious), Marcus Aufidius Lemnus, his freedman kept his promise happily and deservedly.
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Stones R4 and R5 are both dedicated by freedmen of Marcus Aufidius Maximus, requesting his well-being.

From the size and style of these two altars as well as the subject-matter, it can be assumed that they were erected at the same time. If so, it is interesting to note that they have been inscribed by different hands, each using a different lettering style and different abbreviations - including the format of the names. Notice > for 'centurion'.

** The sculptor has made a mistake by giving the praenomen 'Marcus' to the freedman rather than to his ex-master. The 6th Legion was transferred to Britain in c.122 A.D. so these altars cannot be earlier than this date. It is known that the Emperor Hadrian visited Britain in 122 A.D. and it is possible that he visited Bath. Perhaps the tholos, or circular temple (remains of which are displayed in the museum), may have been built to honour his visit and love of all things Greek.*

It is tempting to see the manumission of Lemnus and Eutuches as part of the celebrations.

R5

[d]EAE SULI PRO SALUTE ET INCOLUMITA [te] MAR[ci] AUFID[i] [m]AXIMI > LEG[ionis] VI VIC[tricus] [a]UFIDIUS EU TUCHES LEB[ertus] V[otum] S[olvit] L[ibenter] M[erito]	To the goddess Sulis, for the welfare and safety of Marcus Aufidius Maximus, Centurion of the 6 th Legion <i>Victrix</i> (Victorious), Aufidius Eutuches, his freedman (<i>notice spelling mistake!</i>) kept his promise happily and deservedly.
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See the note on R4 above.

R6

[dia]NA[e] SACRATI SSIMA[e] VOTUM SOLVIT VETTIUS BE NIGNUS LIB[ertus]	To Diana, most hallowed, he fulfilled his vow, <i>(in better English:</i> Vettius <i>Vettius Benignus, a freedman</i> Benignus, a freedman. <i>kept his promise.)</i>
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It is possible that the carved stone relief showing a dog looking up at a draped figure holding a bow, may be a representation of Diana, the Roman goddess of hunting.

R7

PRISCUS TOUTI FIL[ius] LAPIDARIU[s] CIVES CAR[nu]TENUS SU[li] DEAE V[otum] [solvit] [libenter] [merito]	Priscus, Toutius' son, a stonemason, tribesman of the Carnutes (<i>Chartres in France</i>), to Sulis the goddess. He kept his promise happily and deservedly.
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A Lapidarius was a stone mason who specialised in figures and relief carving, and the elegant, calligraphic writing in two sizes of well-spaced lettering with frequent leaf-stops is fitting for a man of his profession.

Priscus came from Chartres, which is another stone-working region.

It is tempting to speculate that this altar could also serve as an advertisement for Priscus if he had decided to start working in Bath.

R8

DEAE SU LI MIN[ervae] ET NU MIN[ibus] AUG[ustorum] G[aius] CURIATIUS SATURNINUS > LEG[ionis] II AUG[ustae] PRO SE SU ISQUE V[otum] S[olvit] L[ibenter] M[erito]	To the goddess Sulis Minerva and to the Divinities of the (two) Emperors, Gaius Curiatius Saturninus, a Centurion, of the 2 nd Legion <i>Augusta</i> (The Emperor's), on behalf of himself and (-que) his family, he kept his promise happily and deservedly.
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The dedication to the 'numen' of emperors was popular in Roman Britain, especially amongst the military. (see also inscription P4). The word 'numen' conveys the essence or quality of divinity rather than an actual god. Whilst alive, the emperor was believed to embody many divine-like virtues which were also personified with their own 'numina' and you can see examples of these on coin-reverses of the period. Worship of the 'numen' of the emperor(s) was part of a more widespread imperial cult which included the deification of dead emperors.

This inscription must post-date the first co-emperorship, between Marcus Aurelius and Verus in 161-9 A.D.

R9

NOVANTI FIL[ius] PRO SE ET SUIS EX VISU POSSUIT - mis-spelling, for 'posuit'	... Novantius' son on behalf of himself and his family, after a vision/dream, set [this] up.
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We do not know this person's name, since the inscription is incomplete; the rest must have been carved on a separate block which stood on top of this one.

This format for a dedication is unusual. Sacred sleep, leading to dreams, may have been part of the cure at Bath as at other healing sanctuaries, especially those dedicated to the cult of Aesculapius (Roman god of healing). It is possible that the building next to the spring, decorated with the Luna pediment and the façade of the Four Seasons, was used for this purpose.

R10

SULEVIS SULINUS SCULTOR - mis-spelling, for 'sculptor' BRUCETI F[ilius] SACRUM F[ecit] L[ibenter] M[erito]	To the Suleviae, Sulinus, a sculptor, Brucetius' son, made this sacred offering happily and deservedly.
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Like stone R1, the format of this inscription suggests that it accompanied a separate offering: probably a statue. 'Suleviae' was the local name given to the three Celtic Mother-goddesses in the Danube basin. Depictions of un-named Mother Goddesses are common throughout Britain, Gaul, Germany and north Italy. Sometimes they are tied to a specific locality, such as the 'Matres Glanicae' worshipped with a male god, Glanis, at Glanum (St Remy-en-Provence). It is interesting to speculate whether Sulinus used this Germanic name because of links to their home-area or whether he was making a link either to his own name or to that of the goddess Sulis. Perhaps he was using this altar as an advertisement for himself and hoping to appeal to customers who came from that part of the Empire.

Two men called Sulinus are recorded from Bath. This one was a stone-mason, specialising in lettering on inscriptions, but he has mis-spelled the name of his profession, which should read 'sculptor'!

N.B. P4, P5 and P11 also have religious significance.

PUBLIC INFORMATION, PUBLICITY & PROPAGANDA

[See web-page for photographs and information, and pdf or powerpoint for line-drawings.](#)

P1

VES[pasianus] VII C[onsulatu]	Vespasian, in his 7 th year of Consulship.
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This building inscription refers to the year 75 A.D.

P2

IMP[eratoris] HADRIANI AUG[usti]	[property] of the Emperor Hadrian Augustus.
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This lead pig (ingot) can be dated by the inscription to 117-38 A.D.

P3a-b

[c]LAUDIUS LIGUR .. AE NIMIA VETUSTATE	Claudius Ligur ... excessive age
[c]OLLEGIO LONGA SERIA [annorum] [sua pec]UNIA REFICI ET REPINGI CUR[avit]	the guild in long sequence of years ... at his own cost had it repaired and repainted ..
G[aius] PROTACIU[s] dEAE SULIS MI[nervae]	Gaius Protacius of the goddess Sulis Minerva ..

This building inscription can be seen at high level in the 'Worshipping the Gods' section. It is thought that the facade, representing the four seasons, came from a building which originally faced onto the Temple Courtyard and therefore had a religious function. Local officials were expected to pay for building and reconstruction work so they liked to position their names prominently so that voters would remember who they were. The inscription has fine, classical lettering with complex ligatures and triangular interpuncts.

P4

LOCUM RELI GIOSUM PER IN SOLENTIAM E RUTUM VIRTUTI ET N[umini] AUG[usti] REPURGA TUM REDDIDIT G[aius] SEVERIUS EMERITUS > REG[ionarius]	This holy place, by vandalism wrecked, To the Virtue and Deity of the Emperor, freshly-cleansed has restored it. Gaius Severius Emeritus, the Centurion in charge of the area.	<i>(in better English: Gaius Severius Emeritus, the Centurion in charge of the area, has restored, freshly cleansed, this holy place, wrecked by vandalism. To the Virtue and Deity of the Emperor)</i>
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A district under military rule is called a 'regio', so the centurion (>) in charge of this area must have had responsibility for maintaining its buildings.

See R8 for an explanation of 'numini' (numen).

VIRTUS and NUMEN both end in '-i' because they are in the DATIVE case = 'TO' the virtue and deity ...

AUGUSTUS ends in '-i' because it is in the GENITIVE case = OF the Emperor.

It is possible that the vandalism (insolentia) referred to was carried out by Christians against this pagan sanctuary.

If this is the case, the inscription can be dated to the latest period of Roman occupation.

Incised guidelines can still be seen on this inscription: why didn't the stonemason just use chalk?

N.B. Emeritus is this centurion's name, but you will see on the Tombstones decoding leaflet that the word can also mean a Veteran, or retired soldier.

P5

PRO SALUTE IMP[eratoris] CAES[aris] M[arci] AUR[eli] ANTONINI PII FELICIS INVIC TI AUG[usti] NAEVIUS AUG[usti] LIB[ertus] ADIUT[or] PROC[uratorum] PRINCI PIA RUINA OP[p]RESS[a] A SOLO RES TITUIT	On behalf of the welfare of the Emperor Caesar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Pius Felix Invictus Augustus; Naeivius, an Imperial freedman, assistant of the procurator, restored from ground-level these ruined headquarters.
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This building inscription is thought to belong to the centre of an Imperial estate in the Bath area which possibly exploited Bath stone. The Emperor referred to is better known to us by his nickname of Caracalla (211-14 A.D.) but it is interesting to see his eight names written out here! All his names are in the Genitive case, ending in '-is' or '-i' = 'OF'. Although Naeivius was an ex-slave, Imperial freedmen were given a lot of responsibility and power and had important jobs in the imperial bureaucracy. (This inscription is currently in storage at the museum.)

P6

P[rovinciae] BR[itanniae] S[uperioris]	[Seal] of the province of Upper Britain.
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The stag shown on this lead seal is taken to be the badge of the province.

P7

IUNIANI ... AD CLARITATEM	Junianus's ... For clarity (of vision)
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This (reversed) stamp shows the name of an eye-ointment maker, and what the product promises to do for the eyes.

P8

OFF[icina] PASSIENI	From the workshop of Passienus.
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Potter's mark on a shard of Samian pottery. We know from stylistic features and comparisons with other pots that Passienus worked in La Graufesenque (near Millau) during the reigns of the Emperors Nero and Vespasian.

P9

EST CIVITAS VMIIS QUAS POS VLI SINGULAS XVII K OCTOBRE TILA RTI DIOCELE PROCULEIANCVIP PINQUOS LE	Citizenship (or Town) 15 th September (17 days before the Kalends of October)
<i>reverse side</i> RINETITIE ITANNSVBI RIBVSVESTIPE EST. MISSION ITIPSIS II	

Soldier's discharge Diploma, granting him citizenship as from 15th September. We do not know the year, but it must be before the 3rd century, when Roman citizenship was granted to all citizens of the Empire.

P10

MARTINI	Martinus's
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We do not know why Martinus wrote his name on this piece of pottery. Perhaps it was his personal bowl.

P11

D[ae] S[uli] M[inervae]	To the goddess Sulis Minerva
DEAE SUL[i] MIN[ervae]	To the goddess Sulis Minerva

The majority of Roman pewter vessels have been found in late hoards, but they may have been made much earlier. These 'paterae' were excavated from the Sacred Spring and it is not possible to date them accurately. Finds of stone moulds for making pewter vessels suggest a local industry. Paterae such as these were used for pouring libations of wine or Spring water. The inscriptions show that they were dedicated to the deity. The pewter vessels from the Spring are all rather battered and worn - perhaps they were decommissioned by throwing them into the Sacred Spring.

CURSES

Selected Curses are transliterated and translated on the Curses Powerpoint, with line-drawings.