

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

A Votive Relief of Mars from Stancomb

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1978, Vol. 96, 78-79

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concentric scoring on the inside. The mortarium is self-coloured and some grey (flint), white and transparent grit is embedded in the rim. The form is related to Bushe-Fox forms 26-30 (*Wroxeter I, fig. 19*). A generally similar mortarium from Richborough (*Richborough IV, Plate XCV, no. 500*) was in a pit-filling dated *c. A.D. 90-125* by Bushe-Fox. This fabric is likely to have been produced in either Gaul, or the south of England. (From VC 1).

(b) In coarser orangey brown fabric with a drab grey core, containing much blackish and red-brown grit; with a brown slip and white and grey trituration grit combined with concentric scoring. Its origin and date are uncertain but manufacture in the south-west in the late 1st century is probable. (From K2A4).

(c) In a fine, slightly yellowish cream fabric with grey flint grit. It is a typical sample of form *Gillam 238* (Bushe-Fox 14-18). These mortaria are dated *c. A.D. 70-100* and are likely to have been made in south-east England, perhaps Kent, though manufacture in Gaul is not entirely impossible. (From E).

From the position in which they were found the last two items add weight to the evidence for a phase of kiln operation in the late Flavian to Trajanic period.

1976

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A ROMANO-BRITISH VOTIVE RELIEF OF MARS FROM STANCOMB WOOD, WINCHCOMBE, GLOS.

A Romano-British sculpture found in Stancomb Wood, Winchcombe (O.S. Nat. Grid SP 040285) in the 19th century (but now lost), and illustrated in Dent (1877) as 'a fragment of a Roman tomb', is now almost certainly to be identified as a votive relief of Mars.

The original illustration (FIG), which has no scale, shows carved in relief, a helmeted male figure facing the spectator, and armed with spear, shield, and (?) sword, with a short cloak over a short, belted tunic.

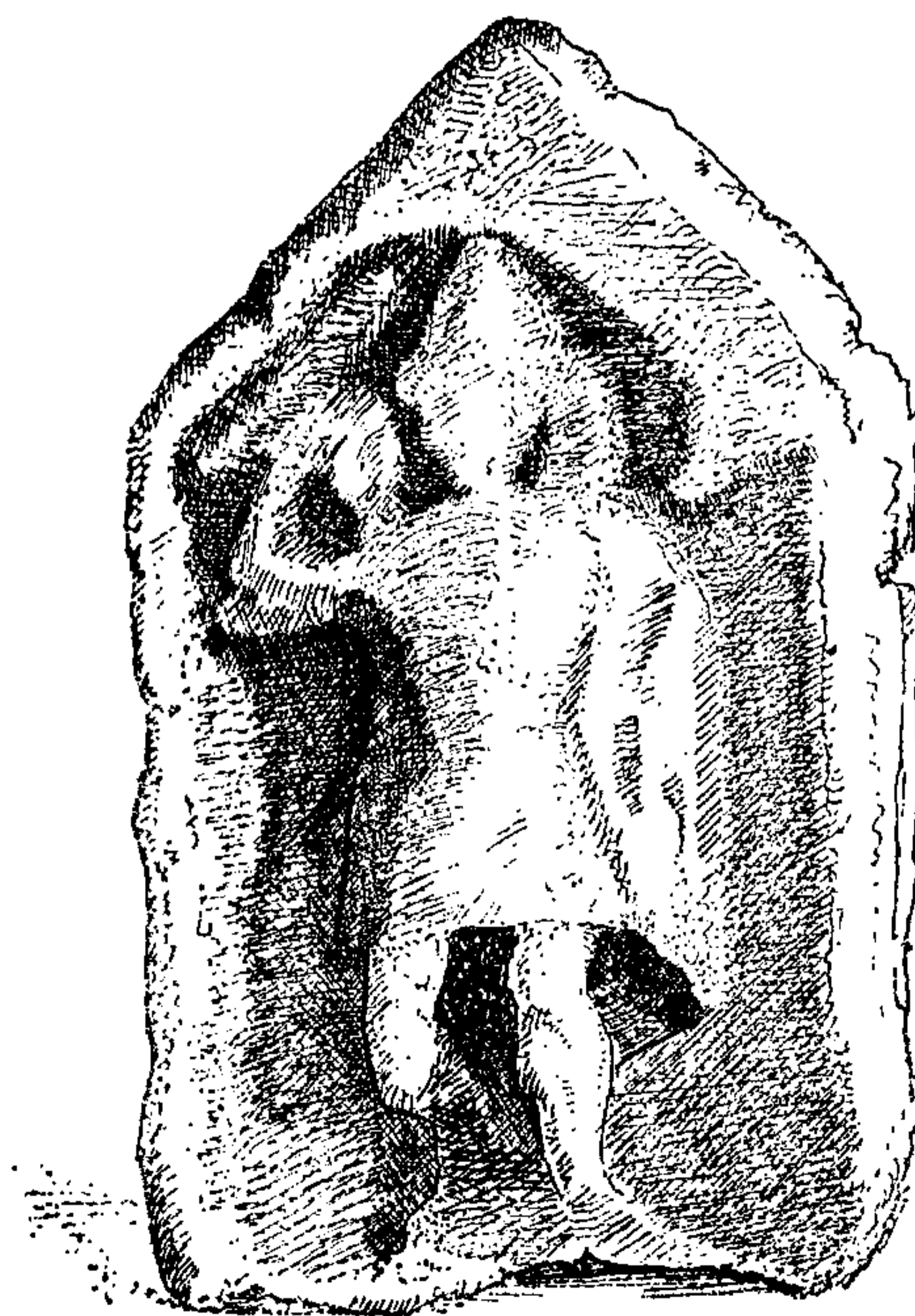


FIG. 1.

Elements of the clothing, and armour from the Stancomb Wood Mars can be paralleled amongst other representations of Mars which occur on Roman altars from the Cotswolds (Clifford, 1938; O'Neil and Toynbee, 1958), but the stance with upraised spear is without parallel in this area.

The thigh-length tunic, which is fastened by a belt at the waist, is paralleled on altars from Kings Stanley, Bisley barrow, and Nailsworth, (Clifford, 1938, figs. 3-5, 23-24, 30), and at Lower Slaughter, (O'Neil and Toynbee, 1958, plate ix, 4). The appearance of the torso suggests the presence of a cuirass, and the legs, which are fragmentary, show possible traces of greaves. The left arm holds a rounded shield, held facing the side, as at Kings Stanley (Clifford, 1938, fig. 3), and in front of a short cloak, which is thrown back over the left shoulder (Cf., Clifford, 1938, fig. 30) to appear hanging behind the left leg. The upraised right arm holds what is probably a spear, of which only very faint traces remain. The attitude of the right leg, and the position of the right arm suggest a threatening, or victorious posture with upraised spear, rather than the more usual figure depicted in a defensive attitude, using the spear as a staff (cf., Clifford, 1938, figs. 2-5, 20, 23-4, 30). No traces of a vertical spear shaft can be seen. Slight traces of what might be a sword, hanging from the belt, can be seen on the left side, similar to that seen on altars from Kings Stanley, Nailsworth (Clifford, 1938, figs. 2, 3, 5), and at Lower Slaughter (O'Neil and Toynbee, 1958, plate ix, 4). The helmet appears to be conical with a rim, and the feature to the left of the head appears to be a downward-sweeping plume, or sash, paralleled at Kings Stanley, and Bisley (Clifford, 1938, figs. 4, 6). The feature to the spectator's left of the head is difficult to interpret as part of the helmet or spear, and is possibly a natural mark on the stone.

The shape of the relief, which is basically rectangular, with a gabled upper section, and the shape of the figure-containing niche, are closely paralleled by the relief of Minerva from Lower Slaughter (O'Neil and Toynbee, 1958, fig. 6).

The dynamic, and 'victorious' attitude of the Stancomb Wood Mars, in this votive context, is interesting in connection with the suggestion (O'Neil and Toynbee, 1958) that the native adaptation of Mars was worshipped not only as a deity of war, but also as a giver of victory over death and evil. As an agricultural deity he would also be the conqueror of sterility in animals and crops.

Acknowledgement. I would like to thank Professor J. M. C. Toynbee for much helpful information on the figure.

February 1975

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AN ANCIENT QUARRY AT MANLESS TOWN IN THE PARISH OF BRIMPSFIELD

In the summer of 1973 sherds of Romano-British pottery were found during the construction of a small reservoir to supply water for agricultural purposes on the Miserden estate. The reservoir is situated on the south-west side of the road from Climperwell to Caudle Green in the parish of Brimpsfield (SO 92851155). In the vicinity, over parts of four fields, there is a surface scatter of Romano-British sherds. These also occur with medieval sherds in the molehills of two large pasture fields to the north of the road, where the outlines of buildings of a deserted medieval village, here called Manless Town ¹, can be seen. The altitude of the site is 883 feet above sea level.

1. *Medieval Archaeology*, VIII (1964), 284.