

Skeletons unearthed 1,600 years on

THE SKELETONS of two of Cowbridge's earliest inhabitants have just been unearthed by archeologists.

A team of 25 led by the Glamorgan-Gwent Archeological Trust have uncovered the bones of a child and a fully-grown man from the fourth century AD.

Director of the trust Mr Gareth Dowdell said yesterday they were the finest examples of their kind.

The graves were found underneath the car park of a shop in the High Street where the team have been digging for the past two months as part of a year's project sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission.

It is the last chance to excavate the area before its deposits are destroyed by development.

Documents in the early third century told of the Roman fort of Bomium between Cardiff and Neath and archeologists believe that Cowbridge has cause to lay claim to that name.

The graves were found near each other about 18 inches below Roman ground level.

The child, whose sex is unknown until a pathological examination has been made, is believed to have been three years old. The body was buried at the bottom of a Roman drainage channel in the late third or early fourth century.

On its wrists were two bronze bangles, one of twisted wire and one hollow.

The skeleton was found underneath a pile of Roman rubble, which formed part of a wall.

Senior site supervisor Mr Jonathan Parkhouse said, "The graves are close to a large Roman building. Over the adult's



● The skeleton of an adult male excavated at Cowbridge.

grave were some stamped tiles of the Second Augustan Legion, which seems to add to the theory that Cowbridge was the site of Bomium."

These are the first skeletons to be found in Cowbridge. The archeologists are also digging on another site in the town — Hopp Yard Meadow at the West Gate.

The bones and ornaments will be packed and sent to a laboratory in Cardiff for further examination.