In this article, the author has drawn on his doctoral research to review the evidence for the deposition of coins in sacred springs in antiquity and the early Middle Ages (Fig. 1). Where and when did this practice originate? How long did it continue? In order to come to a fuller understanding of this phenomenon, he draws interesting parallels with modern practice. We welcome Eberhard Sauer back to the pages of ARA. Since 2008 he has been Professor of Roman Archaeology in the School of History, Classics and Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh.

What have fish ponds at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, an ornamental water basin in front of the Zoroastrian Fire Temple at Yazd in Iran, a fountain at Barcelona Cathedral, a natural water feature in Gough's Cave at Cheddar, the Roman swimming pools at Bath and a dry well with a mirror at the bottom of it in the Limesmuseum at Aalen in Germany, in common? They have all received modern coin offerings, and the same is true for countless other watery features, ranging from the Trevi Fountain at Rome to a pool in Gatwick Airport (Figs. 2-4).

The deposition of coins in water, believed to bring good fortune, has become a ritual practised on a global scale. Where did it originate? Nobody knows at which spring the first coin was offered. Of course, it must post-date the introduction of coinage. Coins recovered from the spring at Burgaski Bani in Bulgaria, with the telling name of Aquae Calidae ('Hot Waters'), reach back to the fourth century BC and early currency has also been found in springs in Italy. Of course, metal artefacts had already been ritually deposited in watery features before the first coins were minted. The earliest offering from the sacred spring at the Artemis sanctuary at Brauron, east of Athens, date
to the eighth century BC. A wide range of Bronze Age and Iron Age metal artefacts have also been deposited in the bogs of southern Scandinavia and in the rivers of western Europe. This has led some to believe that coin offerings in springs in Roman Britain, Gaul and Germany are a ritual which continued previously practiced local native traditions. Yet, archaeology tells a different story. Unlike rivers and bogs, the number of springs in northern Europe with confirmed Iron Age offerings is minute, especially if one excludes late Iron Age objects, probably deposited in the early Imperial era. Amongst the over 12,000 ancient coins recovered from the King's Spring at the Temple of Sulis Minerva at Bath (Aqua Sulis – “The Waters of [the goddess] Sulis”) only one in every 700 is a pre-Conquest issue. These few Late Iron Age pieces could still have circulated after the Roman Conquest and could have been deposited then. None of the ancient coins from the thermal spring at Buxton in Derbyshire

(Aqua Arnemetiae – “The Waters of [the goddess] Arnemetia”) or Coventina’s Well at Carrawburgh on Hadrian’s Wall, is an Iron Age issue. By contrast, we see a sudden almost explosive uptake of the ritual all over north-western Europe in the early Imperial era. At Bourbonne-les-Bains over 3,000 were offered in the last decade of the first century BC, probably soon after Roman engineers had succeeded in building a catchment installation, so that the 66-degrees hot mineral water could be used to feed a bath-house (Figs. 5, 6). Coin offerings commence in the Augustan era at a number of other Continental springs too, notably the spa at Wiesbaden.

Normally small denominations were chosen for offering, especially in Italy and the earliest deposits in the north. Under Augustus many halved assae, representing half the nominal value of this denomination, were a particular favourite. Nonetheless, one must not underestimate the value of such pieces. An as may be as small as a current two-pence coin, yet it represented a tenth of the daily earnings of a legionary, and thus was vastly more valuable than...
small change today; a halved as was still worth some 5%. Coin offerings in antiquity were deliberate and meaningful religious rituals, not the casual acts we witness today. What motivated this practice in antiquity? A silver or gold coin was deposited in the spring at the Amphiparion healing sanctuary in Greece on the occasion of a successful cure from a disease (Pausanias 1. 34. 4), and similar motives may be behind many coin offerings at springs believed to have curative powers. Not all offerings need be related to a healing cult. Circumstantial evidence suggests that at some sites coins with the image of Augustus may have been deposited for his well-being, similar to a custom attested for the Lacus Curtius votive shaft on the Forum Romanum at Rome.

Unsurprisingly, the earliest spas in the northern provinces seem to have been built for the army. Legionaries, initially mainly of Italian origin, were accustomed to hot baths, and these were particularly welcome in the cold northern provinces. In addition to much-needed relaxation, hot mineral waters, such as those at Bourbonne, helped to heal fractures, wounds and rheumatism. The very same southerners also brought with them the practice of coin deposition in springs, well established in Italy at the time. The hot spring of Vicarello near Rome has yielded over 5,000 Republican and Imperial coins and the Fountain of Anna Perenna at Rome over 500 Imperial pieces. Pliny the Younger (Letters 8. 8. 2) famously describes coin offerings in the clear waters of the Clitumnus Spring: ‘Underneath this [cypress-covered hill] emerges a spring, gushing out in several veins of unequal strength; it first forms a whirl-pool and then flows into a wide basin, so pure and crystal-clear that you can count the coin offerings and the shining pebbles.’ (Fig. 8). Italy was the springboard from where the practice of depositing coins in springs started to conquer the world.

Yet, it did so with considerable regional variations. In Roman Gaul and Germany it flourished in the multicultural east and far less so in the west. In Britain, it remained confined to a far smaller number of sites than on the Continent. To some extent this may be related to geologically ‘recent’ tectonic activity having created more hot springs in eastern Gaul and Germany than in Britain. Yet, coin offerings are not confined to thermal waters. Indeed, one of the two largest recorded coin deposits in a spring in the Roman Empire known to me was recovered from a cold spring, Coventina’s Well. The largest votive coin deposit from a spring in Roman Germany, at Bornheim-Roisdorf, was also extracted from a cold spring.

As mentioned above, it was the Roman army that appears to have introduced the practice to the Empire’s north-western border zones, but it soon attracted local imitators, though with considerable regional variations. At Bath and Buxton the practice remained vibrant until the fourth century, whilst at Coventina’s Well it continued on a reduced scale, but lost popularity. An early hypothesis that some of the coins from Coventina’s Well are part of a hoard is unlikely to be correct, as the number of offerings decreased gradually over time, rather than suddenly. As with many other imported Roman customs, such as setting up tombstones for the deceased, it was left to local people (of sufficient means in the case

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**Fig. 5.** Coins at 1:1 scale.

A: Quadrantes, the smallest denomination in the currency system at the time, were the favourite coins chosen for deposition in the hot spring at Bourbonne-les-Bains. No less than 1,500 of this type, with an eagle on the reverse, are still in the museum collections today.

B: Halved coins were popular too. Here a halved as from Bourbonne, minted at Nemausus (Nîmes), with a crocodile chained to a palm tree on the reverse.

C: Coin of Lucilla from Bourbonne, minted at Rome (AD 163-180). The coin with Concord on the reverse has been 'ritually killed' by approximately ten cuts.

D: An Augustan quadrans (bottom right) and as (top left), both from the votive deposit in Bourbonne-les-Bains' hot spring, may be of a similar size to the smallest coins in our currency today, but were much more valuable: a legionary under Augustus received the equivalent of 10 asses or 40 quadrantes per day.

Photos: courtesy of Eberhard Sauer.

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**Fig. 6.** Late coins (1:1 scale) from the votive deposit in Bourbonne’s thermal spring (from left to right): a base metal coin of Magnentius with large chi-rho symbol (AD 350-353), a gold solidus of Honorius (AD 394-402) and a silver obol of Pepin II of Aquitaine (AD 839/845-852). Photo: courtesy of Eberhard Sauer.
of tombstones) to decide whether they did or did not wish to adopt the practice.

Around AD 400 Rome ceased to produce large quantities of base metal coins for the northern provinces. As a result, the number of coin finds and deposits, at religious and secular sites alike, plummets after this time. A few springs have yielded coins of the following 500 years, but in the west there is no spring with more than an average of one coin per century during this period. The writings of the Church Fathers, strongly opposed to nature veneration, suggest that spring veneration now mainly adopted archaeologically untraceable forms of practice, such as praying, making vows, lighting candles or offerings organic substances such as bread. Unquestionably, medieval spring veneration had changed substantially, but a more materialistic approach survived. Whilst in the Iron Age springs had emerged largely as nature had created them, in the Roman period many, notably most thermal springs, were encased in architecture, to feed bath-houses as well as to form the foci for religious ceremonies. In the Christian Middle Ages the Church, having realised that spring veneration could not be eradicated, sometimes incorporated holy wells and springs into Christian ecclesiastical architecture, such as a chapel built over a spring in the middle of the forest at Marcilly-en-Bassigny in France (Fig. 9).

The veneration of springs and other natural features indeed proved one of the most enduring forms of cult. Not only did the Church lose the battle against springs continuing to attract religious devotion in Christian Europe, spring veneration also proved remarkably resilient in the wake of other profound changes. When, around AD 260, the Germanic Alamanni took over the land between the Rhine, the Danube and the Limes that had previously been under Roman rule, all Roman religious cults seem to have ceased. There is no evidence for continued ritual, as far as I

Fig. 7. The source of the River Douix at Châtillon-sur-Seine has not only yielded late Iron Age and early Roman coin offerings, probably all deposited under Roman rule in the later first century BC and early first century AD, but also brooches of the eighth/sixth century BC. It is almost unique as a spring in having received certain pre-Roman religious votive offerings. Photo: courtesy of Eberhard Sauer.

Fig. 8. The Cisternus Fons in Umbria with its amazingly clear water was already admired by Pliny the Younger who saw votive coins under the water here. Photo: courtesy of Eberhard Sauer.

Fig. 9. Built over a miraculous spring in the forest: the chapel of Notre-Dame de Presles near Marcilly-en-Bassigny. Photo: courtesy of Eberhard Sauer.
am aware, in any of the numerous excavated temples in the area. Yet, spring veneration survived. Several springs have yielded late Roman coinage. Most notably at Rottenburg-Bad Niedernau a spring, whose waters contain carbon dioxide and are still in demand as table-water today, received coin offerings until AD 364/378 or even AD 375/392, more than a century after the end of Roman rule (Fig. 10). Perhaps the Roman relic population continued to draw to this numinous place and only ceased to make such offerings when coins disappeared from circulation and were no longer available.

Spring veneration has a remarkable capacity to survive the most profound cultural and religious changes. Rottenburg-Bad Niedernau is an interesting example of this phenomenon and very much reminds me of a site I visited on a journey to Pakistan after my A-levels. In the suburbs of Karachi one finds the Mangho-Peer shrine, dedicated to an Islamic saint associated with a feature which is probably of earlier origin: a pool with thermal spring water forms the habitat for marsh crocodiles, fed with meat by pilgrims. Neither German invaders, nor Christianity, nor Islam have entirely succeeded in eradicating nature cults.

Whilst the types of offerings changed again and again as well as, to some extent, the springs and wells attracting worship, there appears to be an element of continuity in spring veneration reaching back some two millennia. The roots of spring veneration are lost in the mists of time. Notably those with hot waters producing clouds of steam must have been an impressive and wonderful sight to people in prehistory, before their waters were systematically used in bath establishments in the Roman era (Fig. 11). Yet prehistoric spring veneration seems to have adopted a largely immaterial and archaeologically untraceable form. Occasionally the strong local dominance of a deity with a native name presiding over a spring, such as Sulis at Bath, provides a concrete hint of likely pre-Roman roots. Yet, the mass deposition of objects in springs first occurs in northern Europe in the Roman period. After a lull in detectable activity in the Middle Ages, due to shortage of base metal cash, this practice flourishes today like never before, and so is perhaps one of Rome’s most pervasive legacies.

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I am very grateful to Mr Henri Trosgros for his kind permission to study the coins from Bourbons-les-Bains. He, Prof. Sir Barry Cunliffe, Prof. Martin Henig and Dr Cathy King all offered invaluable advice and support for my doctorate, on which parts of this article are based. I would also like to thank Grahame Soffe for his kind editorial support.

FURTHER READING
Spirits of the Dead: Roman Funerary Commemoration in Western Europe
By Maureen Carroll
Oxford University Press, 2011
ISBN 978 0 19 960399 2
Paperback £27.50
331 pp., 80 illustrations
in black and white

Review by David Bradbury

This book, part of the Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents series, first appeared in 2006 in hard covers. It has now been published as a paperback, and at a much more reasonable price. This greater accessibility is welcome, as the book deserves a wide readership among those who have a particular interest in the physical remains left to us by the Romans, and as the author rightly reminds us from the outset, tombs were “among the most visible and public monuments of Roman settlements.”

Unlike a great work such as Jocelyn Toynbee’s Death and Burial in the Roman World (1971), this book focuses upon the epitaphs and what they convey rather than the morphology or architecture of the tombs themselves. The book concentrates on western Europe, where Latin is overwhelmingly the language of epitaphs. I can see why the author did not take on the eastern Roman Empire where Greek inscriptions are the norm, but if I have a criticism it is that the western parts of North Africa (where Latin as distinct from Greek came to be the principal written language) are largely not covered, presumably because the scope of the research and the travelling involved would have increased so much as to make the author’s task unmanageable. Of course, even across the geographical area covered, there was a huge variety of funerary customs, and these regional differences are well picked out; the use of columnelle or stylized herms in Campania being one example.

Early chapters look at the subjects of ‘memory and commemoration,’ ‘anonymity,’ ‘violation and memory loss,’ ‘selecting a monument,’ and ‘conveying a message.’ Later chapters cover the topics of what Roman tombs can tell us about causes of death, ‘families and households,’ ‘population movement’ and ‘social mobility and change.’ Finally, there is an examination of how the early western Christians commemorated their dead.

Throughout the text there are copious quotations from actual inscriptions to reinforce the points being made. My particular favourite is an epitaph reading “here lies the body of a boy, name to be inserted” – presumably the handiwork of an illiterate stonemason copying from a style-guide without an understanding of what he was transcribing. Although the evidence is primarily archaeological and epigraphical, Dr Carroll does not ignore the ancient literary sources and draws from Cicero, Petronius, Pliny the Younger, Sidonius Apollinaris, and others. The wide variation in funerary practice is strongly brought out: for example, a photograph of the well-known Tomb of Caecilia Metella by the Appian Way, just outside the walls of Rome and one of the grandest of all surviving monuments, is immediately followed by an illustration of a very basic stela from Avila with only the crudest of stylised portraits and a terse inscription.

An appendix gives a selection of epitaphs in both Latin and in translation to illustrate some of the main themes in funerary commemoration. This is followed by a very useful list of the most common abbreviations to be found – very handy when visiting lapidaria, and a thorough bibliography.

AD 410, The Year That Shook Rome
By S Moorhead and D Stuttard
The British Museum Press, 2010
ISBN 978 0 7141 2269 4
Paperback £9.99
184 pp., 88 colour illustrations

Review by Vix Hughes and Nicholas Hogben

This book was published in the UK by The British Museum Press in 2010 to mark the 1600th anniversary of Alaric the Goth’s sack of Rome in AD 410, and was launched at the AD 410 Conference at the British Museum (see below). It was the first collaboration between Sam Moorhead, Finds Adviser for Iron Age and Roman coins at the British Museum and ARA trustee, and independent scholar David Stuttard; both have good credentials in the Roman archaeological world.

Both this book and The Romans Who Shaped Britain
(see below) are a delight to read. They have enthralling topics, and the writing style ensures they will appeal to academics, enthusiasts and casual readers alike. The books are written in a style which is fluid and accessible to the readers. The authors' ability to weave the story, the facts, the politics and the people together in such a way is remarkable. These reviews were written by a full-time, professional commercial archaeologist (Vix) and a Roman enthusiast (Nicholas); we both recommend both books wholeheartedly.

The authors' aim in *AD 410, The Year That Shook Rome* is not to debate why Rome was sacked, but how it transpired. They paint a vivid picture of personal and political vendettas; battles and revolts; conflicts of Christians with pagans and within Christianity itself; and the complicated dealings between the Roman Empire and the Goths. The book's size and weight means it is ideal to read when travelling.

In the *Prologue*, the scene is set by describing the city of Rome in AD 410. Part 1, *A House Divided*, steps back in time, and shows political and religious changes that stabilised the empire but created new weaknesses. It recounts attempts by Diocletian in the late third century to bring order to the empire, by splitting it into two and creating more, smaller provinces; dividing power between four rulers (the Tetrarchy); increasing the size of the army; and laying the seeds for serfdom by obliging sons to take the trades of their fathers. It also records the (albeit temporary) reunification of the empire under Constantine, and the ascendency of Christianity.

Part 2, *The Storm Clouds Gather*, shows the arrival of the Visigoths at the Empire's borders, displaced by and fleeing from the Huns, and the attitude of Romans towards these 'barbarians'. The complex politics of the courts of the west and east empires at the end of the fourth century are described. The role of the Roman general Stilicho is considered: how he went from being the most powerful man in the Roman empire to his death following a conspiracy by the eunuch Olympius.

Part 3, *The Sack of Rome*, recounts the political intrigues and broken promises that led Alaric and his army to sack Rome, the sack itself and the death of Alaric. An epilogue describes what happened to key players after Rome was sacked, and a two-page section entitled *Aftermath* summarises events in Rome until the late sixth century, by when the city's influence was more spiritual than political.

The text is richly illustrated by colour plates, with excellent reproductions of sites as diverse as Lullingstone villa and Ravenna.

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**AD 410 BOOK LAUNCHED AT BRITISH MUSEUM CONFERENCE**

Sam Moorhead's and David Stuttard's book *AD 410 - The Year That Shook Rome* was given a splendid official launch at the *AD 410 End of Roman Britain Conference*, held at the British Museum, 13-14 March 2010. The conference was organised by the British Museum in conjunction with the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the Roman Society. Sam Moorhead of the British Museum, the Roman Society and the ARA took a leading role in the event, together with Dr Fiona Haarer, Secretary of the Roman Society and Ian Richardson with his team from the Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure. Eight sessions were chaired by well-known speakers, who introduced 27 lecturers who spoke to a packed house. At a reception after the first day's proceedings, Dr Andrew Burnett, President of the Roman Society and Deputy Director of the British Museum announced the publication of the book and introduced delegates to the two authors. David Stuttard replied and actor James Albrecht read a passage from the *AD 410* book to the assembled company. The book has since proved to be the number one bestseller in the British Museum bookshop.

A full review of the conference will appear in the next issue of this *Bulletin* to coincide with the publication in 2013 of the conference papers as a book.

Grahame Soffe

These include good-sized images of coins from the British Museum portraying emperors and empresses of the period. As a stylistic feature in common with other books, images shown at the start of each chapter also appear within the chapter; the space might have been better used for additional images. A concise, helpful 'who's who' at the back of the book (supplementing a briefer 'dramatis personae' at the front)
describes the book’s principal protagonists. The book draws on various original sources; these are listed, with biographical details for the authors. There are also a good list of books for further reading, set out by topic, a timeline from 753 BC to AD 711 and three colour maps showing Rome in AD 410, barbarian invasions until AD 395 and movements of theVisigoths from AD 395 to AD 415.

The Romans Who Shaped Britain
By S Moorhead and D Stuttard
Thames & Hudson, 2012
ISBN 978 0 5002 5189 8
Hardback £18.95
288 pp., 73 Illustrations,
42 in colour

Review by Vix Hughes and Nicholas Hogben

This book is the second collaboration of Moorhead and Stuttard. The topics covered by the book allow an examination of Romano-British history and archaeology in a different way than has been done before, which makes it a refreshing read.

It recounts the history of Roman Britain, describing it through the lives of people involved in shaping the province during the Roman period. Its twelve chapters run in chronological order, starting with Caesar’s campaigns. The people, their backgrounds, the decisions they made and the effects on both the inhabitants and the military within the province are discussed. Context for events is provided both by describing how key characters rose to power and occurrences elsewhere in the empire that may have influenced events in Britain.

Many of the historic figures will be well known to readers. Prominent Romans featured include Claudius, who ‘conquered’ Britain with the assistance of his generals, including future emperor Vespasian; Agricola, whose campaigns come down to us through his son-in-law, Tacitus; Hadrian, whose policy of consolidating Roman territory rather than persisting on expansion, and the effect of this on regions across the empire, are discussed; Pertinax, governor of Britain, short-lived emperor and possible resident of Lullingstone villa; Septimius Severus, who served under Pertinax in Syria, established an imperial dynasty and died in York; Carausius who, when accused of piracy, set himself up as emperor of Britain and Gaul, only to be assassinated by his finance minister Allectus; Constantius Chlorus, who recovered the provinces; and Constantine, his son, who reunited the empire under the banner of Christianity.

Perhaps less well-known players on Roman Britain’s stage are also considered, such as the feuding Classicilianus and Paullinus; Bolanus, governor of Britain during the year of four emperors, and his successor Cerealis; Constans, the youngest son of Constantine, who braved the midwinter seas to sail to Britain on a mysterious venture; Count Theodosius, father of the emperor of the same name, who restored order to Britain in the latter half of the fourth century; and Magnus Maximus, a commander who was, according to the classical historian Orosius, ‘made emperor by the army in Britain almost against his will’.

While AD 410 is often used as the end point for ‘Romani’ Britain, the authors point out that the letter by emperor Honorius stating the recipients should ‘look to their own defences’ was probably addressed to Britannia in Italy or perhaps Bologna rather than the Britons. Instead, the book concludes with an account of a letter of AD 446 from an unnamed Briton appealing to Aetius, consul of Rome, for succour from ‘barbarian’ invaders.

The relationships between Britons such as Boudicca, Cartimandua and Togidubnus and the Roman invaders are described. The authors imbue the tribes of Roman Britain with sufficient personality as to form a good counterpoint to the strongly defined Romans. The geographic range of Britain is taken on board, activity and evidence being considered for a comprehensive number of regions. Attention is paid to those in Wales, Devon, Cornwall, Scotland as well as England.

The book has an unusual device of starting each chapter with an imaginative reconstruction. It is the authors’ aim to set the scene, to help readers engage emotionally with the people described. The prose does indeed do this, but it might be a little confusing if you overlook the paragraph which explains this approach.

The book provides a good account of Rome’s influence on Britain, the Roman occupation, how it came about, persisted and ended. It draws on both the usual source material, such as contemporary accounts, and current archaeological research. Recent research on coin distribution, from data provided by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, is also evident. Boxed text within the chapters highlights the archaeological basis for information on people, places and issues, acting as a lovely counterpoint to the narrative.

The quality of the book’s 42 colour plates is excellent; they include the Arras Medallion, Low Ham Mosaic and the Mildenhall Great Dish (sadly, slightly cropped). At the end of the book there are: a short glossary; a timeline for Roman Britain; 17 pages of notes (primarily references; many provide valuable supplementary information about evidence or alternative interpretations); and a further reading list comprising 70 original sources, six pages of modern sources, and pleasingly a recommendation that readers consider learning more about the Roman period by joining the ARA and the Roman Society.
Vivien Swan died on New Year’s Day 2009. For a quarter of a century she was a prominent figure on the British and European archaeological scene who could not fail to be noticed. This article describes her life in Roman archaeology and especially her achievements and legacy in her own special field to which she was dedicated: the study of pottery. It also recounts how she used pottery to reconstruct the lives of the people of the Roman world and particularly the military.

“Pottery is undoubtedly the commonest archaeological material surviving on Roman sites, and its study is important for three main reasons: firstly, as a chronological indicator when other datable objects such as coins are lacking; secondly, for the information it can provide on trade, communications and social development when examined distributionally; and thirdly, as a tool in understanding the history of ceramic technology.” So wrote Vivien Swan in the updated fourth edition of her popular general account Pottery in Roman Britain, originally published in 1975. Even today, specialists in the study of small finds and the various types of pottery often seem to disseminate their work to a small audience, but throughout her career in archaeology Vivien was able to demonstrate how such studies are in fact central to a better understanding of much wider issues, as we will see later in this article, and in her case she was always keen to promote pottery studies as widely as possible.

The vast majority of Roman pottery is strong, utilitarian and coarse in character, made on a fast wheel and intended for everyday use, although there is a vast variety of types or forms, some of which have aesthetic qualities. Some of these pots were simply decorated by painting, glazing or colour-coating. Others were pinched, impressed, stamped, incised or rouletted, or even decorated with applied slip (the barbotine technique) or appliqués (King 1983). Indeed, some of this pottery can claim to be art in the truest sense. This had long been realised by antiquaries and artists such as Bryan Faussett with his ‘urns of the Romans’ (1773), and E. W. Fairholt’s illustrations for Charles Roach Smith and others. By the late nineteenth century, the great painter of Classical subjects, Alma-Tadema, found himself so excited by this art that he created and exhibited his Hadrian in England, Visiting a Romano-British Pottery at the Royal Academy in 1884 (Fig. 1). The best survey is that by Jocelyn Toynbee in Figured Pottery (I) in her magisterial Art in Britain under the Romans (Toynbee 1964, 384-418, see also Henig 1995, 101-2), a theme expounded by Graham Webster when studying religious scenes on pottery (Webster 1989). Apart from the head-pots discussed below, it was the mainly undecorated coarse pottery that Vivien concentrated on, but there is also a certain amount of finer, expensive and well-executed display or tableware, often highly decorated, such as the red-gloss and relief-moulded wares generally referred to as Arretine or samian, belonging to the early empire. This pottery Vivien left to other experts.

Learning the Trade
Vivien Grace Bishop was born 12 January 1943 in London, but adopted, in her words “by an elderly couple, living in Penarth”. So her early life was based in South Wales. Her interest in archaeology developed at school and she took part in Dr Stanley Stanford’s second season at Croft Ambrey hillfort, Herefordshire, in 1961 (Stanford 1974, 14), but she

Fig. 1. Hadrian in England, Visiting a Romano-British Pottery. Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema's large and intricate painting (oil on canvas) of an imaginary scene in AD 122. Completed and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1884. The emperor is accompanied by the empress Sabina, Lucius Verus and Baebula. The factory is producing pots with barbotine decoration, as in the Nene Valley. The artist later cut the painting into three pieces and revised the details. From a contemporary photograph (no colour image of the original painting exists).
had started to excavate with Leslie Alcock at Dinas Powys in Glamorgan (Alcock 1963). Leslie Alcock may well have been an intellectual guru for Vivien and she followed him to the School of History and Archaeology, University of Wales College of Cardiff, where she read archaeology and where he was lecturer in Iron Age and Dark Age archaeology. From there she was able to take part in Professor Richard Atkinson’s and Professor Stuart Piggott’s excavation at the Neolithic megalithic tomb of Wayland’s Smithy, Oxfordshire in 1962-3 (Whittle 1991). Richard Atkinson, probably most famous for his work at Stonehenge and Silbury Hill, was head of the department at Cardiff. Dr (later Professor) Michael Jarrett (1934-94) was lecturer in Roman archaeology and Vivien would have come under his influence in her first year. Like Atkinson, he was a charismatic and commanding figure in his field, carrying out all the Roman teaching and so Vivien would have had a grounding in Roman military history and archaeology – his particular specialism – particularly military inscriptions, the Welsh and Northern Frontiers and the building phases of Hadrian’s Wall (Price 1994; Wilkes 1995; Wilson 1997).

Vivien’s interest in the Northern Frontier and Hadrian’s Wall developed further towards the end of her life (see below). Michael Jarrett had been a product of the ‘Durham School’ of Roman archaeology presided over by Professor Eric Birley of Durham University, which produced several highly-talented and influential postgraduate students, who epitomised and set the agenda for British work on the Roman military for much of the twentieth century. These included, together with Jarrett, David Breeze, Brian Dobson, John Gillam, John Wilkes, Brenda Heywood and Valerie Maxfield. Throughout his life Michael Jarrett was active in field archaeology, and enjoyed excavation. ‘He railed against pretentious novelty and was sceptical towards theory’ (Wilkes 1995), and Vivien was to echo this philosophy in heated arguments over ideas, methods and personalities in her later career. It was therefore hardly surprising that Michael Jarrett sent his best students to the Durham University Training Course in Roman Archaeology at the Roman fort and town of Corbridge in the south of Hadrian’s Wall (popularly known as the ‘Corbridge Circus’) (Bishop and Dore 1988). Professor John Wilkes remembers Vivien as being one of the “very lively group” of students which arrived there from Cardiff in the summer of 1963. The Cardiff contingent also included Graham Thomas and Anna Richie. David Breeze was also there on his first excavation. They were set to work on Site 11, concentrating on the Commanding Officer’s house (prætorium) under the southeast part of the later civil courtyard building. The course was directed by Professor Birley and John Gillam and the staff were Dr Brian Dobson, Dr John Wilkes and Barbara Harbottle. John Gillam was in charge of pottery and Vivien would have been given some practice in the recording and initial treatment of pottery and other finds. This would have been the first time she would have met John and other members of the ‘Durham School’ to whom she would attach herself later in her career.

After her degree in 1965, Vivien, armed with her copy of Practical Archaeology (Webster 1963), enrolled onto the famous Wroxeter Training School run by Dr Graham Webster from Birmingham University. Graham Webster was, of course, one of the greatest scholars in Roman-British archaeology and one of the last of the polymaths who was able to command a specialist knowledge of such a wide range as to be able to examine and criticise much of the evidence from an excavation and confidently interpret it. He eventually became the ARA’s first Honorary President. Training was an area in which Graham excelled; virtually all his excavations were run as training schools for university or extra-mural students. In the 1950s the excavation training school at the Roman ‘small town’ and villa at Great Casterton, Rutland, which he ran with Philip Corder, John Gillam and Brian Hartley, turned out to be a “dream team for Roman pottery, with such enthusiasts working together” (Corder 1961; Darling 2004, 125). Of course Brian Hartley was the samian specialist and before this time there had been a heavy reliance on samian for dating. However, it was due to the work of Graham, Philip Corder and John Gillam that the emphasis moved to a more balanced approach in integrating coarse pottery. Graham had started work at Wroxeter in 1953-4 with Kathleen Kenyon (Soffe and Henig 2002; White 2002), but on his move to Birmingham University the training school was initiated in 1955 (Webster 1955) and the excavations then continued for 30 years being run from the university’s Department of Extra-Mural Studies in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Building and Works and its successor bodies, the Department of the Environment and English Heritage. The excavation concentrated on the area of the public baths and macellum in the centre of the Roman city of Viroconium Cornoviorum, and the deep and complicated stratigraphy also included the underlying remains of the legionary fortress, built on a strategic crossing point of the River Severn in Shropshire (Webster 2002; Ellis 2000). Students were accommodated at the nearby Field Study Centre at Preston Montford. The breadth of training given was wide, with a high proportion of time taken by lectures, including guest lecturers on specialist subjects. The lectures always included several sessions on pottery, including a practical test where the sherds were laid out for students to identify almost always included a fragment from a teapot lid in Wedgwood black
basalt ware. Graham also gave lessons on pottery drawing and coins and most students had to give a verbal review of an excavation report in front of Graham and the rest of the course. It became quite clear to Graham that Vivien was unsuited to excavation *per se* and he encouraged her to specialise in coarse pottery. Vivien later said that it was Graham “who first fostered my interest in Romano-British pottery” (Swan 1975b (4th ed., 5)) (Fig. 2). Nevertheless, it is difficult to think of any newly-graduated female archaeologist who was encouraged to excavate in the 60s and 70s, particularly on Roman sites. It was still generally accepted that only men were competent to excavate. This must have been an important learning experience for Vivien; Graham was a leading pottery expert and was at this time particularly interested in new ideas of looking at functions, and the long-standing problem of how to recognise residual pottery, fundamental to our present use of pottery evidence from stratified deposits.

**The Royal Commission and Pottery Kilns**

It was now time for Vivien to find a proper job. At this time it was not as easy as in later years for students to embark on postgraduate research. Richard Atkinson, her professor at Cardiff, gave her support. He was very interested in the work of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) (RCHME), and indeed was appointed a Commissioner himself soon after this time. An enlightened and unusual professor of archaeology in the climate of the 1960s, he supported the female minority of his students as well as the male and his encouragement helped several female graduates from Cardiff at that time to make successful careers in archaeology. These including Jennifer Price, Catherine Johns, Rosalind Niblett, Cherry Lavell, Miranda Aldhouse-Green and Henrietta Quinell. In December 1965 Vivien was appointed as an investigator at the RCHME and was one of the first women to take up such a post in any of the Royal Commissions. Only Dr Isobel Smith, an eminent prehistorian in her fifties, had been appointed earlier that year (Cleal 2007; Ashbee 2007). Vivien entered a world, as Humphrey Welfare put it, “populated by men in tweed jackets.” It was certainly not an easy relationship. The focus of the archaeological side of the Commission’s work was on field monuments, often only preserved as earthworks or cropmarks, rather than on pottery or other artefacts. Inventory was more important than synthesis and the accumulated archive was deposited with the National Monuments Record, a vast resource administered by the Commission. “Vivien was bound to be something of a square peg in a round hole” (Welfare in Manning et al. 2009, 9). She started work in the Commission’s Salisbury office where Desmond Bonney was completing the editing of the Dorset County Inventory volumes. She helped him with the Roman entries of the final volume (RCHME 1975). Bruce Eagles, who had himself been appointed in 1964, became her line-manager under Collin Bowen, who headed the Salisbury team. Her main task was to build up the existing records, from the Ordnance Survey Archaeology Division archives and other sources, for a new project, the RCHME survey of the archaeological and architectural monuments of Wiltshire. The only publications to eventually come out of the Wiltshire survey were the *Stonehenge and its Environs* volume (1979), the two volumes on the City and Close of Salisbury (1980 and 1998), the two volumes on the Cathedral (1993 and 1999), the survey of the *Churches of South-East Wiltshire* (1987) and the study of Wilton House and English Palladianism (1988), none of which Vivien was involved with. Bruce Eagles and Isobel Smith were working on the *Neolithic Long Barrows of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (1979), which was the first, and as it transpired, the only volume of the proposed Hampshire Inventory to be published, although the Commission published Rog Palmer’s aerial survey of the region surrounding the Danebury Iron Age hillfort (Palmer 1984), and eventually Collin Bowen’s survey and study of Bokerley Dyke, the great earthwork system and prehistoric and later cultural boundary between Hampshire and Dorset. This was published as an impressive volume, *The Archaeology of Bokerley Dyke*, with contributions by Vivien on Roman pottery, by the present writer on aerial photography and edited by Bruce Eagles (Bowen 1990). County inventories were gradually being phased out at this time in favour of shorter and more focused thematic surveys all over the country. Work eventually started on Gloucestershire and Vivien was asked to help on some aspects of the first, and again as it transpired, the only volume: *The Iron Age and Romano-British Monuments in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds* (RCHME 1976). Vivien’s main contribution here was helping Bruce Eagles and
Isobel Smith with the survey of the Roman 'small town' at the Chessalls, Kingscote, where the debris of over 75 buildings were recorded and a large folded plan of the site produced (RCHME 1976, 70-3). Ground survey took place in 1967 and the RCHME also undertook the subsequent air survey (Timby 1998, 13-16). One building (site 2) was excavated by Edward Swain between 1975 and 1980. It contained a fine mosaic depicting Venus with a mirror, now on display in the Corinium Museum, Cirencester, which was depicted on the front cover of issue 11 of this Bulletin, and a fine figured wall painting, also probably depicting Venus, Cupid and possibly Mars (Timby 1998; Ling 2001, cover photo and fig. 4).

With Bruce Eagles, Vivien published an important paper on the site (Eagles and Swan 1972).

Quite apart from her day-to-day work for the Commission, Vivien from the start immersed herself into the exploration and re-interpretation of the Roman pottery kilns of the New Forest in south-west Hampshire. This was her own private research but it inevitably impinged on Commission work and some colleagues were eventually drawn into helping her with it. The potteries operated from the mid-third century and the industry probably died out before the end of the fourth. The pot forms and decorative techniques were similar to those of the Oxfordshire factories. Their most traded products were fine colour-coated indented, bulbous beakers, bottle-like flasks, flagons and small bowls (Fig. 3), types less important to the Oxford industry. The pottery was distributed over much of lowland Britain south of the Thames. Fabrics varied from buff to hard blue-grey and colour-coats from matt red-brown to lustrous purple, reflecting varied firing temperatures. The earliest decoration comprised roulettes, barbotine leaves, horizontal stabbing and incised wavy lines and elaborate geometric motif in white paint. The kilns also produced imitation samian, cream-buff with an orange slip, serving restricted markets. The parchment wares were also traded less widely. Most typical were the bowls with orange motifs painted internally. Mortaria in parchment ware and grey kitchen wares were also produced. Although interested in the pottery itself, Vivien initially set herself the task of investigating some surviving kilns. The kiln sites had been made famous by the excavations carried out in the early decades of the twentieth century by the

Fig. 3. A painted flagon from the New Forest kilns. Photo: © Kenneth Grinstead.

Fig. 4. Pen, ink and watercolour drawing, Romanised potters of Sloden and their wares by Heywood Sumner (ht. 58cms), showing his reconstruction (cross section) of kiln 1 at Sloden in the New Forest, being fired. c. 1921. Photo: Winchester City Museums, © Winchester City Council.

Fig. 5. Vivien Swan's excavation of a Roman pottery kiln at Sloden in the New Forest in 1966. Vivien Swan, assisted by Bernard Barr, recording a plan of the oven floor. The stoke-hole and flue-arch are at bottom right. Photo: Ronald Parsons, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England). Courtesy of the National Monuments Record, English Heritage. © Crown Copyright Reserved.
artist, topographer and
archaeologist, Heywood Sumner
(1853-1940) and the beautifully
written and illustrated reports he
published (Sumner 1927; Cunliffe
1985; Soffe 1986; Coats and Lewis
1986) (Fig 4).

Vivien chose to investigate a
number of sites in the northern
high ground of the New Forest,
initially in 1966, and excavated
two kilns at Sloden Inclosure, one
1.75m in diameter (Fig. 5), the
other only 54cm. She was assisted
in the excavation by Bernard Barr,
who was later to become a specialist
in the pottery of Hadham, Herts.
The products included the usual
types and forms described above.
She also excavated another kiln in
Pitt's Wood Inclosure, 1.44m in
diameter which was later in date
and produced vessels of a different
form (Wilson 1968). In 1969 she
re-excavated the kiln at Rough
Piece, Linwood, originally
examined by Sumner in 1925
(Sumner 1927, 94-101, pl. xiii),
as a difficult landowner had given
notice of his intention to plough the
site. This work therefore became a
rescue excavation sponsored by the
Ministry of Public Building and
Works. At first it was realised that
there was a discrepancy in
measurements between the 1969
evacuation and those of Sumner,
so that Vivien was able to show
that Sumner's accounts and
drawings of this kiln were
inaccurate and that his 'chimneys'
and 'clay platforms' were in fact
oven floors with vent holes. His
'ramps' she reinterpreted as the
outer edges of the kiln walls. She
also showed that the oven floor
was supported by pilasters around
the inside wall of the combustion
chamber. Looking through the
other kilns excavated and
published by Sumner, she proposed
a structural reinterpretation of
most of them based on the results
of 1969 and published this as a
strong interim note in Antiquity
(Swan 1971). Unfortunately, the
final report on these, Vivien's only
excavations, has never seen the
light of day, despite her
'instruction' to the present writer:
"Publish! Most kiln excavators
don't!!" She did however revise her
reconstruction of a
pottery kiln of New Forest type and
this is illustrated here (Fig. 6) from
Nick Griffiths' drawing published
in the fourth edition of her
general introduction (Swan

After her New Forest work
Vivien turned her attention to the
Savernake Forest
potteries just south
of Marlborough,
Wiltshire. These
kilns produced light
grey flint-gritted vessels, mostly
jars. Production probably started
in the mid-first century in the area
of the Oare potteries just to the
west of the forest proper, and
continued into the second to supply
the army based at Cunetio,
Cirencester and Gloucester. She
made a close study of a collection of
pottery excavated in 1907-8 from a
large mound of "fine black mould"
at Oare by Benjamin and Maud
Cunnington (Cunnington 1910).
In the original excavation report
by Maud the obvious possibility of
a pottery kiln's waster heap is
discounted and the site is
interpreted as a midden
presumably belonging to a nearby
but unlocated settlement. Vivien
was able to show in a paper
published in Britannia (Swan
1974) and grant aided by RCHME,
that this was a waste heap
associated with kilns sited nearby
and dated to the first century.
Since the Cunningtons' excavation
the location of the mound had been
lost but fieldwork by Bernard
Phillips and Bryn Walters had
relocated it and other probable kiln
sites adjacent to it, which they
showed Vivien in 1974. She was
also able to use the evidence to
date the oppidum at Bagendon
near Cirencester. Benjamin
Cunnington, Curator of the
Devizes Museum was the fourth
generation of antiquaries in that
famous Wiltshire family, being the
great-grandson of William
Cunnington who had partnered
the antiquary Sir Richard Colt
Hoare of Stourhead. But Maud his
wife (best known for her later
evacuations and publication of the
great Neolithic monuments of
Woodhenge and the Sanctuary)
had been the excavator. Vivien had
come down hard upon Sumner's
work in the New Forest; her
assessment of the Cunningtons'
was subtly different and rather
telling: "...it is clear that his wife
Maud, who wrote their excavation
reports, was by far the more able."
(Swan 1974, 37).

Meanwhile in the New Forest,
Michael Fulford excavated three
mid to late fourth-century kilns at
Amberwood Inclosure in 1970 and
then in conjunction with his study
of the pottery from Barry
Cunliffe's excavations of the
Roman fort of the Saxon Shore at
Portchester, he was able to carry
out a detailed survey of New
Forest pottery (Fulford 1973;
1975a; 1975b). In the preface to the
re-publication of his survey in
2000, Fulford was able to point out
that even after a quarter of a
century, research still indicated a
late start for the New Forest
industry where each of the
neighbouring industries had its
her own personal research in collecting data for a complete gazetteer of all known Roman pottery kilns in Britain – not just England, but Scotland and Wales as well. As head of the Salisbury Office, Collin Bowen suggested that this research should be converted into a Commission project. Vivien was then able to spend most of her time on it. Later she said: “I am especially grateful to Mr Collin Bowen... for suggesting that my initial private research on pottery kilns should proceed under Commission auspices...” (Swan 1984a, vii). Her colleague Humphrey Welfare was later to agree with hindsight that this development owed much to Collin Bowen’s wisdom, “perhaps bowing to the inevitable” (Welfare in Manning et al. 2009, 9). Vivien’s project had originally resulted from a meeting to plan the 1972 CBA conference on ‘Current Research in Romano-British Coarse Pottery’ (Detsicas 1973). At the same meeting, the Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP) was founded. Graham Webster figured prominently in both of these. It was agreed that a complete list of kilns was required, together with details of the location of their material. The project should also search for previously undiscovered kiln sites and encourage the publication of unpublished kiln excavations. Vivien collected 1383 records for the gazetteer and as part of this process she sent out a formidable questionnaire to excavators. The present writer remembers supplying information on the sites at Rowlands Castle, Hampshire. These were kilns known only from surface traces and nineteenth-century observations of waster dumps and burnt material. The actual kilns have yet to be located. Eventually RCHME published the gazetteer of kilns with their structure and products in 527 frames of microfiche (Swan 1984b). This was correct up to 1982; subsequently it has been kept up-to-date as a continuous archive within the National Monuments Record. Now the current SGRP project bringing the fiche and archive to availability in the digital age nears completion.

The gazetteer was supplemented by a book which discusses and illustrates the historical development and the technology of all known kilns in Britain at that time and a concordance of all the sites (Swan 1984a) (Fig. 7). Almost a generation on, it is still the standard work, the essential starting point for all workers in the field. It has many admirable features, the result of the collaboration of other RCHME staff in its production, and the assistance of a large number of excavators and other correspondents. Vivien gratefully lists them all in the book (Swan 1984a, vii-viii). An important
feature of the book was the wide range of evidence drawn upon, both from Britain and the Continent. Thereby Vivien was able to undertake a major synthesis and present new conclusions. It described the history of kiln studies from the seventeenth century, including the work of Conyers, Artis, Pitt-Rivers, Walker and Heywood Sumner. The most advanced kilns study of all in the early period of research was that of Grimes on the remarkable legionary kilns at Holt, Denbighshire (Grimes 1930) which included a list of all the then known kilns and a classification of tile and pottery kilns. Grimes's scheme was developed further by Corder (1957) and other advances were made by Woods (1974) on the earliest Roman kilns in the Nene Valley (Fig. 8) and Young (1977) in the Oxford region (Fig. 9). The book also discussed advances in the study of the technology of clamp and kiln-firings, particularly through experimental firings of modern reconstructions of certain kiln-types, such as those carried out by Dr Malcolm Lynne and his team in the Alice Holt Forest (Figs. 11-13). The siting and distribution of kilns was illustrated by 15 detailed maps by Philip Sinton, and another important feature of the book is the discussion of the development of kilns from before the Roman Conquest, the impact of the Roman invasion on kiln technology and the factors which subsequently influenced kiln design and construction methods in the major and regional industries. Here a special feature of the volume is the series of 14 watercolour drawings of actual kiln types by Tony Berry, reproduced in black and white. Three examples are reproduced here in colour (Figs. 8-10). The book shows that Vivien was interested in the migration of potters, something which was to blossom in her later work on ethnicity — "she was beginning to do that most difficult thing: turning pottery into history...she saw the people beyond the potsherds in a way scarcely anyone had before her." (Manning et al. 2009, 8-9). The book also illustrates many previously unpublished kilns such as the single-chambered twin-flued kiln 6 at Whitehill Farm near Swindon, Wilts. (Anderson 1979; Swan 1984a, 117-8) (Fig. 14). A final section of the book discusses current techniques and future research, including excavation and recording methodology.
electromagnetic surveying and archaeomagnetic dating of individual kiln structures, a technique used, for example at Shedfield, Hants. (Clark 1980; Soffe forthcoming and Fig. 15). Another serious issue in 1984 and still with us today, was the scarcity of expertise and resources available for post-extraction and publication work. This is still a major concern in Romano-British archaeology (Fulford and Huddleston 1991).

In 1975 Vivien was transferred from RCHME’s Salisbury office to the York office. She had married Tony Swan in 1966 and had two daughters. She settled with her family in the Yorkshire village of Flaxton, where she became the church organist and formed the Flaxton Music Consort. She had been moved with the intention that although still working on the kilns survey, she should assist Raymond Farrar on the ongoing RCHME survey of the Roman North. She was also meant to gain field survey experience with the team led by Herman Ramm which included Christopher Dunn and Ronald Butler. As her colleague Humphrey Welfare has noted, “this was a mistake by management and it was doomed from the beginning.” To her colleagues Vivien gave “much venting of frustration at the idiocies of management” (Welfare in Manning et al. 2009, 9).

Although Vivien and Ray respected each other’s work, Ray had been working on his own over a long period and Vivien had been given no training in field survey at Salisbury, for although she had originally been appointed as a field investigator, most of her time had been taken up with her kilns research. No wonder it was difficult for her to integrate with the long-established field teams working in the north (Swan 1993). She was able to assist in the survey of the Roman fort at Lease Rigg and signal station at Goldsworthy on the North Yorkshire Moors and Malton fort further south. Ray had not completed the Roman North survey when he retired and it was decided that RCHME’s Newcastle office, led by Humphrey Welfare, should salvage something from the project. The temporary military camps for which Roman Britain is so famous were chosen, and the geographical area extended to the whole of England. This required extra fieldwork in examining camps surviving as earthworks. However, a large proportion of the camps had only been discovered or had survived only as crop-marks recorded through aerial photography carried out over a long period. Data for these was compiled and accurate plans prepared by Grahame Soffe assisted by Victoria Fenner.

Having eventually completed the kilns survey Vivien was at a loose end and was asked to edit the material for publication, with Philip Sinton drawing the final plans and maps. This resulted in another RCHME thematic volume, and although most RCHME publications were still ‘anonymous’ at this time, Vivien again had her
name on the title page (Welfare and Swan 1995).

Vivien was much happier surveying medieval earthworks in Yorkshire with Donnie Mackay (who had joined RCHME as a temporary student worker), assisted on documentary evidence by her friend and colleague Bridgett Jones (Swan and Mackay 1989; Mackay and Swan 1989; Swan, Mackay and Jones 1990). She also worked with Robert Wilson-North and Dilwyn Jones. It all depended on who she was working with and here she excelled in the analytical presentation of research outside her usual field, and in her own field she could show a generosity of spirit in mentoring younger researchers and others new to the subject. Vivien possibly felt she had to be determined, uncompromising and blood-minded to survive in what she saw initially as a rather hostile and isolating environment in RCHME (Fig. 16). Her judgements of colleagues and fellow archaeologists were often forthright. “One discovered who was in and who was out of favour: she never suffered fools gladly (or even at all), and at times her definition of a fool could be remarkably flexible... her most withering judgement on unfortunate third-parties would be delivered in a sort of whisper usually reserved for hushed-up society scandals: she would lean forward and say ‘Of course you know, he is not a good scholar’... many of us, with good reason, lived in dread that we would fail to come up to the mark” (Manning and Welfare in Manning et al. 2009, 8-9). As it worked out Vivien was to become happier after she was encouraged to go for early retirement and a pension from RCHME in October 1996. She had had to cope with the stress of a major reorganisation of RCHME, and her potential transfer to Swindon, a prospect which, like other staff, “she regarded with horror” (Kenrick 2010). At least she was now able to devote her undivided attention to the study of Roman pottery, picking up the mantle of her friend and mentor John Gillam, who had died in 1986.

A New Life with Roman Pottery
Vivien’s departure from RCHME turned out to be a watershed, and her free-lance career seemed to blossom. She became an Honorary Research Fellow at Durham University where Martin Millett invited her to become a founder member of the Centre for Provincial Archaeology. She immediately set out to refine a thesis on which she had already been working for some time. This was the identification and explanation of North African ceramic styles in Britain. Since the RCHME had moved her to York, Vivien had immersed herself in the pottery of the north. Her attention was drawn to a particularly rare group of vessels decorated with human facial features, first discussed by Gillian Braithwaite. Three distinct categories had been distinguished and it was the least common variety which was of particular interest. In this the whole vessel below the rim is fashioned as a head and neck with natural facial features and hair. Braithwaite had noted that these pots had probably been made in York or its vicinity, they ought to date to the late third and fourth centuries and that the tradition was likely to have been introduced from North Africa (Braithwaite 1984; 2007). Together with Jason Monaghan of the York Archaeological Trust, Vivien embarked on a project to identify every fragment of the type from York’s hinterland and beyond (Swan and Monaghan 1993). Most of the York head-pots were wheel-thrown orange ware, later hand sculpted and finally burnished. Most were female heads with a fabric approximating to Ebor ware. After a careful study of the most recently published North African parallels, their most recent dating, and the contexts of the York group, Vivien was able to revise the dating of the North African pots as well as the York group, to the early third century. In investigating stylistic criteria she showed that the York pots portrayed a distinctive female coiffure belonging to the period AD 190-225 and female members of the Severan imperial family, particularly Julia Domna, the wife of the emperor Septimius Severus, images of whom were depicted on contemporary coins, gems, sculpture and paintings such as the Berlin Tondo (see the cover of this issue of ARA). Julia Domna also accompanied the emperor during his stay in Britain and York. Vivien suggested that the head-pots were intended to represent Julia Domna herself or the deities with whom she had become virtually synonymous. The very fine almost intact female head-vase found in the 1976 excavations of the Piercebridge fort appears to be a York product. Although found in a late deposit its condition and associated finds indicate it came originally from an earlier burial or possibly a nearby temple (Swan 1992, 15, 20) (Fig. 17).

Fig. 17. Early third-century head-vase in fine burnished red ware, thought to portray the Empress Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus. From Piercebridge Roman fort, Co. Durham. Ht. 21.5cems. The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle. Photo: Vivien Swan, courtesy of SGPR.
Victrix fresh from its involvement in the construction of Hadrian’s Wall. This legion has been shown to have been involved in major pottery and tile production (the tiles are stamped by the legion) adjacent to the York fortress and to have produced a distinctive North African style of Ebor ware (Swan 1992; 1995). These vessels, for cooking and preparing food, included bowls, cooking-pots, and diagnostically round-based casserole-type vessels with lids, and shallow dishes of a type usually associated with baking flat bread. Vivien showed that the casseroles were designed to be used over fired clay braziers comprising a pan-stand and fire-basket in one piece, occasionally with an internal ash-box below. She put the hypothesis that these vessels were “made by Africans for the use of Africans... presumably soldiers in the garrison.” (Swan 1992, 3). These were presumably immunes, and she put forward a convincing argument for discounting civilians (slaves or freedmen). The head-pots clearly belonged to the same African tradition. After reviewing the second and third-century epigraphical evidence for North African soldiers in Britain, Vivien concluded it was strong enough to suggest the arrival of legionaries and their potters of North African or Mediterranean origin on more than one occasion at the end of the second and beginning of the third century. She made the point that the British expedition of Septimius Severus in 208-211 would have brought a vast entourage to York including a section of the praetorian guard, together with Legio II Parthica, the latter probably containing Africans, and that Africans were also to be found in graves in the Trentholme Drive cemetery. Another distinct group of locally made cooking-jars have their closest parallels in Gallia Narbonensis and from this Vivien concluded that troops from that region were to be found with Legio VI at York and in Legio XX Valeria Victrix and Legio II Augusta elsewhere. In her 1992 paper Vivien was able to review the distribution of African style pottery at all the major military sites in North Britain and Wales.

In the last of this series of published studies of North African ceramic styles, The Twentieth Legion and the history of the Antonine Wall reconsidered (Swan 1999a), Vivien went far beyond the usual scope of specialist studies which has led to renewed and continuing interest and discussion about the building history and occupation of the Antonine Wall, the most northerly frontier of the Roman empire. She suggested that the building of the frontier took far longer than previously believed, and offered a context for this. Although work on building and garrisoning the Wall had proceeded from 142-3 to 145-7, there was a hiatus between 145-7 and 149-50 when troops were dispatched from the Wall and elsewhere in northern Britain, probably including a vexillation of Legio XX, to participate in Antoninus Pius’ war in Mauretania. During this period the Antonine Wall forts were held by reduced garrisons and soldiers from all three legions reallocated to work on the western sector. On the return of the Mauretanian task-force in 149-50, forts such as Bearsden and Duntocher were replanned on a smaller scale with the addition of annexes, and significantly started producing large numbers of North African style pots, including casseroles and braziers, representing new styles of cooking returning with the troops from North Africa. This presented an opportunity to carry out experiments at South Shields fort (Arbeia) to test various methods of cooking using replica vessels, including casseroles and braziers (Croom 2001, Swan 1999, 418-19) (Fig. 18). For all her research and publications on ethnicity and pottery in Britain Vivien was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Wales in 2001.

Another important piece of work at this time was Vivien’s study of the huge quantity of well-preserved pottery from the Millennium Excavation (1997-2001) of the Roman fort at Carlisle (Swan, McBride and Hartley 2009). This looked holistically at the development of trade and production at this important centre which became a vital feature of the western part of the Hadrianic frontier, and the surrounding area. It therefore went on to examine the evidence for the movement of troops who took their utilitarian communal pottery with them, such as had already been noted with the early Flavian transfer of Exeter Fortress ware from Devon to Camelion in Scotland and to York (Swan and Bidwell 1998, 22-3).

In 1998 Vivien was diagnosed with breast cancer, but while still recovering from surgery she was determined to take part in Prof. Andrew Poulter’s excavation project on the late Roman and early Byzantine fort at Dichin in Bulgaria, where she worked as Chief Ceramicist from 1998 to 2001, setting up the post-

Fig. 18. Archaeological experiments in brazier cuisine conducted at South Shields Roman fort (Arbeia), by the re-enactment group ‘Cohors Quinta Gillorium’. The portable brazier has a perforated pedestal, and upright horns, which support the cooking-dishes, in which flat unleavened spelt bread is being baked, and stew boiled.  Photo: Courtesy of Alex Croom. © Cohors Quinta Gillorium.
excavation programme and continuing with it under difficult circumstances in Bulgaria whilst the excavations were still proceeding. As Andrew Poulter has said “in addition to the heat and the difficulties of producing a reasonable standard of cuisine, Vivien had to cope both with the analysis of ceramic finds and with supervising the reception, washing, marking and storage of substantial quantities of pottery...” (Poulter in Manning et al. 2009, 10-11). She also organised seminars and was always keen to compare her results with other finds specialists and the environmental team, seeking new ways to reconstruct the lives of soldiers in the fifth century. She subsequently worked as a Research Fellow of Nottingham University preparing the pottery for publication (Swan 2007; 2008). In a remarkably short time she had produced the first chronology on the lower Danube for the period c. AD 400-600. She was able to trace the changing nature of the garrison through the different vessels used for cooking, eating and drinking, “as one foreign archaeologist put it, “no one is doing work like this on the continent.”” (Breeze 2009). As it turned out she worked tirelessly to ensure that her major research programme should be completed and her final report was finished days before her death and underpins the completion of the project (Swan and Timby forthcoming). After leaving Bulgaria she became involved in pottery studies and the mentoring of scholars in Georgia. She also, through discussion with Dr David Evans, encouraged the ARA tour of Bulgaria in 2008 (Soffe 2011). That project developed further from Andrew Poulter’s presentation on Bulgaria at the ARA’s Symposium in 2005 in which he discussed the excavations at Dichin and Nicopolis ad Istrum (Soffe 2006).

As mentioned above Vivien was an active member of the SGRP from its inception in 1971 (Willis 2012). She was involved in the formalisation of the group in 1985 and served as its first President until 1990 and then as a committee member in most subsequent years. She organised six of the group’s annual conferences and frequently presented papers. Indeed, from the start of her career with RCHME, Vivien loved travelling, either visiting a museum store collection of pottery or attending a conference or other event at home or abroad (Fig. 19). She would often drive her red Toyota sports car until she changed it in 2008 for the Cabriolet. She had a list of colleagues and friends conveniently geographically located, with whom she stayed. At conferences and seminars Vivien invariably sat at the front and her scrutiny disarmed many another speaker. She did not wish to miss anything or the nuances of projected pottery illustrations. If she disagreed with another speaker, she would make her views clear; for example, she walked out of Prof. Richard Hingley’s lecture on theoretical archaeology at the Understanding Hadrian’s Wall conference at South Shields in 2006, as he started to speak (Swan 2008; Hingley 2008; 2012). This conference had been held to celebrate the publication of the fourteenth edition of Collingwood Bruce’s Handbook to the Roman Wall, by her friend Prof. David Breeze (Breeze 2006; Soffe 2009, fig. 4). Through the SGRP she played an important role in the ongoing Journal of Roman Pottery Studies serving on its editorial committee and as reviews editor.
Fourteen years after the group’s first conference at Chichester, the event was held there again in 2009 and dedicated to Vivien’s memory; her absence was greatly missed by many attending (Fig. 20). Vivien also played an important part in the development of the Romano-British and Romanae Fautores, the international society dedicated to the study of Roman ceramics (Kenrick 2010, Swan 1995). She joined the Fautores at their first congress in Britain, in London and Oxford in 1984, and became a regular participant, organising herself the next British congress in York and Newcastle in 1996 at the stressful time when she left RCHME. It was impeccably organised with each participant issued with a huge handbook on the programme of lectures and excursions. She attended the Romania congress in 1994 prior to her active involvement in Bulgaria; this was the beginning of her interest in eastern Europe. She served as a trustee of the UK-based Fautores Trust, a separate entity set up to manage funds set aside for congress travel grants. She was also a regular contributor at the Limes (Roman Frontier) congresses (Swan 1997; 1999b) and the RAC/TRAC conferences, and for many years a co-convenor of the Roman Northern Frontiers Seminar. At a more local level she served on the committee of the Roman Section of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society.

David Breeze has remarked that Vivien “was a larger-than-life figure, unusually for archaeologists wearing colourful designer clothes (her coffin was painted white and with garlands, peacocks and shoes).” She was certainly of striking appearance with her flaxen hair and well-organised wardrobe which included brightly coloured shoes, scarves and handbags. Prof. Jennifer Price, Vivien’s literary executrix, has described how it evolved from Laura Ashley to black cloaks and boots; she also recounts Vivien’s enthusiastic and knowledgeable cuisine and with Tony, her organic growing of fruit and vegetables for her own table and to supply local shops (Price in Manning et al. 2009, 11-12). In 2007 the cancer returned and Vivien faced it with great fortitude. This time it became clear it could not ultimately be overcome. Vivien determined to complete and put as many ongoing projects into writing and ultimate publication, as well as attend as many events as she could. She attended the Late Roman Coarse Ware congress at Parma and Pisa in the spring of 2008 and the RCRF congress at Cadiz in the autumn. Her two last papers on ethnicity and troop movements, now expanding the study to virtually the whole Roman empire, were accepted, to her delight, for publication as a monograph. It was published just after her death together with memorial tributes (Swan 2009; Manning et al. 2009). Vivien Swan will certainly live on in the memories of all who knew her and her academic achievements in Roman pottery studies will set a challenge to a new generation of scholars.

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