Hayling Island Roman Temple.
Aerial view from the East showing the wall foundations as a negative crop-mark (see article on page 8).
Dear Editor,
I recently spent a week at Durham University (Sept. '98) with the Hadrianic Society. Part of the Roman Army course involved a trip to the site at Wallsend. I enclose a photograph of the reconstruction of part of the wall and its viewing platform, which I thought would be of interest to your readers.

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Further information on page 15 - Editor.

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Further information on page 15 - Editor.
Ancient Roman Gardens
by Linda Farrar
published by Sutton, 1998,
Hardback.
Review by Beth Bishop

If television programmes are a reliable guide, gardening is now one of our most popular national pastimes. For Romanists interested in gardening (or vice versa) therefore, I strongly recommend Ancient Roman Gardens by archaeologist, historian and ARA member Linda Farrar, as a rich source of information and inspiration.

Be warned, though: this is not a two-day transformation or magic makeover, but a fascinating survey of every possible aspect of the subject, from its roots in Ancient Egyptian, Persian, Hellenistic, Greek and Etruscan gardens via earliest Roman horticulture (fruit and veg.) to its full flowering in the great public and private parks, opulent pleasure grounds and elegant private gardens of the Emperors and the wealthiest of Rome’s leading citizens, down to the humble plots and courtyards of the ordinary people. Thus a picture emerges of the importance of the ‘garden’ in its widest sense within the context of contemporary everyday life. This makes interesting comparison with the ethos of modern gardening, agriculture and society: for instance, Nero’s Empire.

Poppaea so coveted one particular garden that its owner was forced to commit suicide so that she could gain possession, while the rapid growth of huge private estates and parks to the detriment of ‘domestic’ growing led at one point to public unrest over the resulting food shortages in Rome!

It is hard not to draw parallels, e.g. with deterrents and security measures (shutters; guard dogs; broken amphora sherds set on walls; or with outdoor eating: (when al fresco living was standard, it must have been an altogether more elegant affair than the modern barbecue, with eating in designedly gracious and appropriate settings, predictably fine weather, and of course, the use of servants and slaves: no burning smells and hot, flushed hosts!).

Whatever aspect of Roman gardening you wish to study, be it plants, tools, ornament, furniture, water, etc., it is here, and is generously illustrated with black and white photographs, site plans, line drawings from original mosaics and wall-paintings, and a number of colour plates. There are, amongst many other things, lists of Roman writers on gardens; of appropriate plants and their uses; suggestions for adaptation to today’s (generally) smaller gardens, a glossary of terms and a list of (restored) Roman gardens open to the public, together with references and an ample index. It should not be difficult to ‘Romanise’ at least one corner of your plot!

The book is a readable work of great knowledge and scholarship lightly worn, as the author draws together the evidence – mainly written, but increasingly as techniques are refined, archaeological – from all over the Roman Empire including, of course, Britain. Personally, I would have liked to see more colour plates (although they do push up costs) and there are one or two quite detailed textual descriptions which are unfortunately not illustrated. The book’s layout I found surprising – text well to the left and a very broad right margin. Sometimes this is used for captions, line drawings or lesser illustrations but often it is blank, leaving throughout a great deal of ‘white space’, yet sometimes the reference text runs almost to the edge. However, amongst the great riches on offer these things, like the occasional misprint, are minor matters. Certainly this is a book I am very pleased to own and equally pleased to recommend to anyone with Roman/gardening interests. It presents, for the first time, not only a detailed study of the Roman garden per se, but also allows insights into the similarities and differences between Roman ‘garden’ and lifestyle of the earlier first millennium and our own of the late twentieth/early twenty-first century.

LETTERS 2 – Question Corner

Dear Editor,
I joined the ARA because of my deep interest in the Roman period, but unfortunately I am far from expert in Roman matters. Many of your contributors (and presumably readers) seem to have a much better academic understanding than I.

Because of this, I’d like to suggest that the Bulletin include a feature where less expert members can ask questions about the Roman period to which your more knowledgeable contributors could reply. This might be of special interest to other less informed readers.

If you think this is reasonable, perhaps you could consider whether this question is of sufficiently general interest to merit publication:

Last year I visited the Roman baths in St. Mary Cray, where the person guiding the tour mentioned that the Romans used punts, and that they may therefore have been able to travel up very shallow streams. Later that same day I visited the Roman villa near Orpington station, where I noticed that a map of the villas in the area seemed to follow streams rather than roads. Although I knew there was a canal linking Lincoln and Cambridge I had mostly thought of the Romans as being road users for personal transport. Do the Association’s experts agree that the Romans probably used punts in shallow streams?

Yours sincerely,
Julian Sanders, London

Well, I’m no expert either, and I think it a great idea. We are, of course, dependent on members to ask the questions and for the more knowledgeable of the Roman fraternity to put their heads over the parapet to supply answers!

Who is to be first on this controversial matter?

Editor.
In 1990 Simon Crutcheley (of the RCHME) discovered a 1.9 ha large rectangular enclosure south-east of the Roman town of Alchester. This was explored by excavation by the Oxford University Archaeological Society (OUAS) in 1996–1997 and later interpreted as a probable training ground for the Roman army. We reported on our discoveries in a previous issue of *ARA* (No. 5, 1998, pp 10–12). A training ground (the most likely interpretation for the function of this large empty space) had to be close to a fort or fortress, as soldiers trained there daily, and the less experienced twice daily as Vegetius (2.23) tells us. Where was the permanent military base? There are indications that the town of Roman Alchester with its remarkably rectangular ground plan overlies at least partially an earlier fort. It seems likely that the main gate of the Roman fort, the *porta praetoria*, would have been on the side most likely to be used for the troops to march out or to sortie; this must have been the northern side which faced Akeman Street, the main Roman road leading to Cirencester in the west and to St Albans in the east. The ground plans of Roman military forts follow mostly a very standardised pattern: the road leading through the main gate was called *via praetoria*; unlike the other main road, the *via principalis*, it never crossed the fort but started in front of the main entrance of the central headquarters building. Presumably the west-east road of the later civilian town of Alchester followed the *via principalis* of an earlier fort. The northern section of the north-south road which continues in a straight line to Akeman Street, was probably the earlier *via praetoria*. Interestingly its southern section is on a different alignment and is therefore probably a later addition through an area originally blocked by the headquarters. Pieces of Roman military equipment found in the town and in its surroundings may add support to the theory that it was built over an abandoned fort.

The area was very wet, and thus the town was built on an artificial platform. It is clear that remains of the potential fort are buried beneath the platform and the later civilian occupation layers, accumulated over more than three centuries. No geophysical survey method can detect structures buried so deep under stony layers, nor are they visible from the air. A long-term large-scale excavation within the town would be needed to gain certainty, and this was not an option for us. Was there another way we could find out more about the central military installations at Alchester?

We know that many military sites of the first decades of Roman rule in Britain consist of a palimpsest of forts of various sizes constructed beside, within, or partially overlying earlier abandoned compounds. For strategic reasons one army unit might be withdrawn from a site, only for it to be reoccupied at a later date by a unit of different size or composition, requiring a new fort with a different layout. Could there be a second fort at the road junction at Alchester as well, despite the disadvantages of the terrain which was probably liable to occasional flooding? In January 1998 Simon Crutcheley and I came to the conclusion that on several aerial photographs there are clear traces of the western half of a large fort just west of the later town (size 4–9 ha, depending on its unknown eastward extension). With the kind permission...
of English Heritage an OUAS team directed by Patrick Erwin (OUAS and Department of Earth Sciences) carried out a resistivity survey on the site. This survey proved what we had expected: there was a compound with wide rounded corners, protected by a double ditch. All the measurements are perfectly within the range one would expect for an early Imperial military fort.

Unfortunately the exact lengths of occupation of the military installations during the period of occupation of Roman power in Britain are not yet known. Alchester was located at the junction of one of the most important east-west roads with one of the most important north-south roads. One of them linked Colchester with the central sector of the Fosse Way, Gloucester and South Wales, the other the central south coast with the northern frontier. The cross-roads at Alchester was of prime strategic importance from the mid AD 40s until at least the AD 60s. Prior to the 1999 excavations within the western fort it would be premature to speculate about the exact foundation date of the earliest complex, but one is tempted to think that it was early.

The training ground could have belonged to either of the forts. Sufficiently dry and level ground was in short supply around Alchester, and this may explain why it is 750 m away from the closer of the two installations. There are other examples (notably Lambaesis, Algeria), of training grounds being situated at some distance from the fort(ress). At least the risk of a hostile surprise attack on the undefended training ground was small. The army may well have had a look-out post or guard on the top of nearby Graven Hill which dominates the area and from which on a clear day a hostile contingent approaching from any direction would have been spotted kilometres away. The summit of the same hill is incidentally at least partially enclosed by an undated entrenchment. Whether this might be part of an Iron Age hill-fort and might help to understand the origins of the town of Alchester, is not yet known, but will hopefully be answered by the fieldwork this summer.

The excavations in 1998 focused again on the surroundings of the training ground, but no further fieldwork was carried out within the installation itself. We continued to investigate the large camp, described in last year’s report. Then I had been puzzled by the comparative frequency of metal detecting finds by Mike Whitford within its defences, which seemed to be too frequent for a marching camp only occupied for one night or a few days. Was it, despite its slight defences, a more permanent installation, perhaps even a winter quarters? The 1998 excavations proved me wrong. We were able to prove that other sections of the defences visible from the air consisted, like the southern defences explored in 1997, of a single shallow V-shaped ditch, and it is fair to assume that there had been a rampart, later used as a source for gravel, on its inner side. In the north-west, however, no signs of a continuation of the ditch can be seen on the aerial photographs. Attempts to trace it by resistivity survey and trial trenches failed. We observed that the geology of those areas where no camp ditch is visible from the air is very similar to that of those where it can be clearly seen. Thus it would be hard to explain why the continuation of the ditch is invisible on the aerial photographs, unless a continuation never existed. Are we dealing with a camp whose construction was interrupted and never completed? But how can we explain in this case, why a number of pieces of military equipment, brooches and coins of the invasion period were lost? Did soldiers use the abandoned marching camp later for training purposes in conjunction with the adjacent training ground? (The camp has to be further than the training ground as the latter re-used a section of its ditch.) One would not assume, however, that soldiers brought money with them to exercises in the vicinity of their base. Furthermore this theory could not explain why the marching camp had not been completed in the first place. The army was used to constructing a camp daily in hostile territories; thus it would not have taken more than a few hours to erect the defences.

However, while half the soldiers constructed a camp, only half the army was ready to resist an attack. It is not clear why the defences never seem to have been completed; one might even speculate whether enemies could have exploited this temporary weakness and attacked the army, leading both to the abandonment of the construction works and the loss of small items. We may never know for sure why the camp was not completed and why more items were lost than statistical probability would suggest for a period of a few hours.

Parallel to the camp and to the later training ground a crop-mark revealed a probable Roman road. Resistivity survey allowed us to trace its continuation and we sectioned it at two points. There was indeed a paved road. Later ditches make it difficult to determine the original width of the road before the finds have been fully analysed, but the road was in any case at least eight metres wide. Pottery suggests that it was originally constructed around the mid first century, and sections continued to be used at least into the fourth century. The width of Roman roads can vary considerably, but the early construction in very wet terrain suggests that this was a major road or at least intended to be one, whether or not all sections were ever completed. Its purpose must have been to bypass Ot Moor, a boggy area south of Alchester, crossed by a Roman road leading to Dorchester-
on-Thames. Dorchester, near an Iron Age oppidum, is the site of a probable fort, succeeded later by a Roman town. If the construction date of a bridge near Ot Moor dates the construction of the road leading over it, then it may be as late as AD 95–110. In this case our road may have formed its predecessor, the early military link to Dorchester, while Ot Moor was not yet sufficiently drained to allow a road to be built across it which would have been passable in all seasons.

**Excavations 14 August – 12 September 1999**

(Fieldwork with smaller team also 7-13 August.) This summer we will for the first time ever excavate within the area of the fort at Alchester. We will also explore a nearby undated entrenchment, a possible hill-fort. Free transport from Oxford to the site and back will be provided, but, unfortunately, we cannot offer accommodation. If interested in participating, please contact Eberhard Sauer, Keble College, Oxford OX1 3PG; e-mail: eberhard.sauer@keble.oxford.ac.uk

**Acknowledgements**

I am very grateful to the Association for Roman Archaeology and to the Roman Research Trust for their generous financial support of our fieldwork. I would like to thank the landowners, Mr. and Mrs. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Offord, Mr. and Mrs. Shouler and Mr. and Mrs. Taylor for their kind permission to excavate and survey on their land and for their interest in the fieldwork. The project would never have started without Simon Crutchley (RCHME) who made me aware of the site and has contributed fundamentally to the project. The geophysical survey, carried out with kind permission by English Heritage, is Patrick Erwin’s great contribution. We owe it to him and also to the kind support of Helen Hatcher that our trenches could be located precisely and that for the first time ever much of the area of the fort was surveyed. Without the invaluable contribution Tim Bryars and Chris Green made to the fieldwork, the excavations would have been far less successful. Mike Whitford again very kindly helped us to discover objects, we otherwise would have missed. Space does not allow to list all the other participants of the 1998 campaign, but I would like to thank them collectively, and can mention only those who devoted most of their time and talents to the last campaign: Mariscal Acevedo, Annouchka Bayley, Laura Cripps, Simon Ennever, Penny Goodman, Simon Heap, Sarah Hinton, Gail Kennedy-Faggin, Vanda Morton, Jacqueline Palmer, Matthew Peacock, Mike Saunders, Chris Taylor, Carole Walton, William Whiteley and Henry Wood. I am indebted to Paul Booth, Professor Barry Cunliffe, Professor Sheppard Frere, Dr. Martin Hennig, Dr. Cathy King, Arthur MacGregor, David Miles, Dr. Mark Robinson, Dr. Lindsey Shepherd, Paul Smith and Grahame Soffe who have offered invaluable support for the project.

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**THE ROMAN SARCOPHAGUS FROM SPITFIELDS, LONDON**

by Jenny Hall, Roman Curator, Early London Department, Museum of London

Archaeologists from the Museum of London Archaeology Service will be excavating a site in Spitalfields, London, until the end of September this year. They were expecting to find evidence of Roman and medieval burials as the site was both part of the Roman northern cemetery beyond the Roman gate at Bishopsgate and the medieval cemetery connected with the church of St. Mary Spital. They had already discovered Roman cremations deposited in both glass and ceramic vessels and numerous Roman and medieval inhumation burials when they chanced upon an extraordinary find. A stone sarcophagus was discovered. It had been lowered into an open grave and beside it jet and glass grave goods had been deposited. The lid, already cracked and broken, was removed and it was expected to find a skeleton inside. Instead, however, the lid of a lead coffin appeared, covered by a deposit of soil. At this point it was thought safer to remove the sarcophagus to the security of the Museum of London. The combination of a limestone sarcophagus and lead coffin meant a weight of over two tons. It was placed temporarily in the Stuart Gallery of the Museum of London so that it could go on public display while environmental archaeologists and conservators cleared the debris from the top of the coffin. They needed to assess the state of the lead coffin, to check whether it was likely to be sealed and to make necessary arrangements for it to be opened. The work was carried out during museum opening hours and watched by a curious public. The coffin was finally opened on the evening of 14th April, attracting much press attention. The contents went on display the following day.

So what has been found? The limestone sarcophagus is undecorated. The sides of the lead coffin are plain but the lid is highly-decorated with a cable pattern dividing most of the lid into diamonds and triangles with a rectangle at the feet end. Within these segments are scallop shells in clusters of three and four. The
scalloped shell is a common motif on the lids of lead coffins in the Thames Estuary area. Scalloped shells are associated with the journey of the deceased to the underworld. Both the lid and coffin base are made in one piece with the sides and edges folded over. As the joints and lid were not tightly sealed, there was little possibility of the coffin being airtight or watertight.

The group of objects which had been found beside the stone sarcophagus consisted of artefacts of jet and glass. There was a long tubular glass phial with applied trailed glass decoration. The shape of the phial and trailed decoration are 4th-century in date but, as yet, no close parallel has been found. It was probably made in the north-western provinces and would have held expensive perfumed oil. With the phial were some interesting jet objects. One consisted of a tapering rod which originally had a circular disc attached to one end. This is now separate. It would seem that it acted as a spatula for use inside the phial. The rod is of similar length and the disc would have served as a handle to the rod and lid to the phial. In addition, there was a small round canister, also thought to be made of jet, though we still await proper identification. The canister is still in a soil block, awaiting conservation which will allow it to dry out slowly so that it does not crack. We hope that we may find evidence as to what it contained. It may have been a trinket or cosmetic pot. In the same group there was a large heavy jet pin. Broken in two, it may have been a hair decoration. Larger than the usual jet hair-pins, it is simply decorated but resembles an example found in a grave at York. Finally, there was a flat circular ring, possibly a hair decoration or pendant.

Whilst excavating the soil that had accumulated between the lead and stone coffins, an additional grave good was found. This was another glass vessel, a long pipette with a bulbous middle. This is again a 4th-century type and would have also held perfumed oils. A similar pipette was found only some 40 metres away during earlier excavations on an adjoining site, also part of the Roman cemetery.

When the lead coffin was opened, we had no idea of what we might find — some jewellery, a pair of shoes or other grave goods. After the lid was removed all that could be seen was the skeleton laid out, held in place by a layer of muddy silt in the bottom of the coffin. However, it was hoped that the layer of muddy silt might yield some hidden secrets and we were not disappointed. The silt was about 3 cms deep and it was necessary to remove this before it dried out. This was done while the coffin remained on public display and the public were kept informed on what was being found by the museum curatorial staff. Careful removal paid off and evidence of leaves and small fragments of textiles and thread were found. The leaves are thought to be bay leaves and were found in the area of the skull. This could have been a head-dress or the head had been laid on a cushion of bay leaves. The textiles are still to be properly analysed but first thoughts favour silk and gold threads. The fragments of textile were found lying underneath the body and may have been cloth laid in the bottom of the coffin before the body was lowered in. The skeleton itself is female, aged in her early twenties and well-nourished during her lifetime. There is no obvious sign of cause of death, no violence or accident. One possibility, because of her age, is that she died in childbirth but we can only speculate until the bones are properly researched. Detailed research work on all aspects of the find will continue through the summer and the story of the find will feature in a Channel 3 documentary later this year and in the series, Meet The Ancestors, likely to be broadcast in January of next year.

Fig. 1. The opening of the coffin was conducted with extreme care to protect the contents and the staff involved. Photo: © Courtesy Museum of London.

Fig. 2. The pattern on the lid of the lead coffin, shown in close-up, to indicate the use of scallop shells as a motif. Photo: © Courtesy Museum of London.

ROMAN RUBBISH DUMP ON THE ANTONINE WALL

A Roman rubbish dump has been located in a garden on the edge of Falkirk housing estate adjoining Mumrills Farm, Laurieston. Its fill includes a dinner service and at least one sandal. Mumrills was an important fortress on the Antonine Wall.

Times 21.04.99
Excavation and fieldwork on Hayling Island, just off the SE coast of Hampshire, began in 1976 after a campaign of aerial reconnaissance which coincided with the severe drought of that summer. Post-excavation work has continued since and this year we have been engaged in a new magnetometer survey which has already revealed exciting information. The temple has proved to be exceptional in several ways. Beneath the Roman structures the remains of a late Iron Age timber shrine have been excavated. Although there are slight traces of earlier Iron Age predecessors to many 'Romano-Celtic' temples in Britain and on the Continent, this is undoubtedly the best authenticated example so far discovered in Britain. Dating from the early/mid 1st century BC, it continued up to and beyond the Roman conquest, being replaced on the same site by the large stone-built Roman temple in the 60s/70s AD, which mirrors the plan of the earlier shrine. Thus Hayling Island became, together with the temples of Claudius at Colchester and Sulis Minerva at Bath, one of the first major temples to be established (or re-established) in the new Roman province.

To return briefly to the Iron Age temple, it appears to belong to two phases, the first comprising a square open-air enclosure set within an outer enclosure. The succeeding period, from the late 1st century BC to the conquest period and perhaps later, saw the abandonment of the inner enclosure in favour of a circular roofed building set around a pit that had apparently formed an important focus since the foundation of the shrine. A series of ditched enclosures and other features extend out from the temple. The wealth of votive offerings deposited within the temple form an interesting assemblage. Amid remains of sacrificed pigs and sheep, some human bones were found, together with metalwork belonging to 'warrior' equipment, weapons, vehicle fittings, horse harness and currency bars. Also included were British, Gaulish and Roman Republican coins, with most categories of artefacts deposited in particular zones within the enclosure. As will be shown below, there were significant links with Gaul during the Roman phase of the temple, and these probably originated in the Iron Age. The complex shows many points in common with Gournay and other northern French temples in overall sequence, and was probably constructed as a result of 'Belgic' influence on Britain in the 1st century BC. The Belgae appear to have been established in the area before the conquest and this also appears to be the location for the flight of the Atrebatic ruler Commius to Britain in c. 50 BC. Thus there seem to have been both religious and political influences flowing into central southern Britain just before the conquest period.

The Roman temple consisted of a circular limestone cella with a pronaoe or porch on its east front. It was plastered and painted red externally, multi-coloured inside, and roofed with tiles. In the early 2nd century the
porch was enlarged. Across the temenos or sacred courtyard, a gravel path linked the cella to the entrance hall, outer porch and other rooms along the front of the temenos. The outer porch, like that of the cella was also altered by the addition of foundations along its front. The architectural form of this monumental entrance is not easy to establish but it appears from the archaeological evidence that the rooms may have been divided by columns and access was usually to either side of the central structure. A useful comparison can be made with the very similar temple at Entrains, Nièvre, central France (figs 2 and 3) which has side entrances only, with a large monumental niche occupying the central position, originally plastered but later faced with marble. At Hayling the southern side room contained a black and white tesselated pavement and walls of limestone blocks in Gaulish petit appareil, both features reminiscent of the nearby 1st-century Fishbourne Palace. The rest of the temenos consists of a double wall, the outer one solid, the inner one a stylobate for a colonnade, with the corridor between them gravelled to form an ambulatory. Around the perimeter of the courtyard were two phases of posts, the second dating to the early 2nd century, possibly to the same building campaign as the porch alterations. A similar courtyard arrangement is known at the large temple at le Moulin-du-Fâ, Talmont, Charente-Maritime, France. The votive material deposited at the Roman temple is in sharp contrast with that of its Iron Age predecessor. Military equipment and horse and vehicle trappings are absent, but pottery, glass objects and animal bones continue, together with metal objects, mainly coins and brooches, including enamelled horse and rider and hippocampus brooches, the latter a votive object originating in central France (figure 10). Also a fragmentary inscribed stone altar was dedicated by an officer of the Legio IX Hispana.

Why then was such a large and (exceptionally for Britain) early Roman temple built so soon after the conquest? The answer seems to lie in the political alignment of the area at that time. In the late 1st century BC the Cornian dynasty had struck up cordial relations with Rome and when, in c. AD 25, the Atrebates' northern oppidum at Calleva fell into the (politically anti-Roman) hands of the sons of Cunobelin, Verica, Tincmarus' successor, retreated to his southern capital in the Hayling Island/Chichester area. Eventually Verica was forced to flee to Rome for help, and in the wake of the invasion the southern Atrebates were aligned to Rome. This alliance resulted in the military supply bases at Chichester and Fishbourne serving the Roman invasion and liberation force, particularly Vespasian and the Legio II Augusta, in one of their main landfalls and their advance westward into Durotrigian (enemy) territory in 43–44. Soon after this in the Neronian and early Flavian period the temple was rebuilt on a monumental scale coinciding with the building of the proto-palace and later Flavian palace at Fishbourne, as well as other structures in the Chichester area. These events can be ascribed to the client king Tiberius Claudius Togidubnus (Cogidubnus), successor to Verica, and it cannot be fortuitous that Gaulish architects and builders seem to have been working on these enterprises, perhaps represented by the collegium fabrorum mentioned on Togidubnus's dedicatory inscription from the temple of Neptune and Minerva. Obviously the Roman principate was keen to concentrate expertise and expenditure within the area to reward Togidubnus for his help during the invasion, to promote 'Romanisation', and also to perpetuate and enhance...
the native Atrébatic shrine associated with the southern oppidum.

One of the most striking aspects is that the Hayling Island Roman temple is so unlike other 'Romano-Celtic' temples in Britain, and the search for good parallels leads us to France. The most relevant examples lie in a band across central France with most examples to the west of that area. By contrast, to the north, east and in Germany the typical double-square temple is almost exclusively found. Three of the largest Hayling-type examples are at

Périgueux (Dordogne), Talmont and Sanxay (Vienne). At Périgueux, in the town of Vesunna Petrocoriorum, the late 1st/early 2nd century temple's *cella* with its surrounding columned ambulatory stands on a podium. Remarkably, the *cella* survives today, 24 metres high (figure 7), except where the porch was attached on the east side, where it has collapsed. The *cella* was originally clad in marble sheathing. Another circular *cella* survives at la Rigole, Villetteourex, Dordogne (figure 8). It is smaller than Hayling with a diameter of 8 metres but stands 10.8 metres high and is now incorporated into a château which has cut later openings through its windowless walls. Three further Gallo-Roman temples provide more intriguing evidence. Limited excavation has shown that the temple at Entrains (figures 3 and 6) had two main phases of construction, the first

![La Rigole: the cella of the temple from the north-east.](image)

probably in the 1st century. The *cella* has, like Hayling and Annoire, Jura (another temple discovered by air photography), no ambulatory. Although the *cella* is comparable in size to Hayling's, it lacks a masonry porch; the *temenos* and outer façade, however, appear more grandiose. Another circular temple, at Alonne, Sarthe, may give a clue to the identity of the cult at Hayling Island, and there may be some correlation between cult name and plan form in central Gaul. The early votive material deposited at Alonne is directly similar to that at Hayling and three dedications to Augustus and Mars Mullo were also set up. The circular temple at Craon, Mayenne, also has a dedication to Mars Mullo, and one cannot help suggesting that the Hayling temple was similarly dedicated. If there is a link between plan-form and a particular cult-group, then possibly Hayling's temple owes its origins in a cult-centre somewhere in western or central France.

All this can be supplemented by more recent discoveries and suggestions. These focus upon the excavation of the high-status Catuvellaunian burial at Folly Lane near Verulamium, which was succeeded by a Roman temple. This sequence, combined with other evidence, suggests that there were Iron Age temples and their Romano-Celtic successors dedicated to ancestral cults or to chthonic deities linked to hero/ancestor worship.

This can be related to Hayling Island in that the first Iron Age phase can be linked with Commius, possibly as his ancestral shrine or even his own mausoleum/centaph. The second phase can be linked with Verica who revived the site as an ancestral shrine and cult of Commius to legitimate his reign (figure 9). The succeeding

![Silver plate coin of Verica (c. AD 10 - 40) from the Hayling Island temple, inscribed VERICA REX COMMII.](image)

Roman temple was a reinforcement of this cult by Togidubnus. Perhaps a Mars-type Celtic deity was the tribal god of the Commian dynasty, as the Celtic Mars was attributed with tribal protection, warriors and death (figure 10).

![Enamelled brooches from the Hayling Island Temple depicting a Mars-type deity riding a horse (of British origin) and a hippocampus (of Gaulish origin).](image)

"Among the islands that lie just off the coast of Britain are many scattered and deserted islands. Some of these are called by the names of spirits and heroes." Plutarch: Moralia.

Further Reading:


In 1972 when Butser Ancient Farm was set up its original brief was to explore the agricultural and domestic economy of the late Iron Age and the Roman Period. Inevitably a two-phased operation it was envisaged that an Iron Age farmstead would first be built surrounded by fields and paddocks wherein empirical trials could be carried out to test the theories and ideas proposed by excavators of Iron Age sites. In effect it was to be, and became, an open-air laboratory. As soon as the first phase had been established it was intended to build a small Roman villa with attendant fields and farm buildings. Such intentions take no account of the vicissitudes of chance and more particularly the problems of funding. The Ancient Farm, however, has survived these last three decades having pioneered the experimental testing of interpretations – and in so doing has achieved a global reputation. Currently it is on its third site, bioclimatically different from its predecessors, located on the upper chalk at Bascomb Copse near Chalton in Hampshire.

In all this time, apart from a minor excursion into the Roman period when the so-called Romano-British grain-drier was explored and found not to dry grain but more probably to be a melting floor, the second phase of the original remit had not been implemented up until three years ago. It was then decided at least to make a start. The new farm site had sufficient overall area to set aside a zone for Roman research. Thereafter, in association with David Johnston of Southampton University, the house element of the Sparsholt Roman Villa complex which he had excavated was selected for specific study. Setting out to build a Roman house is in itself a daunting task and naturally one that would require considerable funding. This latter problem was set on one side while a research design was argued about and settled upon. It was decided to explore the first phase of the house structure and to concentrate upon the northern part of the building which contained a channelled hypocaust. This design had the great advantage of being limited to the completion of only part of the building, the rest of it being essentially more of the same, and would allow the implementation of a channelled hypocaust.

The excavation had revealed considerable remains of the hypocaust room, along with the wall footings and walls to floor level of the building, which allowed the excavator to distinguish the two phases of construction; first the main building serviced by an integral corridor and the location of the doorways or arches and then the added rooms of phase two at each end of the structure. Virtually the whole of the building had herringbone floors with the central room graced with a splendid mosaic, which is currently on exhibition in Winchester Museum. In addition, window glass was found in association with the hypocaust room. Within the research design mosaic floors and wall plaster have been postponed until later in the programme.

The building itself is single storeyed and constructed of flint and mortar walls set on chalk foundations, with a stone tiled roof. The intention is to build the main rooms of the northern end, including the roof.

In the last three years the underfloor elements of the hypocaust have been finished, including an opus signinum floor over it, and the walls presently stand at a metre high. During this time a great deal has been learned and many questions engendered, not least of which is the original purpose of the building being a house or a suite of offices.

In practical terms the archaeological evidence has been faithfully reconstructed. The stonework which forms the islands in the hypocaust was built with Purbeck limestone. Purbeck is some forty kilometres from Sparsholt and given the need for six tonnes of stone in the building, there has to be a good reason for its importation and use. Perhaps the heating trials will reveal more. On the other hand it may simply be that it is easier to build the corbelled channels with flat stone blocks rather than with field flints. Initially it was thought that the Roman box flue tiles would cause huge problems of manufacture. In the event it was discovered that the commercially available modern ceramic flue tiles are virtually the same shape and dimensions as their Roman predecessors.

The walls themselves, built with flint and mortar, are quite fascinating. Field flints, ubiquitous in the upper chalk regions of southern England and in this county often referred to as “Hampshire diamonds”, have been used as a building material for the last two thousand years. Their value as a building material and their longevity is attested by the ancient churches and houses which stand to this day. Walls constructed of rough stones are described by Vitruvius, a Roman architect of the first century who wrote a treatise ‘On Architecture’ (De Architectura), as opus incertum as opposed to buildings constructed of orthogonal blocks. This, therefore, is the work of the rough stone mason but nonetheless is still highly skilled.

Field flints come in all shapes and sizes and apart from having to be collected from the fields after autumn ploughing, have to be graded on site.

Fig. 1. General plan of the villa house.
before use. For the wall to be strong it has to be tied together by through stones, long stones which reach from the outer face of the wall deep into the interior. Such stones are at a premium and during the last three years of flint collection an assessment of their frequency against all other shapes comes out at a ratio of 1 : 90. They are much sought after, prized and handled with extraordinary care. The walls are built with facing stones inside and out, with every third or fourth stone being a through stone and then the internal wall is carefully put in place. It is an absolute misnomer to describe such walls as “rubble filled”. Each and every stone is carefully mortared into position whether on the outside face or in the interior. The mortar, the same as in the original, is a mixture of grit and quicklime at a ratio of 6 : 1. In reality the mortar holds the stones apart rather than sticking them together.

Opus signinum, the Roman cement, is the same mixture but with the added component of one part of crushed brick and tile. The sheer quantities of materials necessary for the construction are quite surprising. For example, a cubic metre of wall requires two tonnes of flint!

In March of this year the temptation to test the hypocaust, now complete with its cement floor, proved irresistible. A smoke pellet was ignited just inside the praefurnian arch of the stokehole. There was no fire, no pre-heating and even the wind was blowing in the wrong direction. Within thirty seconds smoke began to issue from the tubuli nearest the stokehole, within forty seconds all ten tubuli were belching smoke. The Romans seemed to have got it right – while visiting heating engineers were full of gloom-laden prophesies.

Fig. 3. Hypocaust room during construction showing the islands of Purbeck limestone, the channels and the tubuli in the walls and the praefurnian arch and stoke hole.

This is the first working hypocaust built of the original materials to have been constructed in Britain in the last sixteen hundred years. Once the walls are built and roofed over it should prove possible to conduct full scale experiments to test its efficacy and efficiency, the nature and quantity of fuel needed to reach and to maintain a temperature, and the opportunity to explore a Roman three-dimensional living space with tessellated floor and plastered walls. It will also provide a unique educational resource.

So far the work has been funded by The Friends of Butser Ancient Farm, Mr. Ian Petchet and, this season, with a small grant from The Association for Roman Archaeology. To all of these, and the volunteers who help on site, the author expresses his gratitude.

Fig. 4. Hypocaust room with the channels corbelled over and ready for the opus signinum floor to be laid.

Inevitably, in order to push this exciting project forward, funds are urgently required for building materials, monitoring equipment and labour.

The Ancient Farm is located near Chalton signposted off the A3 four miles south of Petersfield and ten miles north of Portsmouth. Open daily from 10 am – 5 pm, Easter to October.
A NEW INTERPRETATION OF A RELIEF SCULPTURE FROM BIRDOSWALD

by Anthony Beeson

In the small museum at Birdoswald on Hadrian’s Wall, anciently the fortress of Banna, is a large sculptured block carved on one side with the images of two deities. A report in the Carlisle Patriot of 16th June 1821 announced its discovery at the site, from whence it was removed to Lanercost Priory, and only returned to Birdoswald in recent times. Competently carved in high relief in the local sandstone, the piece had been badly weathered and damaged, with both figures losing the greater part of their heads. They have been identified as Hercules with Jupiter. The latter, on the right, is bearded and has long hair. His naked body is draped with a cloak which falls in folds from his left side. The left forearm rests at waist height, whilst its hand appears to grasp something which, at the time of discovery, was identified as a patera or shallow bowl. Jupiter’s right hand is raised in the traditional pose for hurling a thunderbolt, and the existence of a dowel hole in the hand itself proves that this was made separately in either metal or stone. Whether it was the sort of thunderbolt resembling a spiral cone of flame or the, more spectacular, three forked variety, we are, unfortunately, not likely ever to know.

The other figure on the block has been identified as Hercules since the relief’s discovery in 1821, and this has not to my knowledge been previously questioned. An inaccurate woodcut, published in J. Collingwood Bruce’s Lapidarium Septentrionale (1875) p 208, and also in his Handbook to the Roman Wall, has perpetuated this identification. The figure faces the viewer, legs apart. His head has been lost and his lower right arm and hand badly damaged. He wears a tunic which has slipped from his right shoulder, leaving his chest bare. Hercules is not usually dressed in this fashion. In his left hand he holds the attribute that has been identified as Hercules’ club, notwithstanding the fact that it is both too narrow and is not shaped like the traditional weapon with a swelling head. The Victorian woodcut altered its shape so as to appear more club-like, but it is clear that this part of the relief has not suffered much weathering, and the object has always been narrow. In fact it is actually a long pair of blacksmith’s tongs, such as can be seen on the well-known grave-stone of a smith found at Dringhouses, York, and now in the Yorkshire Museum. On the Birdoswald relief, the long handles narrow where they are pivoted at the top of the bowed jaws, which themselves end in parallel gripping faces below. The hollow surrounded by the jaws of the tongs is clearly visible. Blacksmith’s tongs and the slipped tunic are both attributes of the god of fire and patron of metalworkers, Vulcan, whom I believe this relief to represent. His lost head would probably have worn the felt cap or pileus, whilst a hammer, perhaps also like Jupiter’s thunderbolt made separately, may have been held in his right hand.

Fig. 1. The relief from Birdoswald – height 0.85 m x width 0.497m. Jupiter (on the right) once held a thunderbolt in his raised hand. Vulcan holds a pair of blacksmith’s tongs in his left hand. Photo: Anthony Beeson.

Fig. 2. The relief from Dringhouses – height 1.09 m x width 0.52 m. Compare the tongs held by the figure with those from Birdoswald. Photo: Anthony Beeson.

That Jupiter and Vulcan were connected in worship in Britannia is proved by the existence of a silver dedicatory plaque to the two deities found at Stony Stratford in Buckinghamshire and by an altar to them from Old Carlisle. Jupiter’s thunderbolts were forged at Vulcan’s smithy under Mount Etna by the Cyclops, and at the simplest level it is possibly this that connects the two deities. Given the complexities of Romano-Celtic religion, however, the connection is likely to be far more involved. Vulcan, or his Celtic equivalent, appears to have been popular in the region of Hadrian's Wall, with pottery reliefs coming from Corbridge depicting the god and his attributes, and a dedication to him made by the townsmen of Vinetolanda. John Leach wrote an interesting paper entitled ‘The Smith God in Roman Britain’ for Archaeologia Aeliana in 1962, p 35-45, which is well worth reading. Vulcan was particularly popular in...
the region of the middle Rhine, from whence most of the sculptural representations of the deity in the western provinces come. In Britain, however, he also occurs in stone sculpture on the Screen of the Gods, found reused in London's riverside wall, and on a small relief from Duns Tew in Oxfordshire. The gravestone from Dringhouses, mentioned above, should also be included as, although it comes from the site of a small cemetery, it has no inscription to the memory of an individual and could just as easily be a religious sculpture.

The Birdoswald Vulcan and Jupiter block is carved on only one face, suggesting that it was originally built into a larger structure. Whether this was a shrine or temple to the two deities, or part of a more extensive frieze of the gods, like the London screen, we are unlikely to know, unless further blocks are found. When new and painted, perhaps with bronze attachments, it would have been a striking embellishment to the architecture of the fort.

MOSAIC ARCHIVE INSTALLED IN LONDON

On 29th April a reception was held at the Institute of Classical Studies in London to mark the installation in the ICS Library of the David J. Smith Archive. The archive had formerly been held in Devizes Museum but its transfer to the capital should make it more accessible, especially by those using the Roman Society's Library in the same premises.

The archive represents Dr. David Smith's personal collection of photographs, correspondence, pamphlets, slides and books on archaeology, primarily relating to Romano-British mosaics. Following his retirement as Keeper of the Museum of Antiquities at Newcastle upon Tyne in 1987, David Smith generously donated the material to the Roman Research Trust (pre-ARA) who retain ownership of it and provide funding to enable new books to be added.

David Smith is the author of over 150 articles and book reviews. He is best known for his important contribution to the study of Romano-British mosaics but his interests are wider than this including, in particular, the archaeology of the Hadrian's Wall area and of Libya.

For details of how to consult the archive, contact the Institute of Classical Studies, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU (telephone 020 7862 8700).

Patricia Witts

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL ROMAN ARCHAEOLOGY CONFERENCE, 1999

by Grahame Soffe

Two years having passed since Nottingham, it was the turn of Durham University to host this prestigious conference from 16th to 18th April, incorporating TRAC'99, the Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference. It was organised by the University under the leadership of Professors Martin Millett and Jennifer Price, on behalf of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies. A rich variety of over 90 papers was given in parallel sessions to nearly 250 delegates from all over the world, some sessions receiving sponsorship from English Heritage, the Robert Kilm Charitable Trust, the Thirlthwaite Charitable Trust, the Journal of Roman Archaeology and Giffords Ltd. A book fair was mounted by Oxbow Books, the Roman Society, the JRA and Allan Sutton Publishing. There was also an exhibition which included a display of maps promoting the $4 million project to create the *Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*. Princeton University Press will issue it next year for about $200 retail.

The sessions were again devoted to specific themes. A key session looked to *Romano-British Research Agendas*, trying to get to grips with what our priorities should be in future within the constraints of limited funding. John Creighton again surprised delegates by deliberately inverting the traditional view of the effects of Caesar's visit to Britain in 55/54 BC, to stimulate more critical readings of Iron Age to Roman transition period archaeology. The theme was continued later in a focus on *Material culture and identity* with Lindsay Allason-Jones and J. D. Hill making important warning statements on how we will deal with 'finds' in future. Finds produce vital evidence for economy, settlement, production, consumption, etc., so we need the time and resources to analyse and synthesise the material together with trained experts for the future. As Lindsay said "What would happen if Martin Henig were run over by a bus!" In the evening debate and panel discussion led by David Breeze, Greg Woolf, Mike Fulford, Sue Alcock and Martin Millett, it was English Heritage Adrian Olivier's reminder of limited state funding, compared with the vast potential of developer funding under the PPG 16 legislation, that made the most impact.
An interesting session on the Roman Army had unusual contributions by Renate Kurzman on brickstamps and Simon Clarke on the Newstead pits. Evan Chapman's comparison with later professional armies was eccentric and stimulating. In the Gallia Narbonensis session, French contributors spoke on Béziers, Glanum and Marseilles and James Anderson Jr's paper surprised many by completely redating the Maison Carrée temple at Nîmes and the temple at Vienne to the early 2nd century AD. Under Sculpture & Society, Peter Stewart's discussion of British provincial sculpture looked at examples from the SW in a wide context. Professor David Breeze and Peter Wilson chaired major sessions on Roman North 1: What's new on the northern frontiers, and 2: the late Roman transition in the North.

Important contributions were made here by Gordon Maxwell (Roman Scotland from the air), Tim Strickland (The Road North), Paul Bidwell (Hadrian's Wall), Mike McCarthy (Carlisle: the Corbridge of the NW), Vivien Swan (African cooking wares on the Antonine Wall), Nick Hodgson (Roman fort plans), Alex Croom and Bill Griffiths (Research by Re-enactment), Tony Wilmott (Birdoswald), Jeremy Evans (pottery), Peter Wilson (Catterick) and many more. In the session on Sanctuaries: interpretation beyond the ritual context, Ton Derks drew our attention to Northern Gaul and Mars dedications, and Professor Tony King looked at the political and social aspects of Romano-Celtic temples with particular reference to Hayling Island (see also the article on page 8). In Images of Rome, Ray Laurence's Perceptions of Roman Republicanism in the USA and Britain was new and entertaining. Other major themes were on transport, group identities, rethinking the late antique transition, archaeological approaches to resistance, and provincial capitals.

An excellent excursion to the Roman forts at Wallsend and South Shields was organised by Paul Bidwell and Nick Hodgson. In addition to the reconstructed Hadrian's Wall and the gatehouse at Arbeia, the highlight was a preview of the military bath-house almost completely rebuilt at Wallsend and based on the well-preserved remains outside the Chester's fort (figs. 1 and 2). This will open to the public in the summer of next year.

THE ERMIN STREET GUARD
For those members interested in Roman military history they might like to know the Guard display dates for the remainder of 1999.

August 14th and 15th – KIRBY HALL, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE. E.H., CAV.

"History in Action IV". The fourth time English Heritage is staging the re-enactment event of the year. From massed Romans to World War II. 01536 203230

September 11th and 12th – NAMUR, BELGIUM.

Full displays with The Gemini Project, from Holland and The Römercorhonte Opladen, from Germany.

October 9th and 10th – RICHBOURGH, KENT. E.H., CAV.

Full displays on both days.

October 30th – CIRENCESTER MUSEUM.

Part turn-out for the Corinium Museum.

CAV. = The addition of two fully equipped Roman Cavemarks.

The telephone numbers are for the display times and details.
Any member requiring further details of the Society, should contact Mr. Chris Haines on 01452 862235 or by e-mail: TheESG@aol.com
SPECIAL BOOKS OFFER TO ARA MEMBERS

MARK ANTONY – Thanks to Shakespeare and the cinema, most people have heard of Mark Antony – but only in association with Cleopatra or Caesar. He is therefore only known at second-hand, overshadowed by more successful Romans such as Augustus, who finally defeated him – and tried to obliterate his memory. Pat Southern redresses the balance with this long-overdue biography. She explores his career and unfolding character against the background of one of the most turbulent half-centuries in Rome’s history. His open generous nature led him into undesirable company; notorious for his heavy drinking and womanising, he nevertheless, by the age of 28, established himself as a competent soldier and, as Consul, took over control of Rome after Caesar’s assassination. Antony emerges as the most human of his contemporaries. Able as an administrator and soldier; magnificent and magnanimous as a man, Antony was his own worst enemy – fallible and imperious in his judgements and attachments. His final self-destruction at the age of 52 was perhaps inevitable.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ROMAN BRITAIN – The fourth century is often treated as a preamble to the end of Roman Britain. This however was not how it was perceived at the time and it is from this perspective that we need to look at what can only be described as Britain’s Golden Age. It is the villas that define this age. With their lavish design and furnishings, especially the mosaics and wall paintings, they are the visible expression of a wealthy elite who dominated the luxury market, patronised and funded a high-quality artisan class, and provided the social and economic structures within which much of the ordinary rural population spent their lives. This book places the remains of the great houses such as Bignor, Lullingstone, Chedworth and Woodchester and treasures like Thetford and Hoxne in their historical, literary and social context. As far as the Empire was concerned Britain was no more than a trophy, and in the end the shattered prestige of Rome could no longer afford such a troublesome and expensive province.

ROMAN INFANTRY EQUIPMENT – The Later Empire – As a result of both internal and external pressures on the Empire, the third century was a period of transition and transformation for the Roman army. It saw changes in its role, organisation and equipment. The third-century infantryman looked fundamentally different from his early Empire counterpart – and in the following centuries the physical image of the army was to change yet again. Having looked briefly at the role and the tactical organisation of the army, Ian Stephenson deals systematically with defensive equipment (helmets, body armour, shields, greaves, etc); offensive equipment, whether for close combat (spear, sword, pugio) or long-range missiles (javelin, pilum, bow, sling); and other military equipment (tunic, trousers, belts, shoes, tools). Throughout he also considers how each piece of equipment was used – not just how it looked.

MARK ANTONY – Pat Southern
Special offer – £13.99 + £1.50 p&p
Usually retails at £16.99

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ROMAN BRITAIN – Guy de la Bédoyère
Special offer – pay just £22.00 + £1.50 p&p
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