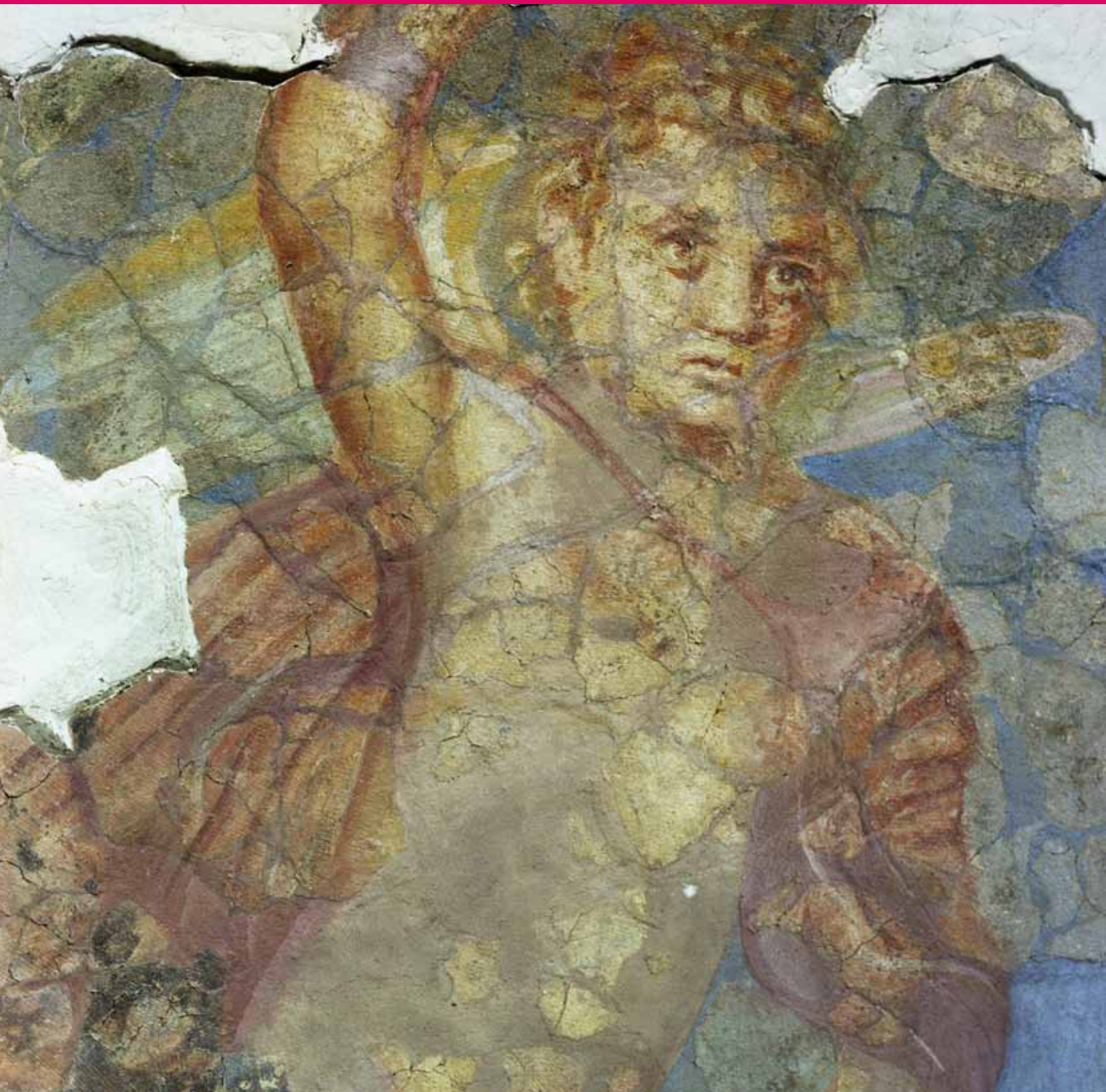


The Association for Roman Archaeology

ARA NEWS

March 2012

Issue 27



Detail of a cupid painted on plaster from a Roman bath-house, displayed in Southwell Minster. Bryn Walters discusses the campaign to protect Southwell from development (page 3). *Photo: © Crown Copyright.*

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Editorial

I once thought there was no point in complaining to the 'powers that be' – I doubted they'd listen, and it seemed a bit presumptuous. But as a commuter, tired of delayed and dirty trains, and the untidy and overgrown car park at my local station, I started writing letters. Sometimes I received a polite rebuff, sometimes I got an apology and a small cheque. Then, to my surprise, contractors were called out: rubbish was cleared from the car park, grass and hedges were cut.

Margate Football Club applied to the local council a couple of months ago, seeking approval to extend its car park, near to the site of a Roman villa and road. As a local resident, I took part in the council's consultation, asking them to ensure that the archaeology was respected; my local archaeological group also contacted the council. I received regular e-mails that kept me

informed of progress. The council decided in January to limit Margate FC to a small extension of the existing car park. I don't know if I made a difference, but I know the council heard from people who cared about our heritage.

In the current economic climate, with the Government's desire for a planning system where the default answer to an application is 'yes', some councils seeing museums as expendable luxuries, and archaeologists' jobs being cut, it's more important than ever for people to speak up for our country's archaeological heritage. Rescue has been campaigning for the preservation of our historic environment for over 40 years (see pp10–11); they provide advice on writing to local councils on their website (called 'Fighting Back'). I intend to write a letter in support of a Southwell Heritage Park (see p3); they might just listen.

Nich Hogben, Editor.

Campaign to preserve Southwell Roman site

In 1959, excavations directed by the late Charles Daniels, east of the great Minster Church at Southwell in Nottinghamshire, revealed evidence for a Romano-British rural building, interpreted at the time as a villa of substantial proportions (Daniels, C 1966).¹ The excavation had been prompted by a proposal to construct a school over the area east of the Minster. Romano-British remains including tessellated flooring had been revealed intermittently across the area since the late 18th century.

The present Norman Minster dates from the beginning of the 12th century, but had been preceded by a smaller Saxon Minster church of the 10th, the plan of which is unknown as it lies buried beneath the present Norman building. Interestingly, part of a tessellated floor from the time of the Saxon church survives beneath the pews in the present south transept, long believed to have been made up from salvaged material from the adjacent villa and painstakingly re-laid as a Saxon floor.

I have contested this theory, as I had never seen evidence for Saxon recycling of tessellation in this country before, while there are several examples of Roman mosaics being located beneath and corresponding to the alignment of later churches. About 15 years ago I examined this small piece of flooring; in my opinion, based on the manner and compaction of the stones, it is part of an original Roman floor still *in situ*. The floor respects the alignment of the transept walls, which suggests that a minor detached Roman structure, belonging to the known villa, was utilised as part of the first-phase Minster.

When the school was under construction in 1971, over 200 inhumations were disturbed in the area subsequently identified as the lower courtyard of the Roman villa. Unfortunately, no firm dates for the burials was secured. The school was demolished over ten years ago; when it was proposed that the site be used for a housing development, local objections were raised.

As Director of the ARA I was approached to support the campaign opposing the planning applications. As I have an interest in the Southwell 'villa' site and its transition through history, I supported the campaign to preserve the site. I wrote letters of protest, magazine and newspaper articles, and took part in radio broadcasts. Most recently, along with Professor Martin Henig, I spoke at a public gathering at Southwell, which was arranged by Dr Will Bowden from Nottingham University and supported by other campaigners from within the archaeological fraternity.

The most recent archaeological evaluation trenching on the site of the proposed development revealed phenomenal stone walling; this had not been revealed when the school was built. The walls, constructed in massive blocks of masonry, may have formed part of a monumental structure or massive terracing for the suggested 'villa'. Dr Phil Dixon, Archaeological Advisor for the Minster, supervised repair works beneath the Minster's chapter house several years ago, and encountered the source of a prolific

spring. This spring would have risen on the higher ground just west of the main 'villa' building and a little way north-east of the south transept (the site of my suspected detached Roman building with the tessellated floor).

The combination of this evidence supported my



Fig. 1. Southwell Minster from the north.

Photo: © Southwell Civic Society.

theory that the Southwell 'villa', certainly from the fourth century, had been part of a spring-line sanctuary with a possible temple/shrine on the higher ground above, in much the same manner as I have argued for Great Witcombe and Chedworth in Gloucestershire. But the importance of Southwell is in its continuity: its transition from a pagan site into a Christian one which did not fade away with time, but continued as a sacred site, serving a living community up to the 21st century. In that respect it is almost certainly unique in Britain. It has been on this argument that I have based my support for the continuing campaign to save the area for the people of Southwell, to maintain it as an historic area associated with the history of the Minster.

Last year a planning application by the developer Caunton Properties Ltd was refused; further applications may be forthcoming. Campaigners intend to submit a formal application for a change of use for the area, so that it may be preserved and landscaped as part of a Southwell Heritage Park. This would allow more detailed archaeological study and investigation to take place in the future. Should any members wish to offer some support to save this valuable site, they should write to the Chief Planning Officer, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Kelham Hall, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG23 5QX. Please send a copy of your letter to Southwell Heritage Park Campaign, 15 Kirklington Road, Southwell NG25 0AR.

Bryn Walters.

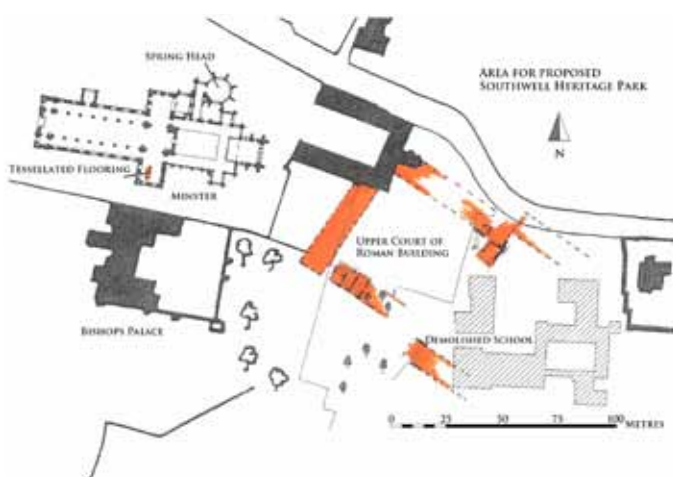


Fig. 2. The Minster, with known Roman features in red.

© Bryn Walters.

¹ Daniels, C, 1966. Excavation on the Roman villa at Southwell, *Transactions of the Thorton Society* 1966, pp13–54.

ARA study tour of Jordan

22 September–2 October 2011

Readers of **ARA News** will have read with great interest the article by John Bithell about his visit to Jordan, published in September 2010 (issue 24). In my own *reportatio* of the ARA study tour to Jordan, I avoid any detailed reports of specific places already described by John and concentrate on those sites that he did not visit. The ARA tour was led by Sam Moorhead of the British Museum, who has excavated in the area and proved to be outstanding in his role, and our Jordanian courier and guide, Elias Khzouz, was not only knowledgeable and enthusiastic, but keen to engage with our discussions and to contribute pertinent remarks based on his knowledge of local history and traditions.¹ We all learnt a lot by listening to and participating in the debates led by Sam and Elias, with valuable contributions in particular from the ARA experts Grahame Soffe, Bryn Walters and Anthony Beeson.

Like John, we spent our first morning in **Amman** itself, formerly known as *Philadelphia* and one of the cities of the Decapolis, the 'ten' (actually more like a dozen or so) cities that dominated the region in Hellenistic and Roman times. We started at the Citadel (acropolis), a site with a jumble of constructions from various periods (Fig. 1) and home to Amman Archaeological Museum. We moved down to the theatre area, passing the *nymphaeum* (a grand structure of fountains, now unfortunately entirely surrounded by modern buildings) on the way. Since John's visit, the former *forum* area in front of the theatre had been cleared of modern accretions and is currently being landscaped into an open space which should provide a better idea of how large and impressive the Roman *forum* once was (one of the largest in the Empire, in fact). In the afternoon, we headed out into the countryside west of Amman to **Irak al Amir**, specifically to a mysterious edifice now known as **Qasr al-Abd**. This large rectangular two-storey building was built c. 170BC by Hyrcanus, a member

¹ Sam Moorhead provided us with a comprehensive 89-page information pack that proved invaluable during the tour and an essential reference tool for checking facts and figures when writing this article.

of the Tobiads, a wealthy Jewish family of tax collectors. It was constructed in a Hellenistic style with Egyptian Alexandrian influence, and decorated with various animals such as lions, leopards and giant eagles (Fig. 2). The structure has traditionally been called a 'fortress' but may have functioned as a mausoleum. ARA members had the first of many lively debates during the tour (Fig. 3), discussing the possible functions of this building: was it a country palace, mausoleum or a place of worship?

Jerash (ancient *Gerasa*) north of Amman was another major member of the Decapolis, and certainly deserves its reputation as one of the most impressive Roman cities left standing. It is sufficiently well preserved and restored to give the visitor a real feel for the scale and buildings of a typical Greco-Roman town, with colonnaded streets, temples and theatres rising all around. According to Sam, every time he comes there are more columns standing in the main colonnaded *cardo*, so the Jordanians are obviously keen to make the sites as 'legible' as possible to the lay visitor. The large oval plaza is particularly striking (Fig. 4), but as good ARA members, we spent more time debating water systems and construction techniques in obscure corners ignored by most tourists. We eventually tore ourselves away to head for ancient **Gadara** (now Umm Qais), another Decapolis city, most of whose fine buildings were erected in the second century AD. It is near the Golan Heights with a distant view on Lake Tiberias (the Sea of Galilee), and is mostly built from the black basalt that dominates this whole plateau area in northern Jordan, near the Syrian border. The compact West Theatre is constructed entirely of this material, and the Byzantine churches alongside it are a striking mix of black and white: basalt and Proconnesian marble (Fig. 5). Nearby are the ruins of a *nymphaeum*, bordering the long *decumanus maximus*. Walking down this high street, we entered a zone which proved to be one of the most intriguing parts of the entire tour. A small building north of the *decumanus* provided



Above, left to right: Fig. 1. Amman citadel, temple of Hercules. Fig. 2. Qasr al-Abd. Fig. 3. Bryn Walters putting forward a theory to Grahame Soffe, Jordanian guide Elias Khzouz and Sam Moorhead, with ARA members listening in.

Photos: Figs. 1 and 3, © Marigold Norbye; Fig. 2 © Tim Arnold.

Below, left to right: Fig. 4. Jerash, Oval Plaza. Fig. 5. Gadara, Byzantine basilicas. Fig. 6. Gadara, excavations.

Photos: Figs. 4 and 6, © Marigold Norbye; Fig. 5 © Tim Arnold.



the focus for lively discussions, before we encountered a large area which had been excavated in recent years by Deutsches Archäologisches Institut und German Protestant Institute of Archaeology. To the north of the street there was a square grid area excavation, displaying ancient floors including some with mosaics (Fig. 6). To the south, a huge *forum* complex extended from the street down to a large structure which may have been a gate. The whole complex appears to have been walled along the two sides perpendicular to the main street, with a large open colonnaded plaza in the centre, bordered by various smaller buildings and courtyards, each with their own colonnades, and an octagonal structure near the entrance from the street (Fig. 7). In one corner, tucked off the central *forum*, was a small enclosed courtyard with a fountain in the centre, which some group members, including Bryn, eventually interpreted, from the ditches running along two sides of the court, as being possible public latrines (Fig. 8). Time prevented us from spending longer in this unexpected treasure trove of recently exposed ruins, which would benefit from some protection to avoid future wear and damage. Towards the end of the street is the base of a round building interpreted as a mausoleum, and nearby the well-preserved apse and crypt of a church.

The first two days in these three Decapolis cities were probably the most intensively 'Roman' of the entire tour, but the remainder of the tour still reserved plenty of sights that enabled us to consider Roman remains in a wider historical and geographical context. In the period before Roman domination, the main local ruling people had been the Nabataeans. They were originally nomads from the desert who eventually settled down in the region, notably in Petra. Through trade they had close links with Jewish Judaea and the post-Alexander Hellenistic kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, and with the Arabian desert tribes and the oriental worlds of Persia and beyond. Thus Nabataean art and architecture displayed mainly Hellenistic traits, but with influences from the other cultures as well. Rome started showing an interest in the area from 64BC when Pompey created the Province of Syria to the north. In AD106, Trajan finally annexed the kingdom of Nabataea and turned it into the Province of Arabia.

The area served as a buffer zone against the enemy empire of Parthia, with numerous Roman forts being built in the desert to control strategic points. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476, this province survived as part of the Byzantine Empire, and saw the construction of numerous churches with fine mosaics continuing the Roman traditions. Even after the destruction of cities and churches through earthquakes and later Arab Muslim conquest, certain elements of late Antique art and architecture survived under the Muslim Umayyad period (661–750), as we were to discover during the third full day of our tour, dedicated to the 'desert castles' east of Amman.

We started with a 'fort' in the middle of the desert, **Qasr al-Kharana**, essentially a set of rooms all facing inwards onto a courtyard, whose precise function is unclear (Fig. 9). It contains graffiti dated to AD710, placing it in the Umayyad period, and may have been a meeting place where the Caliph got together with the local desert tribesmen. Such traditions have continued since, and most likely existed in Roman times as well: the ruler or his representative would arrange periodic diplomatic reunions with the Bedouin, without whose cooperation it would have been impossible to rule over the vast desert expanses. The second 'desert castle' most certainly had this type of function: at **Qasr 'Amra** (built c.711–15), there is an audience chamber with three aisles roofed by barrel vaults where the Caliph would have received guests, flanked on one side by a bath suite in the best Roman tradition. The remarkable feature of this building is that all the walls and ceilings of the chamber and baths are covered with frescoes, depicting not only animals and plants, but also scenes with human figures. They show that the prohibition against representing people in Islamic art was not yet fully enforced. Instead, the artist depicted not only artisans, musicians, hunters, archers and rulers, but numerous topless and naked women, many of them dancing, not only in the intimacy of the baths but in prominent places in the audience chamber (Fig. 10). Fruit such as pomegranates and grapes, acanthus leaves and other luxuriant vegetation, representations of three of the Muses, scenes of hunting and of artisans working, depictions of the Three Ages of Man and of the signs of the Zodiac,



Above, top to bottom:

Fig. 7. *Gadara*, recently excavated *forum* area seen from the entrance area with octagonal building in foreground.

Fig. 8. *Gadara*, courtyard with possible latrines.

Fig. 9. *Qasr al-Kharana*.

Fig. 10. *Qasr Amra*, fresco of dancing girl.

Photos: Fig. 7 © Tim Arnold; Figs. 8, 9 and 10, © Marigold Norbye.



Left to right: Fig. 11. Azrak Roman fort, courtyard with *principia* building to the left. Fig. 12. Umm al-Jimal, corbelling (to the right of the picture) on the house opposite the Nabataean temple. Fig. 13. Umm al-Jimal, house XVIII with double-arched window. Photos: Figs. 11 and 13, © Marigold Norbye; Fig. 12 © Tim Arnold.

all suggest that the classical tradition was still strong in early Islamic art. Our leader Sam went as far as to contend that the Umayyad period was an extension of late Antiquity, and that the earthquake of AD747 that devastated the area was as instrumental as the new Islamic religion in destroying the physical infrastructure of the old classical world.

After this insight into the Umayyad world, we went back in time to the late-Roman period in the westernmost point of our tour, the oasis of **Azrak**, where there remains a well-preserved quadrangular Roman fort with rectangular towers, heavily modified in the medieval period but still containing recognisable Roman elements such as the HQ building (*principia*) (Fig. 11). In the late Roman period, it was probably taken over by Arab allies of Rome, as it does not appear in the *Notitia Dignitatum* that listed the administrative organisation of the Empire in the early fifth century. In more recent history, its claim to fame is that Lawrence of Arabia used it as his base briefly in 1917 and again in early 1918. In the old store room, next to the stables, there is a collection of inscriptions and carved stonework from the Roman period.

The day finished in another military outpost, **Umm al-Jimal**, originally a Nabataean village from probably the first century AD. The village was fortified by the Romans, and further strengthened in the fourth and fifth centuries – when it stood on the Arabian border (*Limes Arabicus*) – by the adjunction of a major *castellum* (fort) covering c.2.5 acres and equipped with corner towers and four gates, three of them with towers. The town grew with the military occupation, so there remain parts of some impressive buildings such as a possible *praetorium*, later remodelled as a fine domestic residence,

and a small temple. There are a dozen or so churches, mainly dating from the fifth to seventh centuries, and more than a hundred houses, some with distinctive corbelling and relieving arches above the door lintels (Fig. 12). Another notable architectural feature was interlocking corner stones. One grand house (number XVIII) boasts an elegant double-arched window and a functioning thick stone door that rotates on its hinge (there was a similar door at the gate of Azrak fort) (Fig. 13). Many of the buildings have sections of their walls still standing, some at full height, others toppled down, so that the full scale of the place is immediately visible and the visitor has the impression of walking through a ghost town. Most striking is the fact that the buildings are made of the local black basalt typical of this area. Cisterns and waterways show how here, like elsewhere, a functioning water infrastructure was essential for the survival of towns and villages: the disruption of water works by earthquakes was a primary cause of the abandonment of places like this in the mid-eighth century.

Umm al-Jimal is also notable for two important inscriptions relating to its Nabataean culture: an 'altar' inscribed in honour of Dushara, a powerful god associated with Zeus and Dionysus, and part of a tomb inscription which is a valuable witness of the transition of Nabataean script to an Arabic style and of the rise in power of the Tanukh, a confederacy of Arab tribes whom the Romans enlisted as part of their frontier forces. Unfortunately, both inscriptions have recently suffered damage due to a lack of protection of the site. In an ideal world, there would be some restoration work to shore up some of the walls that are threatening to collapse. With such a large site, this would be a huge undertaking.



Left: Fig. 14. Madaba, Roman street. **Centre:** Fig. 15. Madaba, Byzantine mosaics *in situ*, clockwise from top left: personifications of the cities of Rome, Gregoria and Madaba; detail from a hunting scene border; the *Hippolytus* mosaic. **Right:** Fig. 16. St Lot's Church, mosaic floor. Photos: Figs. 14 and 16, © Marigold Norbye; Fig. 15 © Nich Hogben.



Left to right: Fig. 17. Mukawir (*Machaerus*), Herodian fortress. Fig. 18. Mukawir, a Roman camp on the saddle of a nearby hill. Fig. 19. Mukawir, remains of a Roman siege ramp in the foreground, with the Roman camp in the middle background.

Photos: © Nich Hogben.

The fourth day was dedicated to places with more Biblical associations. Like John Bithell, we admired the famous mosaic map of the Holy Land in the church of St George at **Madaba**. We then had the opportunity to visit the new Archaeological Park in Madaba, built around the remains of the Roman high street (Fig. 14), containing various mosaics lifted from Byzantine churches of the environs and a spectacular mosaic representing the ancient Greek play *Hippolytus* by Euripides found in a Byzantine mansion under a church alongside the street (Fig. 15). More fine Byzantine church mosaics were on display on **Mount Nebo** (also on John's itinerary), and we too admired the Roman milestone in the museum area as well as the view Moses was given of the Promised Land. Further beautiful mosaics awaited us at the **church of Saints Lot and Procopius** at Khirbet al-Mukhayyat, with animal and vegetal elements creating lively scenes (Fig. 16).

We ended up at the fort of **Mukawir** (ancient *Machaerus*) on top of a hill 7km east of the Dead Sea (Fig. 17). The original fortress was built by a king of Judaea, and the client-king of Rome, Herod the Great (40–4BC), turned it into a fortified palace. His son Herod Antipas later occupied it; it may be here that he was seduced by his step-daughter Salome into giving her John the Baptist's head on a plate. During the First Jewish Revolt (AD66–73), the fort was taken over by Jewish zealots, and the Romans built a series of camps on the surrounding hills to encircle it. We stood in the fort and, with Sam's expert guidance, were able to spot the traces of several Roman camp outlines on the hills (Figs. 18 and 19). The fort itself has deep casemate walls which may have contained John the Baptist's prison. There were also baths, and the remains of an aqueduct along one side of the hill which provoked an engineering debate as to how the water feeding system operated in this hilly landscape.

The fifth and sixth days were devoted to the famous 'Rose-Red City' of **Petra**, and despite two exhaustive – and exhausting! – days there, we could have spent even more time there, such were the riches on offer. Like John, we walked down the narrow defile of the Siq and duly admired the stunning Treasury at the end of it, also paying attention to the less glamorous tombs recently excavated at its base (unfortunately not open to visitors). Our party then split into two according to physical fitness; one group went with Elias to explore in detail the so-called Royal Tombs carved into the rock side at one end of the main town centre. We others faced a steep ascent with Sam to a religious complex called the High Place, where sacrifices were made, at the top of one of the mountains (Jabal Madbah) surrounding the city. We were rewarded by spectacular views of the city and its encircling mountains, and the amazing sight of two tall obelisks on a plateau; they are over six metres in height and, incredibly, were created by carving away the mountain top (Fig. 20). The High Place itself consists of various platforms and basins which probably served as altars and pools for rituals (Fig. 21). We walked down the other side of the mountain through fantastic rock formations in rich yellow, pink and ochre colours into a river valley (the Wadi Farasa). On the way we visited a group of buildings known as the Garden Temple complex, recently investigated by Stephan Schmid for the Palestine Exploration Fund: in ancient times, it would have been irrigated and filled with vegetation. As John Bithell has explained, the Nabataeans would hold banquets in special halls (usually *triclinia*) near the rock tombs of their ancestors, and this particular complex contained a temple, a tomb decorated by a headless bust of a figure wearing Roman armour, and a *triclinium* carved into brilliantly coloured rock (Fig. 22). Our route led us past other grand tombs back to the town centre and the far end of its colonnaded main street



Left to right: Fig. 20. Petra, the High Place: obelisks carved from live rock. Fig. 21. Petra, the High Place. Fig. 22. Petra, *triclinium* in the Garden Temple complex, with Marigold Norbye for scale.

Photos: Figs. 20 and 21, © Marigold Norbye; Fig. 22 © Tim Arnold.



Left to right: Fig. 23. Petra, the Great Temple complex and the Temenos Gate to the right. Fig. 24. Petra, Bryn Walters discussing the religious significance of red paint on a column in front of the theatre in the Great Temple complex. Fig. 25. Petra, ed-Deir, known as the 'Monastery'. Photos: Fig. 23 © Tim Arnold; Figs. 24 and 25, © Marigold Norbye.

with the Qasr al-Bint temple, which we postponed visiting until the next day.

We joined the rest of our party for lunch and enjoyed the small museum nearby, with some fine fragments of sculpture and Nabataean pottery. We then walked to a complex of Byzantine churches on the hill above the main street, where we saw more fine sculptures (mainly column capitals) and mosaics, and some unusual blue stone columns in a small chapel nearby. Our path then took us towards the tall cliff face containing the spectacular Royal Tombs which part of our party had seen in detail that morning. Just before we reached the main series of tombs, we stopped at the tomb of Sextius Florentinus, Roman governor of Arabia c.AD 129, unusual in that it was made for a Roman rather than a Nabataean. It had the interesting feature of three pediments one above the other, which made it look as if the artist was trying to create a foreshortened effect of several buildings placed one in front of the other. We saw a similar effect with two pediments on the Urn Tomb (one of the Royal Tombs) later on.

On the second day, we started off looking at the Urn Tomb in detail before wending our way down the cliff face and walking along the main street, known as the Colonnaded Street. After a brief stop at the small *nymphaeum*, we spent a long time in the so-called Great Temple, a large building complex whose exact functions are unclear. The entire complex is partially built into the side of a hill overlooking the main street (Fig. 23). Past several steps rising above the street (the *propylaeum*), there is a large colonnaded courtyard (the lower *temenos* – a *temenos* is a sacred enclosure around a temple), at the far end of which there is a further flight of steps leading to the upper *temenos*, which has a little theatre at its back, with a small temple constructed above the theatre. The complex has been excavated by a team from Brown University which has provided useful diagrams and possible

interpretations (also to be found on the web site of the excavation), but the ARA experts still found plenty about which to speculate (Fig. 24). There is a small set of baths on the side of the complex. We eventually emerged back down into the Colonnaded Street and went through the nearby Arched Gate (also known as the Temenos Gate), with its elegant Nabataean capitals and carvings of humans and animals. We continued to the end of the street and the large Qasr al-Bint temple, popularly known as the Palace of the Pharaoh's daughter, built in a mainly Hellenistic style between 30BC and AD40. It is assumed to have been the main temple of Petra, possibly dedicated to the god Dushara. Much of the edifice is still standing, with an impressive *cella* (main central room) divided into three *adyta* (inner cult rooms inaccessible to the public).

Sam had stressed on several occasions that one characteristic of the holy places we would be visiting was that they tended to be built on high places, closer to the heavens and the deities. On the first day in Petra, those of us physically able to do so had trudged up narrow paths carved up the rock to the High Place, wondering as we puffed along how the Nabataeans had had the stamina to process up such a steep mountain side in full ceremonial garb, carrying religious paraphernalia and pulling along animals destined for sacrifice. In the afternoon of the second day, we were doing it again: hiking up to another holy place, the ed-Deir, known as the Monastery because Christian crosses were later carved in it (Fig. 25). Like the more famous Treasury, it is a huge and impressive monument carved into the rock face, with columns, a broken pediment topped by an urn, and a large inner chamber. From here one could climb a little bit further up to a mountain top close by, on which are the remains of two small temples, and enjoy some breath-taking views of the mountains and plains beyond Petra. It was a suitable climax to a fascinating visit to the Rose-Red City.



Left to right: Fig. 26. Beidha Neolithic village. Fig. 27. Wadi Rum, Thamudic rock art. Fig. 28. Wadi Rum landscape. Photos: Figs. 26 and 27, © Marigold Norbye; Fig. 28 © Tim Arnold.

The next day, we followed John Bithell's footsteps into **Little Petra**, and like him, peered through a grille at the ceiling paintings of the Painted Biclinium. It is a shame that they are not more visible, as they are exquisite when one looks at the details. A few hundred metres away, we visited the **Beidha** Neolithic village, where the stone bases of houses still exist, giving one an excellent impression of the layout and scale of these very early settlements (Fig. 26). We then leapt in time to a fortified crusader castle perched on the top of a hill: **Shobak** (known to its founders as Mont Real), built by the king of Jerusalem in 1115 as capital of his territory of Oultrejourdain (lands beyond the Jordan). After this detour, we entered the desert of the **Wadi Rum** (made famous by Lawrence of Arabia) and exchanged our bus for open-backed jeep trucks. We visited a Nabataean temple dedicated to the goddess Allat, made up of a rectangular podium with sixteen columns; it is similar to the Kiosk of Augustus on Philae Island on the Nile. The temple was expanded in the late first century AD, making it comparable to another Philae monument, the Temple of Harendotes. After a short drive in the open desert, we reached a narrow gully in Jabal Khazali, a rocky outcrop, where we saw some rock art and inscriptions (Fig. 27). Our trucks then proceeded to carry us across the desert to the Abu Aina campsite where we ate and slept in tented luxury. The experience of seeing the stars in a perfectly black and still night, or the sun rising over the sand dunes and the fantastically shaped rocky pillars and outcrops, was special and moving (Fig. 28).

The following morning, we picked up our coach again at Wadi Rum village; four of our party who did not camp had overnighted in Aqaba and rejoined us here. We drove back towards the main north-south highway, with an unplanned stop at Rum railway station where the train buffs among us were excited to find a steam locomotive and some carriages from the old Hejaz railway. After that we sped northwards up the highway, which runs parallel to the old King's Highway of classical times, then headed inland to the Roman fort of **Lejjun** in a bleak desert landscape. Its current Arab name still recalls the presence of Roman legions. Elias, who had never been there before, at first expressed his amazement that we had driven one hour into the desert in order to visit a field of rubble! Thanks to the explanations of Sam, Grahame, Bryn and Anthony, he did eventually concede that the site was 'readable' if one only knew how to look at the stones and interpret them. Some areas were actually quite well preserved, such as the North Gate which was still partly standing (Fig. 29). In the central crossroads, the bases of a large quadrifrons (a four-faced monument with two pairs of arches at right angles to each other) were clearly identifiable, and Anthony had helpfully brought a sketch that helped us visualise it. The entire complex is extensive – one of the largest in the Eastern Roman Empire, 242 by 190 metres – and still surrounded by remnants of its walls. It was constructed c. AD 300 by Diocletian, may have held a garrison of 1,000 to 2,000 men at its peak, and was used for about two and a half centuries. One can still identify the two main high streets (*via praetoria* and *via principalis*), the *principia* (HQ building) near the central crossroads, a cistern, a granary, a church, baths built alongside the north wall, and four towers in the corners of the enclosure.

As we drove on to our next destination, another crusader castle, at **Kerak** this time, Sam made some interesting comparisons between the Roman and the crusader methods

of holding a territory militarily. The crusaders built heavily fortified structures, usually on top of a hill, which were virtually impregnable. A fort like Lejjun on the other hand, would not have been able to withstand a siege in the same way. This tells us something about the relations between the local population and the Romans: the legions did not fear constant attacks from the locals as the crusaders did. On the contrary, the Romans worked to keep the peace so that the natives were happy for the Romans to protect them against local troubles and insurrections. This may help to explain why the Romans were able to hold their empire for so long: they worked with the local population and practiced a degree of assimilation, whereas the crusaders built highly visible fortresses that acted as practical and symbolic reminders of their attempts to dominate the land, but never won the true cooperation of the indigenous people.

Kerak itself was impressive, but like John, I too will pass over its details, only pausing to point out the existence of a small second-century AD bas-relief of a Nabataean warrior embedded in one of its inner walls (Fig. 30). From there, we finally went down to the Dead Sea, which we had seen from a distance a few days before. After visiting the **monastery of St Lot** (Deir 'Ain 'Abata) on a hill overlooking the valley, we drove along the coast, pausing briefly just after sunset to look at the site of **Callirrhoe**, King Herod's favourite spa on the Dead Sea.

On our final full day, we went to **Bethany beyond the Jordan**, which John Bithell has already described; the building of modern churches continues unabated. Afterwards, we were supposed to go straight back to the hotel and luxuriate in the Dead Sea, but that was too soft an option for most of us, so Elias resourcefully arranged for the coach to take us up to the **Dead Sea Panorama Complex**, managed by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, a high spot overlooking the Dead Sea valley with stunning views and an interesting little museum about the history and the ecology of the Dead Sea, and the problems it is facing today (the sea is shrinking at a frightening rate, and preserving it and its local water supplies would entail close cooperation between currently antagonistic nations). After all this, we finally condescended to play tourists and test the buoyant waters of the Dead Sea; the end of the day culminated in a spectacular sunset over the sea where Nature provided a suitably dazzling finale to what had been a most fascinating and intellectually stimulating tour.



Fig. 29. Lejjun, North Gate. Photo: © Tim Arnold.



Fig. 30. Kerak, second-century relief of a Nabataean cavalryman. Photo: © Marigold Norbye.

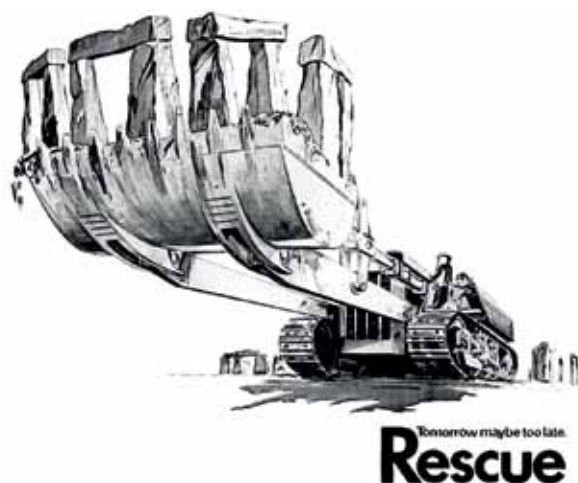
Rescue, the British Archaeological Trust – still campaigning after 40 years

Rescue was founded in 1971 following discussions amongst a group of active archaeologists with a launch meeting at Senate House, London (attended by over 700 people including yours truly as an enquiring undergraduate). It was a response to the huge amount of development damage in the late 1960s, and the realisation after monitoring new roads, particularly the M5 in Somerset and Gloucestershire, that there was far more archaeology out there than had previously been recorded – and it was rapidly disappearing. The M5 project began with a single archaeological site recorded on the route and showed that in practice some two sites per mile were affected by 100 miles of roadworks. This included a string of Roman rural settlements, including many on claylands previously thought to be unoccupied until the medieval period.

Rescue's early campaigning was about the need for a national structure to deal with archaeology locally, for a funded system that could dig the sites and landscapes that were under threat and could maintain a record of all archaeological survey work, and for an extension to the legislation protecting archaeology. In 1974 Philip Rahtz edited *Rescue Archaeology*¹ which summarised the status quo, the scale of the problem and the new projects developing as a result of Rescue's efforts. One of Rescue's current projects to mark our 40 years is the preparation of a new book to follow up the themes of that book.

The system that actually developed in the 1970s was more piecemeal than the campaigners had hoped, but various trusts and some urban and county-based units emerged with the support of the Department of the Environment (formerly Ministry of Public Building and Works, subsequently hived off as English Heritage in the 1980s). In order to excavate before sites were destroyed, the local archaeological units took advantage of every government scheme on offer that provided cheap labour (such as the Manpower Services Commission's Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) and Youth Training Scheme (YTS)). This left something of a gap in the post-excavation and publication process but introduced archaeology to a very varied group of mainly young people, some of whom have remained in the profession.

Alongside the field work, the systems of recording what was known locally evolved into the county Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs, now frequently expanded and re-branded as Historic Environment Records, HERs). These brought together the national records, particularly the Ordnance Survey and information from local museums about the source of objects in their collections.



The distinctive Rescue 'Stonehenge' image, used on the cover of *Rescue Archaeology* and on Rescue's website. Courtesy of Rescue.

developer contribution process on big, often Roman-period sites in the City – but there could still be problems, for example when the timber floor of a Roman warehouse was discovered at Park Street, Southwark in 1988, on a council house development which had no in-built profit available for the archaeology. Similarly, Roman and early medieval York saw some hugely successful major excavations but also unprotected and unfunded crises such as at the Queen's Hotel site in 1989.

The loudest public uproar was over the discovery of the Rose Theatre in Southwark in 1989 where an agreement to fund full investigation was cancelled by a subsequent buyer, leading to dramatic media pictures of actors visiting the site and deploring its destruction. This gave English Heritage some help in negotiating the first Planning Guidance for Archaeology (PPG 16) with the government in 1990 which clarified a presumption in favour of preservation *in situ* for nationally important sites and established the process of 'preservation by record', i.e. excavation and publication where sites were destroyed, with the developer funding the work (the 'polluter pays' principle).

Just under two years ago PPG 16 and PPG 15 (which dealt with the built historic environment) were revised and combined into Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5, March 2010), apparently re-affirming the place of the past as a planning consideration, putting the HERs at the centre of the process for assessing impacts on sites

During the 1980s it became increasingly clear that there had to be an obligation on the developer both to allow archaeological work to take place (which began to be established through the planning system) and, more controversially, to pay for it. London saw the successful evolution of the



Fig. 1. Tony Robinson talks to the press in the Verulamium theatre for the Rescue campaign to stop the ploughing of much of the town. Photo: © Jude Plouviez.

and buildings, and making the point that heritage can be a productive element of development.

Suggestions that Rescue is no longer needed and that there is no 'rescue' element in modern archaeology seem a little premature today. The only legislation that protects our heritage (other than scheduled monuments and listed buildings) is European; in Britain this is applied through the planning process backed by government advice in the form of PPS 5 – but soon to be replaced by the simplified National Planning Policy Framework, the draft of which caused consternation in many areas of society (including the National Trust and the *Daily Telegraph*) when it appeared in July 2011.

A major problem is a stated presumption in favour of development (described as 'sustainable development' without a clear definition of what this means). Rescue's assessment of the document is that it threatens to slow development because of the lack of clarity about the process for archaeology, leading inevitably to planning appeals, and that it weakens the provision in PPS 5. There is still a case for better legislation if only to protect the status quo, but it seems very unlikely to be achieved in the near future.

Even our scheduled sites are not well-protected – it took many years of campaigning by Rescue and local archaeologists to stop the destruction of large parts of Roman *Verulamium* by continued ploughing (Fig. 1), finally achieved for this site in 2003. Elsewhere

there are still scheduled sites being destroyed by the plough, only stabilised when owners can be persuaded by agricultural grants to change their use.

Another kind of loss of archaeological knowledge in the 1980s was highlighted by the looting of a set of temple bronzes from Icklingham, Suffolk (Fig. 2) which reappeared in a gallery in New York in 1989. Rescue publicised the case and arranged a meeting at Westminster to campaign for Britain to ratify the 1970 UNESCO convention on illegally exported cultural property, something that was finally achieved in 2002.

Rescue continues to state the inconvenient in defence of the archaeology – we remain unhappy with the competitive element in the present system where many developers favour the cheapest organisation over the more innovative or better researched proposals. Competitive tendering controlled by the developer will always tend towards lower standards, and the only counterweight is provided by the archaeologist employed in local government to advise on whether the planning condition is being met adequately.

As local government is forced to save ever more cash, the number of archaeologists to monitor and press for better standards of work is declining. Some of the urban unitary councils believe they can dispense with directly employed archaeologists – for example, Sandwell (in the West Midlands) recently suggested that it could fulfil its

archaeological obligations by buying in advice, probably from a neighbouring council. Various councils are looking to external companies to both maintain the HER and provide planning advice.

More inconspicuously staff numbers are being cut, so that even in substantial counties the HER and planning roles are being merged; inevitably, the demands of planning deadlines mean that maintenance of the HER, the key data on which all decisions have to be based, will take a back seat. And the local and academic researcher will increasingly become dependent on the online version of the HER rather than being able to interrogate the original and the people who understand its biases.

The output areas are also in disarray – museums are also being squeezed by local councils. Either they lose curators, and thus knowledge of their collections (for example last year the Museum of London replaced two highly experienced curators of prehistoric and Roman London with one new incumbent), or close, making their collections inaccessible for research (for example, in 2012 Malton Museum may lose its current premises and Carmarthenshire Museum is being considered for closure).

Rescue has been monitoring and mapping cuts to all aspects of archaeology in the last year, with an online map showing what is going on (<https://rescue.crowdmap.com/main>). We try to respond where we can, and encourage our members and others to let us know if there are threats to the archaeological provision in a local area.

Rescue is only as strong as its membership, and the voluntary council members, can make it. We get no regular grant support from government or other bodies, and so have the freedom to comment within the limits of our status as a charity. Members receive three issues of *Rescue News* a year; subscription rates remain very reasonable at £15 per annum (£8 senior citizens and students). Full details and an online subscription form can be found at <http://rescue-archaeology.org.uk/membership>.

Jude Plouviez.



Fig. 2. The looted Icklingham temple bronzes, anonymously photographed in 1984.

Courtesy of Rescue.

¹ Penguin Books Ltd (a Pelican Original), ISBN 0140214860.

² The plight of *Verulamium* was discussed by Martin Henig in *ARA* 9, pp7–9.



A ROMAN EXAMPLE OF THE 'SWISS ARMY KNIFE'

The iconic, multifunctional *Schweizer Offiziersmesser* (Swiss Officer's knife, or commonly, Swiss Army Knife) originated in Ibach Schwyz, Switzerland in 1897. The tool has attachments stowed inside the handle of the knife through a pivot point mechanism. This of course is based upon the pivotal knife that has a long history.

Now it seems that as in many things the Romans had thought of the idea almost two thousand years before.

The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, visited by ARA members in June 2011, recently reopened its Greek and Roman Gallery following renovation. One of the most interesting exhibits is a remarkable folding and multi-purpose tool (Fig. 1).

The latter seems to have been designed especially for a wealthy traveller, and features a knife, a spoon, a three-tined fork, a spike, a pierced leaf-shaped pick and a spatula. The spike could have been used as a device for extracting snails from their shells, and the pick may have been a toothpick or for nail cleaning. The spatula may have helped pull ointments or cosmetics out of narrow-necked bottles. The elegant fork has an elaborate trident-like head. Forks are often said not to have existed in Roman times, but examples do exist in museums throughout the world showing that in wealthy circles at least they were well-known. The handle of the knife, into which the tools fold, is pierced and has the general shape of a *kithara* or concert

lyre. The 3in x 6in (8cm x 15cm) knife was excavated from the Mediterranean area more than 20 years ago and was obtained by the museum in 1991.

With the exception of the knife blade, the tool was made entirely out of silver sometime between AD200 and AD300. Roman folding knives are not rare, but most of them are made out of bronze and have fewer parts. This is a deluxe version, and so probably belonged to a wealthy person who travelled a lot, like a merchant or army officer.

The term 'Swiss Army Knife' was coined by American soldiers after the Second World War who bought them in great numbers but had difficulty in pronouncing the name 'Offiziersmesser'.

Daily Telegraph – 18. 11. 2010

LATE ROMAN CAMPANIAN AMPHORA DISCOVERED AT ARBEIA ROMAN FORT'S VICUS

Excavations in the civilian settlement outside of the fort of *Arbeia*, South Shields have discovered most of a metre high wine amphora that was imported into the region between AD250 to AD350. Nick Hodgson of *Arbeia*, and project manager for Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums has been quoted as describing the find as "spectacular and significant" He said: "What is special about this is it can be stuck together to see what it originally looked like. Containers like this were used for bulk transportation. This is very significant because it is of a rather unusual late Roman type, which only started being imported from AD250".

The discovery shows that there was still a taste for Mediterranean wine in the area and that the inhabitants were not content with imbibing only British wines and local beer. The clay of the amphora contains volcanic rock and it is believed to have originated in the Campanian region of Italy, and presumably was imported by sea to the coastal fort and *vicus* of *Arbeia*.

Other pieces of similar amphora were found in a Roman roadside ditch during the

excavations that took place at the corner of Baring Street and Fort Street, South Shields. The excavation also uncovered a stone building that suggests that the civilian settlement was still a going concern in the late-Roman period, when it is commonly believed that most civilian settlements outside forts in the north of England had failed. "The discovery fits in with other indications that at South Shields the old picture of things going to wrack and ruin by the 4th century is not quite true".

The Journal – 22. 10. 2011
Shields Gazette – 25. 10. 2012

EXCAVATIONS AT LOWER BORROWBRIDGE ROMAN FORT AT TEBAY, CUMBRIA

Members of the Lunesdale Archaeology Society gained permission from the Secretary of State to excavate a scheduled area to the south of the fort at Lower Borrowbridge Farm, close to the M6 in the Tebay gorge, Cumbria, where it is believed a bath-house once stood. The building would have been used by Roman soldiers stationed at the fort, the remains of which survive as a turf-covered platform with some surviving facing stones perched above the confluence of Borrowdale Beck with the River Lune. The valley name Borrowdale means 'fort stream' but the Roman name of the fort is unknown. In 1946 a Roman cavalry tombstone was found re-used in a culvert about a mile south of the fort.

The new excavation has exposed walls, foundations and traces of a hypocaust. Pottery coins and a ballista bolt were amongst the small finds. The week-long dig also raised new questions about the original use of this building that had been thought to be a bath-house. Site director Joseph Jackson said: "In the past the site has been designated as a potential bath-house. We're still unsure of that but it is certainly a building of importance."

The structure was first sampled in an excavation conducted in 1883 by the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society. This was followed again in 1975–6 by a rescue excavation on another section of the building.

<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/la/hs/Contrebis/3-76-Anstee.pdf>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cumbria-14362255>

http://www.roman-britain.org/epigraphy/rib_borders.htm#lowborrowbridge



Fig. 1. The Roman 'Swiss Army Knife': a folding eating implement, with a three-pronged fork, spatula, pick, spike and knife (AD200–300).

Photo © The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

CORINIUM'S EARLY ROMAN CEMETERY GIVES UP ITS DEAD

An excavation conducted by Cotswold Archaeology at the former Bridges Garage on Tetbury Road at Cirencester, Gloucestershire, has uncovered up to 60 burials and four cremations at one of the earliest cemeteries ever found in Roman Britain. The site lay outside the circuit of the town walls and conformed to Roman law that forbade burial within towns.

Neil Holbrook, chief executive at Cotswold Archaeology, said he could not overestimate the potential significance of the discovery. The team are particularly excited by the discovery of a child's grave containing a pottery flagon, which could date to the early Roman period, between AD70 and 120. If the near-perfect flagon was new and not an antique when it was buried along with the child, and if the burial could be dated to this early period then it could "challenge the current belief amongst archaeologists" that inhumation burials were not common practice until the later Roman period. It is hoped that close dating of other burials will be possible, so as to solve this conundrum. A large number of the inhumations were in shallow graves within a marked enclosure, which could have belonged to a single family. The flagon, which was likely to have been made in nearby Purton, was found in the child's grave within this enclosure.

The excavation continues one carried out in the 1960s before the construction of the garage during the great period of annual excavations at Cirencester. This disclosed 46 cremations, six burials and part of an inscribed tombstone dating from the first to third century. Project manager for Cotswold Archaeology, Cliff Bateman, said: "It is amazing that so much archaeology has survived the comprehensive building works." When Bridges Garage was first built on the site in 1961, local archaeologist Richard Reece managed to salvage 46 Roman cremations and six inhumations before work was completed.

"We didn't know how comprehensive the works of the 1960s would have been and how much the massive fuel tanks would have damaged the surviving archaeology," Mr Bateman said. "There was nothing to suggest that there would be so many burials. It's only when we excavated a third of the site that we discovered a ditch and immediately on the other side we found four cremations."

After conservation it is hoped that the finds, which include an exceedingly important enamelled cockerel figure (Fig. 2, and see below), a fragmentary pottery tette (feeding bottle) and two bracelets, will be exhibited at the town's Corinium Museum. One of the bracelets, made of green glass beads, jet beads, shale and copper alloy was found still attached to the wrist of a skeleton.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-15759443>

http://www.wiltsglosstandard.co.uk/news/9367600.Significant_Roman_cemetery_uncovered_by_builders_in_Cirencester/?ref=rss

THE CIRENCESTER COCKEREL

The most visually exciting find at the former Bridges Garage site is a cockerel statuette, found in a child's grave. The striking figure is made of bronze or a similar cast copper alloy, is around 125mm in height and is believed to date from the second century AD. Although still awaiting conservation and caked in earth, it is possible to see details of the beautiful enamelled decoration. The breast is covered with a diagonal chequerwork of white and possibly blue, whilst the cockerel's wings, eyes and probably the comb are also inlaid with enamel that appears to be green and blue. The tail feathers may be represented by a separate plate and be fanned, but until the earth is properly removed it is difficult to be certain.

The cockerel is depicted in the act of crowing, perhaps a symbol of awaking for the dead. In the spring the cock was associated with Persephone and the renewal of life, and it was also a gift that an older man gave to a youth that he desired. Its early crow was said to shatter and confuse the evil demons of the night. The cock was a companion of the god Mercury (Hermes) who was often considered to be the conductor of the dead to Hades. A god of commerce, he appears to have been particularly popular in the wealthy town of *Corinium*. Although the bird may simply have been a toy or favourite possession of the child with whom it was buried, it was placed close to the child's head, as if to awaken the sleeper.

A similar cockerel is known from Roman Cologne. Although there are minor differences in the enamel colours and the tail is missing, it is almost certainly a product of the same Romano-British atelier. Roman Britain seems to have been particularly important in the production and export of enamelled



Fig. 2. The Cirencester cockerel.

© Cotswold Archaeology.

objects, ranging from brooches, cult and votive objects to decorative items. Loving the play of colour, the Iron Age inhabitants of Britain developed their own form of the craft. It was at first not true enamelling in the usual sense of the word, as the glass was only heated until it became a malleable paste before being pushed into place. This technique is often called 'sealing-wax enamelling', and may be more truly described as 'glass inlay'.

The Greek sophist Philostratus III gives us the first literary reference to enamelling in pre-Roman Britain. In describing decorated horse harnesses of the Celts he says "It is said that the barbarians in the Ocean pour these colours on heated bronze and that they adhere, become as hard as stone and preserve the designs that are made on them" Philostratus III *Icōnes* (Book I, 28). The true technique of enamelling, where glass paste is spread into cells and fired until it liquefies, is believed to have been introduced by the Romans into Britain. The study of its production in Britannia is still really in its infancy, but deserves much attention.

This exciting addition to the corpus of enamelled objects from Britannia is now awaiting cleaning and conservation. The compacted earth needs to be removed from it and the enamel has to be stabilised. No doubt it will then become a prized exhibit in the Corinium Museum at Cirencester.

<http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/beautiful-enamelled-cockerel-found-in-roman-child%E2%80%99s-grave/>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-16198947>

Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard – 23. 12. 2011

Land of Eagles: Journeys in Roman Albania

Shqipëria – 'Land of Eagles': this is how native Albanians refer to their elusive and for a long time impenetrable nation. Despite lying only 70km across the Adriatic Sea from the boot of Italy, Albania is still cited by many as one of Europe's last remaining frontiers. Decades of communist rule, harsh totalitarian government and recent civil unrest have ensured few visitors to the country over the years and imbued its mountainous lands with a sense of mystery. Persistent whispers telling of blood-feuds and rampant organised

crime have long overshadowed any mention of its world-class heritage sites. In the last few years Albania has emerged from the darkness of its self-imposed isolation, finally eager to share its undiscovered treasures with the world. And the consensus is they won't stay undiscovered for long. As my guide said to me upon my arrival, "you have come at just the right time".

My tour of Albania, a country comparable in size to Belgium, began and ended in the capital city **Tirana**; home to a third of the nation's three million inhabitants. No doubt many visitors arrive expecting a featureless, grey, communist sprawl but Tirana is a modern, colourful city with scenic parks and bustling boulevards. The centrally located National Museum is a good way to start or finish a visit to the country and houses an excellent selection of artefacts, statuary and mosaics from the nation's many ancient sites. At the time of my visit the building, recognisable on the facade, was surrounded by a sea of roadworks, yet it remained open and staff will happily supply an English-speaking guide.

The *Via Egnatia*, one of the great roads of the Roman world, began at the coastal city of *Dyrrachium* and stretched almost 700 miles eastward to Byzantium. Striking south-east from Tirana, my first ancient site was the city of **Elbasan**, once an important stop on the *Via Egnatia*. Affectionately nicknamed the 'belly button of Albania', this historic city expanded greatly during the communist era when it housed an enormous steelworks, now

completely abandoned. Elbasan should perhaps be more positively associated with the impressive fortress that stands at its heart (Fig. 1). Most of what you see dates from the Ottoman period, but Roman masonry is visible at the south-west corner. The formidable walls now enclose only a restaurant and garden, but the lofty towers and battlements are well worth exploring – though as is the way in Albania, don't expect much in the way of safety rails. Broken inscriptions and carved stonework lie strewn around the fortress interior (Fig. 2), just a hint of the stronghold's ancient significance.

Continuing east along the route of the *Via Egnatia* I passed briefly over the border into the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in order to explore the banks of Lake Ohrid. A World Heritage Site, Lake Ohrid is the deepest lake in the Balkans and divides its shoreline between Albania and FYROM. At the northern end of the lake lies the city of **Ohrid** (ancient *Lychidnus*): renowned for its selection of early Christian churches, it also boasts some impressive Roman remains. The Hellenistic theatre predates Roman occupation of the region and, as was customary, incorporates its seating into the natural contours of the hillside. The theatre underwent later modifications, with the first few rows of seating being stripped away, perhaps so that it could host beast fights and gladiatorial contests (Fig. 3). Further up the hill is the extensive Plaosnik archaeological area. Ongoing excavations around the monastery here have uncovered early Christian basilicas, built atop Roman residential buildings (Fig. 4).

From Lake Ohrid I journeyed south towards the Ionian Coast, through the historic city of Korça, the highland town of Përmeti and the ancient mountain fortress of Gjirokastra. The temperatures soared as the azure waters of the Ionian Sea finally came into view and awaiting me at the coast was perhaps Albania's most famous archaeological site.



Fig. 1. The walls of Elbasan's fortress.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 2. Inscription fragments inside the fortress.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 3. Roman theatre in Ohrid.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 4. Excavations around St Pantelejmon monastery, Ohrid.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 5. Walls of the Sanctuary of Asclepius, Butrint.
Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 6. Fountain and the treasury building.
Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 7. Manumission inscriptions on the theatre walls.
Photo: © Gareth Harney.

Butrint¹ (ancient *Buthrotum*) is situated on the far south coast of Albania, close to the Greek border in what was once the land of Epirus; just a few kilometres across the water (and an easy day trip) from Corfu. The Roman colony nestles on a land-tied island at the edge of the large and wonderfully scenic coastal lake of the same name. Though there is evidence for Iron Age occupation of the site, the legend of the city's founding is described by none other than Virgil, who recounts how Trojan hero Helenus sacrificed an ox on the site; the animal fell into the lake but managed to swim to the shore where it finally died. Helenus built a city on the auspicious spot and called it *Buthrotos*, meaning "the wounded ox" (*Aeneid*, Book III). Romantic as this tale may be, in reality the city's strategic location was probably more of a factor in its founding. Its natural inland harbour, shielded from Mediterranean storms by nearby Corfu, could not have been better chosen.

The remains now on display at Butrint represent many levels of occupation from two thousand years of continuous

¹ Oliver Gilkes gave a presentation on his excavations at Butrint at the 2003 ARA Symposium (see *ARA* 16, p19).

habitation by successive colonies: Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Venetian. Luckily there are regular signs in English to help visitors piece the puzzles of the site together. The itinerary wastes no time in bringing you to the monumental heart of the ancient city. A short, leafy walk from the entrance and you are confronted by the imposing remains of the Sanctuary of Asclepius, a grand public space dominated by the Hellenistic theatre. As you approach, the path follows the course of the Hellenistic wall that surrounded the city, a good opportunity to appreciate the intimidating size of the blocks and precise masonry work (Fig. 5). Passing through an archway, you cross a bridge to the theatre: the whole area is now a serene, green pond. Here at the beginning of the visit is evidence of why the city declined; tectonic shifts in the Roman period raised the water table and caused persistent flooding. As you pass a small fountain and the treasury building (Fig. 6), remember that they all once occupied dry land.

Upon entering the theatre through the *parados*, look again at the retaining wall at your side. The entire wall is covered in fine Greek inscriptions, declarations of

the manumission of slaves (Fig. 7) that were formally registered under the auspices of the League of Epirus and then of the Prasaiboi, the local people; they date from the second and early first centuries BC. The theatre dates to the third century BC and once sat around 1,500 spectators (Fig. 8).

During excavations in the 1930s, a selection of fine marble sculptures were discovered around the stage, some of which can be seen in the site's museum. The temple of Asclepius from which the complex takes its name would have stood proudly above the rear of the theatre but today its remnants have been swallowed by the surrounding trees. Carrying on through the Roman-era *scenae* (stage building) the route passes one of the many public baths identified in the city, though its location undoubtedly makes this one of the most prestigious; a hot room with pools and raised hypocaust floor are visible (Fig. 9).



Fig. 8. Butrint, Roman theatre.



Photo: © Gareth Harney. Fig. 9. Caldarium of the central bath-house.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 10. Peristyle complex adjoining the theatre.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 11. Marble-clad well-head.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 12. View of the 'gymnasium'.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 13. Infant burial from the Triconch Palace.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.

Continuing eastward, you pass the surprising remains of a large peristyle dwelling (Fig. 10). The location of the building is surprising: directly adjoining both the theatre and *forum*, it is connected to the former via a private staircase. Such a property, it has been theorised, was likely used by priests attending the cult of Asclepius and other locally represented deities.

Adjacent to the building and at the end of an evocative ancient pathway there stands an elegant, marble-clad well. There are deep grooves in the marble, worn by the continuous friction of ropes over the millennia (Fig. 11). The path then passes through the remains of the *forum*, discovered in 2005. A trio of vaulted shrines (the central one known from inscriptions to have been dedicated to Minerva) can be seen but, frustratingly, the vast majority of the *forum* still lies under two metres of soil. Similarly, passing through the peaceful woods to the south, it is difficult to imagine that this whole area was once the centre of a bustling ancient city.

The path emerges at a building, once clad in sumptuous marble, known as the 'gymnasium' (Fig. 12). This complex, dating to the early Roman period, is constructed around an ornamental pool and fountain, which still has mosaics visible in its niches. Despite the name, the building's function is highly contentious; Oliver Gilkes thinks it more likely that it is a part of a shrine to the east of the *forum*.

One of Butrint's most interesting structures lies nearby on the southern coast of the peninsula. The Triconch Palace began life as a large but conventional house in the early Roman era but was greatly expanded in the

fifth century. It takes its name from its grand, three-sided dining room, the remnants of which are still visible. The immense palace even had its own private harbour – no surprise, then, that a mosaic at its entrance speaks of an owner of senatorial rank. Nearby, some impressive boat-houses and storerooms associated with the palace abut the coastline. Evidence suggests that the complex was not even finished when the rising water table forced the owner to abandon its construction. In the Middle Ages, the ruins were reoccupied by scattered domestic dwellings and also used for burials. An infant buried in an amphora was found on the site, and the poignant remains are displayed in the museum (Fig. 13).

Retracing your steps inland, the path east will bring you to one of the most iconic structures of Butrint, recognisable from the covers of most guidebooks to the site: the baptistery (Fig. 14). This incredible sixth-century building is one of the most architecturally elaborate of the baptisteries of late antiquity, and demonstrates that the city became a vibrant focal point for early Christianity following the fall of the Western Roman Empire. Unfortunately the feature for which the building is most famous, its elaborate mosaic floor, is only uncovered for the public on rare occasions. It depicts vividly a wide variety of early Christian symbols: peacocks stand at the entrance, while a plethora of other animals dance in concentric circles around the central baptismal pool. This was no doubt one of the most luxurious baptisteries in the Empire – extant plumbing even shows that the baptismal waters supplying the pool were heated, in keeping with the ornate surroundings.



Fig. 14. The baptistery, Butrint.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.

Continuing the Christian theme, a short amble uphill brings you to the Great Basilica. This most impressive structure dates to the same era as the baptistery. The three-aisled basilica, which survives up to roof height, illustrates clearly the evolutionary progression from the basilica of the Roman world, with its central nave and high colonnades (Fig. 15).



Fig. 15. Interior of the Great Basilica.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.

The Great Basilica may grab the attention but do not overlook the exquisite remains of the Roman *nymphaeum* opposite. Marble overlay is still present at ground level, and there are niches for statues of Dionysus and Apollo (Fig. 16). Part of the Augustan-era aqueduct system that supplied the city, this is one of numerous structures that celebrate water in the city. It is likely, given the Sanctuary to Asclepius, that by Roman times Butrint had developed into a spa town with a reputation for healing waters; in turn, this may have led to it becoming a baptismal centre for early Christians. Excavations have shown that under the Great Basilica lies another of the city's Roman bath-houses.

A fine stretch of Hellenistic city wall leads the visitor around the northern edge of the peninsula, providing wonderful views over the flat expanse of the Vrina Plain. Excavations have shown that the Roman colony expanded across the water, forming a thriving suburb on the mainland to which Butrint was connected by a bridge; villas and temples have been uncovered and discoveries are ongoing.

Following the mammoth ancient wall you will soon come to the Hellenistic Lake Gate (Fig. 17). Often associated with the 'Scaean Gate' that Aeneas passes through in Virgil's *Aeneid*, this fourth-century BC gateway, built without mortar, is one of six that allowed entrance to the Hellenistic city. Another, known as the Lion Gate, lies a few hundred yards further along the

course of the wall. This equally impressive gateway of the same era takes its name from the worn lintel carving of a lion battling a bull (Fig. 18). Passing through, you will find yourself at a Roman well-head known as the Well of Junia Rufina. A Greek inscription on the marble balustrade shows it was dedicated by this local woman, who declares herself "friend of the nymphs". The faintly visible paintings of peacocks above the well were a later Christian addition. The steps now lead up to the *acropolis*, where the site's wonderful museum is situated. Renovated in 2005, it houses many interesting finds from the city including an impressive selection of inscriptions and statuary.

My journey through Albania continued north along the virgin beaches of the Ionian coast. From the resort of Saranda a winding coastal road climbs gradually, taking in Ottoman castles along the way, eventually reaching the heights of the Llogara National Park, an alpine wilderness with incredible views of the coastline. Julius Caesar passed through this area in 48BC *en route* to besiege the Pompeian forces at the nearby ancient city of *Oricum*. I instead went north, to the ruins of another city, **Apollonia**.

Cicero, one of *Apollonia's* many famous visitors, described it in one immortal line: *magna urbs et gravis* – a great and important city. The vast majority of the greatness Cicero described still lies unexcavated; this has led to the site being nicknamed the 'Pompeii of Albania'. Aside from the Byzantine monastery and some communist-era



Fig. 16. The Roman *nymphaeum*. Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 17. The 'Scaean' Gate.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 18. The Lion Gate with relief carving on lintel.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.

barracks, after antiquity the site was not built on. Future generations would be assured of a rich cultural prize if the site was more fully excavated. Nevertheless, what is on show is well worth seeing and speaks of a city every bit as important as Cicero described.

Founded by Greek colonists and developed into a key port, *Apollonia* was lauded in the annals of history. Aristotle praised its oligarchic system of rule, whereby a small number of Greeks ruled peacefully over the native populace. Similarly, Roman geographer

Strabo describes it as "an exceedingly well governed city". Clearly, ancient *Apollonia* was doing something right. It was also an important centre for philosophy and education: Octavian came here to study, and it was here that he learnt of Julius Caesar's assassination.



Fig. 19. Roman column adapted into well head, Apollonia Museum. Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 20. Facade of the bouleuterion. Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 21. The Roman odeon. Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 22. The Greek stoa. Photo: © Gareth Harney.

Visits start at the Monastery of St Mary, which functions as the site's museum. This is somewhat appropriate as the building itself is built almost entirely out of stone scavenged from the surrounding ruins. Look out for a marble lion's head and floral architraves reused as masonry by the entrance, and a well-head in the forecourt fashioned from a cross-section of a huge Roman column (Fig. 19). On display are some fine examples of sculpture and statuary found during excavations; *Apollonia* is being explored by an Albanian-French team and a German expedition. *Apollonia* has been explored and excavated by the French for more than 80 years.

A large-scale map outside the museum illustrates the size of the city, with vast swathes remaining blank and unexcavated. The most logical route around the visible remains takes you across the parched grassy landscape straight to the monumental centre of the city. The impressive facade of the Roman-era *bouleuterion* is the postcard image of *Apollonia* (Fig. 20). Its six Corinthian columns and Greek inscribed pediment have been questionably restored with unflattering concrete, yet the enigmatic structure remains majestic. In front are the remains of a monumental gateway leading to the elegant Roman *odeon* opposite (Fig. 21). This small theatre could seat about 300 citizens for music and poetry recitals. It has the nicely preserved side entrances and extensive Imperial-era brickwork. Stretching north from the *odeon* are the clearly recognisable remains of the Greek *stoa* – a colonnaded public walkway, traditionally used by philosophers as a place to spread their ideas (Fig. 22). Along its length there are seventeen visible niches that held statues of local

worthies and gods, found during the 1920s excavations.

At the other end, the recently excavated foundations of a temple and a reconstructed archway can be seen. From here a path runs north-west to a hillside that gives expansive views over the landscape. Bunkers sit like concrete mushrooms in the middle distance and it is possible to make out the remains of a partially uncovered bath-house nearby. Yet if you look again at the hillside you stand on, with its distinctive concave shape, you realise it is the city's ancient theatre, lying unexcavated. Only some partially exposed columns and rubble in the orchestra area betray the ancient structure's presence.

As you return to the entrance, continue past the museum and look down the slope at a wonderful, partially excavated peristyle villa with a large water feature (Fig. 23). The corridors are bedecked with mosaics, although frustratingly these are gravelled over. An adjacent aqueduct channel supplied water to the luxurious property. I completed my visit to *Apollonia* by walking the intact southern walls of the city, accessible down a rugged slope behind the restaurant. The walls are an interesting mix of Hellenistic and Roman brickwork and reach imposing heights. Defensive towers can be identified, as well as a monumental outlet for the city's waste water channel (Fig. 24). Follow the line of the wall for a few hundred yards and you can climb a steep hill back into the site. Incidentally, the landscape visible to the south is the site of the city's large necropolis in which many tumuli have been excavated.

Apollonia is difficult to reach for those not using private transport and, like most of Albania's ancient sites, you will

in all likelihood have the site more or less to yourself – a refreshing experience in these days of mass tourism. Sadly, the site is not yet listed as a World Heritage Site, which equates to a lack of both funding and protection from development: currently a road-building scheme to improve access to the coast threatens part of the site.



Fig. 23. Partially excavated villa, Apollonia.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.



Fig. 24. Water outlet in Apollonia's city walls.



Photo: © Gareth Harney. Fig. 25. Partially uncovered amphitheatre of Durrës.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.

On my return journey north I stayed in the World Heritage town of Berat, with its distinctive Ottoman architecture and magnificent mountain-top fortress.

The last ancient stop on my circular tour around Albania was at Albania's second-largest city, the bustling port of **Durrës** (ancient *Dyrrachium*). The city's Archaeological Museum has an extensive collection of artefacts from all eras of Albania's history. Durrës is also home to the biggest Roman amphitheatre in the Balkans, which once sat around 20,000 spectators (Fig. 25). The monument has many distinctive features, not least the modern houses which still stand in the middle of it! Only discovered in the late 1990s, the authorities have struggled to present and maintain the remains in a suitable fashion. My guide assured me that deals have been struck with residents and they will soon be moving so that a full-scale excavation of the amphitheatre can begin. The site is still worth a visit: an exploration of the subterranean corridors reveals stonemason's marks inscribed on the marble steps, and a lovely mosaic-covered Byzantine chapel built into the amphitheatre's *cavea* (Fig. 26).

So ended my journey around the 'Land of Eagles'. Although my tour took in some of Albania's most impressive ancient sites, there are many more I did not reach: *Antigonea*, *Byllis* and *Oricum* to name but a few. Over the next few years, as the country continues to rapidly improve its infrastructure, more of its cultural sites will surely become available to visitors. Signs suggest the country is nearing a tipping point, when its undiscovered treasures will be embraced by western tourists *en masse*; auspiciously, it

currently sits at the top of a famous travel publication's list of 'must-see destinations'. Albania is a secret that can't be kept for much longer. I did indeed go at just the right time.

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Gareth Harney.

garethharney@hotmail.com

Editor's note: I would like to thank John Wilkes and Oliver Gilkes, both of whom provided advice in relation to this article.



Fig. 26. Small Byzantine chapel built into the amphitheatre's *cavea*.

Photo: © Gareth Harney.

Romans in Commagene

Romans in where? If I mention *Zeugma* you will correctly conclude eastern Turkey, in the upper reaches of the River Euphrates. *Zeugma* is the name given by the Romans to the Greek city *Seleucia*. It was infamously lost to the lake created by the Birecik Dam, but many outstanding mosaics were saved in a massive rescue excavation. Commagene was a Hellenistic kingdom that managed to stay more or less an independent state until well into the Roman period. It may have survived by playing off the Roman Empire against Armenia and Parthia, or because it sat

astride an important trade route and was therefore an acceptable trading partner for both Romans and Parthians. Commagenian traders could travel freely through the land of the Parthians and bring exotic spices from India and silk from China. Eventually to facilitate Rome's war with Parthia, particularly the campaigns of Septimius Severus, it became part of the Roman province of Armenia. Tolls on trade were probably a major reason for the wealth of *Zeugma*.

The war with the Parthians resulted in Roman occupation in Commagene.

Among many other Roman relics, there are many Roman bridges on the army's supply routes built by order of Septimius Severus. Many are now just a few broken arches, but one still stands, and carried vehicular traffic until a few years ago. This is the bridge at Cendere over the River Chabinas, east of the Euphrates. The main arch has a span of 34 metres. An inscription records that it was built by *Legio XVI Flavia Firma* in AD 198/200, to replace a bridge built by Vespasian. The inscription also records that it was financed by the four cities of Commagene. The bridge originally had four inscribed columns, one each for the emperor, the empress, and

their sons the two Caesars, Caracalla and Geta – Geta's was presumably removed after his murder and *damnatio* by Caracalla. A fuller history of Commagene can be found in two recent books: a history and an excellent illustrated archaeological guide written by two archaeologists.¹

There are many sites in this part of Turkey of interest to any archaeologist. These include a ninth millennium BC Neolithic site at *Göbekli Tepe*, which the excavator believes to be the world's oldest temple; Bronze Age Assyrian and Neo-Hittite sites; gigantic propaganda monuments by Hellenistic kings; and the remains of perhaps the oldest Islamic university. But for ARA members the greatest draw must be the mosaics of *Zeugma* (there is also a splendid collection of mosaics in the Hatay Museum in Antakya (*Antioch*), which can and should be included in a tour). The *Zeugma* mosaics are now housed in the new Mosaic Museum at the nearby town of Gaziantep. This was opened in September last year by the Prime Minister of Turkey. It is claimed to be the biggest mosaic museum in the world and exhibits over 1,500 square metres of mosaics, as well as archaeological artefacts from *Zeugma*. It cost some £20m, which puts English government support for our heritage to shame.

Accounts of the international rescue excavations have perhaps been unfairly



The Bridge of Septimius Severus at Cendere. A column on the far side, presumably for Geta, is missing. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.



Gaziantep Mosaic Museum: view from the upper gallery, to show a simulation of the interior of a Roman house. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.



Frescoes from the Euphrates House identified as Achilles's lover Deidamia (left) and Penelope (right). Gaziantep Mosaic Museum.

Photo: © Rebecca Newman.



Scene from the story of Queen Pasiphae and the bull: after King Minos fails to sacrifice the white bull sent to him by Poseidon, the god makes Queen Pasiphae (King Minos's wife) lust after the bull. The Queen (seen with her daughter Ariadne) through her wet-nurse instructs Daedalus and his son Icarus to make a wooden cow, with the intention of climbing inside it so the white bull will copulate with her. She thus begot the Minotaur. The Labyrinth is visible in the background. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.

critical of the Turkish government. Before deciding to construct the dam the Turkish government, perhaps prompted by the excavations and campaigning from 1988 onwards of David Kennedy (Professor of Roman History and Archaeology, University of Western Australia) commissioned University of Chicago archaeologist Guillermo Algaze to survey the region to determine how the dam would affect historical and cultural heritage. Algaze established that some 245 areas of historical importance would be submerged. He presented his findings in international scholarly publications and submitted them to the Turkish government, but at first no foreign institution or university heeded Kennedy's urgent call for rescue excavations.

Working largely on their own, local archaeologists from the museum in Gaziantep, the region's principal city, began excavations in 1992. Muammer Güler, the governor of Gaziantep, renewed the call to save *Zeugma* in 1998, channelling funds intended for the building of schools and hospitals to the rescue excavations. "We can build schools and hospitals next year," he explained, "but we can't save *Zeugma*".² Whitehall and local councils please

note. We saw on our tour that the dam has benefited the region. It has helped to foster much-needed improvement of the impoverished south-eastern region of Anatolia, and has contributed to the regeneration and local pride of the city of Gaziantep.

A Turkish company stepped up as a sponsor of the rescue efforts, providing funds for the museum in October 1999. Heavy earth-moving equipment and trucks given by the company sped up the work. The sponsors also brought in a firm specializing in archaeological restoration work, which successfully removed all of the mosaics to the museum. The firms Celal Küçük and Mine Ünsal worked overnight to salvage a Venus mosaic from a subterranean room in imminent danger of collapse. These conservators have now undertaken the work of restoring and preserving these mosaics. By 2000, a third of the site was already under water. The international community did eventually begin a thorough rescue excavation in 2000,



Bronze statue of Mars, second century AD, Gaziantep Mosaic Museum.
Photo: © Dick Osseman.
(The editor would like to thank Mr Osseman for giving the ARA permission to use his picture; more of his images may be seen at <http://www.pbbase.com/dosseman>)

with a \$5m grant from the Packard Foundation. Bear this and *Herculaneum* in mind when you next choose a printer for your computer.

Of course much has been lost as a consequence of the construction of the dam, but paradoxically it has led to the spectacular display of the mosaics. Normally they would have been reburied after excavation, or looted. Attributions in museums around the world such as "said to be from Eastern Turkey" may hide a looted mosaic from *Zeugma*. Instead the new museum does indeed provide a spectacular display. I hope these pictures will give a flavour. Light and airy inside, the lighting is just right. Clever use has been made of part of an upper floor to allow mosaics to be viewed from above. I was also impressed by the simulation of the interior of a Roman house, complete with columns round the mosaic, and with a trompe-l'œil window and view of mountains.

As well as the mosaics there are some unusually well-preserved frescoes, and a spectacular statue of Mars found in the House of Poseidon at *Zeugma*. It is 1.5m high, hollow and made from 2–4mm thick bronze. The eyes were made of silver with a gold inlay for the pupils. Its remarkable preservation is



Oceanus and Tethys mosaic. Hatay Museum, Antakya.

Photo: © Rebecca Newman.

probably due to deliberate burial of the statue for safety prior to the sack of the city in AD253 by the Sassanid King Shapur I. The bouquet of flowers held by the left hand is strange for a statue of Mars. The excavator suggests it alludes to the symbolization of fertility as one of the attributes of Mars. During the spring festival which occurred in the month which bears his name Mars was worshipped with the attributes of earth and fertility.³ Martin Henig suggests it is more likely that the 'bouquet of flowers' is part of the handle of a shield since lost, which would be normal on a statue of Mars.

Not all of the site at Zeugma was flooded, and since 2005 excavations have been carried out by the Zeugma Archaeological Project on parts of the site that remain above water.⁴ An open-air museum is being established there, and we were there just a day or two after the site of the houses was opened to the public under the protective structure seen in my photograph – one of the lightest and least obtrusive I have experienced. The photographs demonstrate an excellent series of internal viewing platforms, and very complex stratigraphy, but as far as I know no interim report is yet available.



Excavations in progress at the House of the Muses, Zeugma. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.



The House of Danae, Zeugma, named after its mosaic. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.

Notes

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- 2 See *Archaeology Magazine* Volume 53 Number 5, September/October 2000, for a full history.
- 3 See Zeugma Interim Reports, *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary series*, n.51, Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 2003.
- 4 See <http://www.zeugmaarchproject.com/index.php/english.html>

Rebecca Newman.



Above: New arrival at the Hatay Museum in Antakya (*Antioch*). Lion from the Neo-Hittite Period (Early Iron Age) from Tell Tayinat. The lion is 1.3 metres tall and 1.6 metres long, probably from a monumental gate complex. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.



The Yakto Mosaic. Fifth century AD, from Harbiye. The central figure is a woman, representing the Great Spirit or Megalopsychia. The hunters are named mythological figures: Narcissus fighting a lion, Meleager fighting tigers, Actaeon fighting a bear (before he saw Artemis!) and Adonis in another bear hunt. Hatay Museum, Antakya. Photo: © Rebecca Newman.

Excavation at Charles Street, Dorchester

Simons Development Ltd and their construction company Cowlin are developing a site on Charles Street, Dorchester (Fig. 1). The final design will include a new set of council offices, a library and a shopping precinct with car parking. Wessex Archaeology are the contract archaeologists selected to achieve the archaeological design of the development process. The initial test pit excavation revealed an infant burial near the earth rampart that backed the town wall.

The development design calls for a minimum of deep but narrow bore pilings to minimise archaeological destruction, with total archaeological examination of the area where destruction of remains was inevitable. This has resulted in a very long and narrow trench, with a maximum depth of two metres to natural surface in an area where there is a natural dip or bowl.

Below the medieval dark earth so common in Dorchester there is a series of very visible robber trenches, which indicates a range of rectilinear rooms, with occasional large spreads of flint nodules in lime mortar left undisturbed at the base of the trenches. The insides of the structure footings were backfilled with puddled chalk at the time of construction. Some fallen wall with painted plaster was found lying beneath stone roof tiles within a room that had an *opus signinum* floor. They found fragments of box tile, infrequent and loose *tesserae* and a partial turned column (Fig. 2) of very similar type to those found at the Roman townhouse on the Colliton Park site. These indicate



Fig. 2. The partial stone column.
Photo: © Wessex Archaeology.

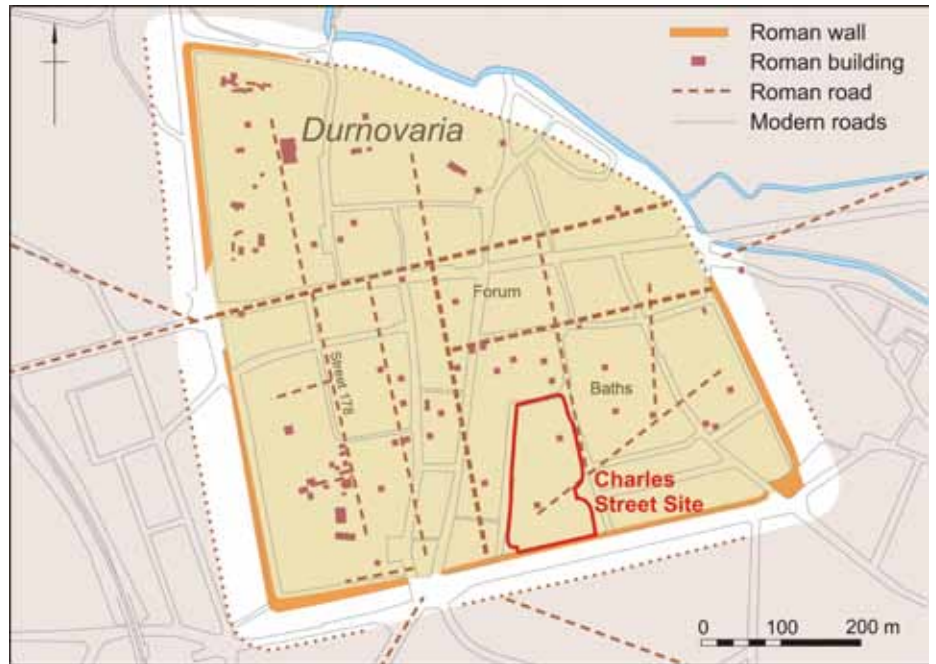


Fig. 1. Map of Roman Dorchester, showing the Charles Street site.
Photo: © Wessex Archaeology.



Fig. 3. The copy Probus coin.
Photo: © Wessex Archaeology.

that this was a property of some substance, possibly a courtyard house or one with a half-colonnaded veranda.

The property alignment seems to fit that of the accepted early military road that cuts the town with no respect to, or for, later *insulae*. This could mean that the road was possibly still in use at a later date than was earlier thought. A single coin was found in a sealed deposit, probably at the time of construction of the main property. It was identified by Dr Nicholas Cook as a copy of a Probus (276–282) barbarous radiate coin (Fig. 3). Other properties seen in the trench are smaller but equally visible, with very firm robber trenches, and on a similar alignment. Further information is available at www.wessexarch.co.uk – select 'Gallery', 'Archaeological Sites' and 'Charles Street Dorset'.

John Bithell.

Obituary

Peter Yates

Sadly, the Director and Membership Secretary received news just before last Christmas from Mrs Helen Newall, daughter of Peter Yates, of her father's passing on the 11th December at his home in the village of Moncarapacho in Portugal, to where he had retired and had been enjoying the tranquillity of the Portuguese countryside. A long-standing member of the Association and former 'Friend of the Roman Research Trust', Peter was well known to the many older members of the Association from the days when he regularly attended our tours and other events. We passed on our sincere condolences to Helen and her family.

Spotlight on: Lunt Roman Fort

Editor's note: *Lunt Roman Fort is one of the sites included in this year's Long Weekend Summer Tour (see p24).*

The Lunt Roman Fort at Baginton just outside Coventry has been much overlooked in the world of archaeology in recent years but is an important site for several reasons. Firstly it deviates from the playing card shape of almost every other Roman fort, whether timber or stone, in that its eastern wall has been curved to accommodate a feature that is unique in Roman Britain: a *gyrus*. This circular structure (Fig. 1), which has been reconstructed on the site in the form of a circular timber palisade, suggests the presence of a sizeable contingent of cavalry at the fort. Equestrian fittings, found at the site during excavations which took place between 1966–73, suggest that its use was for training horses and cavalymen, not as more fanciful suggestions (and doubtless generations of school children) would have it, as a training ground for gladiators or even an amphitheatre.

Secondly, the fort (which was probably first constructed around the time of the Boudiccan rebellion in AD 60–61) has been partly reconstructed in its turf and timber form, offering a tantalising glimpse of what the majority of Roman forts in Britain would have looked like in the first century AD.

One other intriguing feature, again deviating from the standard playing card plan, is the lack of evidence for a gate in the north wall of the fort. The undulating terrain at that end of the site together with the presence of the River Sowe perhaps negated the

need for a major north-facing gateway, normally essential to the symmetry of a Roman fort. All in all, Vitruvius would have been left scratching his head at this one. Perhaps we should see it as a demonstration of the Roman army's ability to adapt to the terrain in which it found itself. The fort would have been ideally positioned on the wooded slope from which the name 'Lunt' is thought to derive, in a strategic position overlooking the river.

Today the site is approached through the eastern gate (Fig. 2), which would have led onto the *via principalis*, and was set further south than was usual in the eastern facing wall, to accommodate the *gyrus*. The imposing timber gateway stands to its (assumed) full height, having been reconstructed between 1966 and 1977 by the officers and men of the 31 Base Workshop Squadron Royal Engineers and prisoners from HMP Leicester. The reconstruction was very much the brainchild of site archaeologist Brian Hobley, who carried out excavations at 'the Lunt', as the site is known, between 1966 and 1971. He was ahead of his time in wanting to see the fort reconstructed as an archaeological park for the benefit of archaeologists and students alike. Many other Roman sites could benefit from Hobley's inspirational thinking, which turned the site of a lost timber fort into a thought-provoking attraction.

The east gate, like the other reconstructions at the site, is set in the original post holes of the excavated area. Its design is based on forts from the years AD 64–78, using evidence from Trajan's column, similar sites and from Roman accounts written by military personnel. As such it can only ever be speculative, but the double-gated entrance topped with a wooden palisade with steps up to a lookout platform is imposing.

A long section of the fort wall was reconstructed either side of the gateway. The section in the north-east corner of the fort has a timber walkway and crenellated parapet. The rampart has turf walls front and back and is filled in with earth. A V-shaped ditch was

dug on the outward facing side of the ramparts, on the site of an original ditch. Archaeologists have been surprised at how well this structure has survived since its reconstruction in the 1960s. Originally the defensive structures would have surrounded the entire fort, with a double V-shaped ditch or *vallum* to deter attackers. The ditch had a narrow channel at the bottom which it has been suggested would have served as an 'ankle-breaker', to stop potential attackers in their tracks.

Once you pass through the reconstructed gateway the other rebuilt features of the fort are immediately visible. Just to the north of the gateway sits the *gyrus*. This circular structure was originally 34m in diameter and possessed a funnelled entrance and two gateways. Today the wooden stockade lends the fort a dramatic feel. The *gyrus* was not an original part of the fort but was added in the second phase of construction, perhaps between AD 64–78: an operation which involved shortening two of the fort's barrack blocks. Stratigraphic evidence suggests that the *gyrus* was also the last part of the fort to be dismantled, sometime between AD 78–80. It has been suggested that it was used as a storage depot and stockade for soldiers as they dismantled the rest of the fort, possibly on the march northwards during the campaigns of governor Julius Agricola.



Fig. 1. The *gyrus*, Lunt Roman Fort.

Photo: © Martin Elvery.

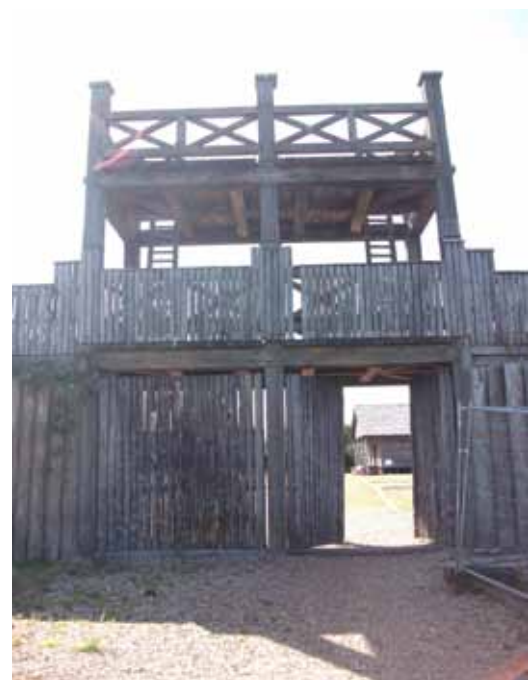


Fig. 2. View of the east gate from exterior of Lunt Roman Fort.

Photo: © Martin Elvery.

The other major reconstructed feature at the Lunt is the granary (*horreum*, Fig. 3). The post-holes underneath this structure suggested a date of AD 64–78 for its construction; an earlier structure believed to be a *praetorium* has been located underneath it. The *horreum* was built at a similar time to two other granaries that were situated just inside the northern rampart.

The reconstructed *horreum* is impressive, with a covered entrance-way and its floor raised on wooden posts. Inside, the *horreum* is the hidden gem of the Lunt: a well-presented museum containing key finds from the site, a gift shop and reconstructions of a Roman foot soldier and a cavalryman, complete with weaponry (Fig. 4). Around the top of the walls runs a colour frieze depicting scenes from Trajan's column that provided evidence for the likely design of structures found at the Lunt.

While some of the artefacts on display in the museum are replicas, others are originals found at the Lunt in the 1960s. The most striking of these is a beautiful set of blue-tinted beads, known as melon beads because of the sliced scoring on their surface. The beads have been placed on a string to reconstruct a beautiful necklace (Fig. 5). This fine artefact was found in one of the barrack blocks immediately west of the *via praetoria*; it has been speculated that this could be evidence for the presence of a commander's wife at the fort. A beautiful tiny Flavian-period intaglio, made from the gemstone cornelian, is also present. Engraved with an image of Fortuna, the goddess of luck, this fine object may have been used as a mark for wax seals on correspondence.



Fig. 5. Melon bead necklace, Lunt Roman Fort.
Photo: © Martin Elvery.

Evidence on display for the presence of horsemen at the site includes a bronze phallic pendant, which has fittings for a horse's harness, and a temporary horseshoe or *hipposandal*, found in the commander's building. Many military fittings such as rivets, buckles and harnesses were also found, as well as an S-shaped clasp for attaching a chain-mail cape. A bronze *patera* is another impressive exhibit.

Other features on show at the Lunt include gravel paths representing building interiors, concrete lines marking excavated walls and concrete pads for post holes of many of the other buildings inside the fort, such as the commanding officer's house, several sets of barracks and the headquarters building or *principia*, where the military standards and treasury would have been kept. Lunt Roman Fort provides an informative and memorable experience – and its evocative setting is a lovely location for a picnic on a summer's day.

Hobley's excavation

In his 1973 report Hobley used evidence from stratification and coin finds to divide the occupation of the fort into four periods.

He suggested that the first period of occupation was between AD 60–64. From this period Hobley located many interior buildings but only found a small area of defences, to the east of the site.

Hobley suggested that the *gyrus* was built in the second phase of the first occupation, perhaps in AD 64 itself, and therefore posited that a contingent of auxiliary cavalry moved to the fort at this time, possibly a *cohors equitata quingenaria*.

Hobley identified a second level of occupation which he dated to AD 64–78. In this period new barracks were constructed, overlaying earlier buildings in the southern half of the fort. Also added were a *principia*, an officers' house and what Hobley considered to be an ablutions block but might be a *valetudinarium* (a hospital, see **ARA News** 26, pp18–20 for more on such



Fig. 3. The *horreum* reconstruction, Lunt Roman Fort.

Photo: © Martin Elvery.



Fig. 4. Reconstruction of a foot soldier and an auxiliary cavalryman.

Photo: © The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum.

structures). The new barracks may have been built for the cavalry contingent.

Hobley suggested that during the next phase of development, which he put between AD 78–80, the fort may have been in a state of demolition and that the squads responsible for packing up the fort may have been accommodated in the *gyrus*. Following this, Hobley tentatively suggests a short period of re-occupation in the period AD 260–268. Substantial ditches enclosing most of the original fort site and a southern gateway were the only structures found dating from this period.

Coin evidence has proved to be the most accurate way of dating the fort's development. 30 bronze coins of the emperor Nero and 22 bronzes of Claudius were found by Hobley's teams. This led him to suggest an initial date of occupation for AD 60 – late enough for the Claudian coins to come into circulation. He also posited that construction of the fort may have coincided directly with the need to deal with the disturbances that erupted during the Boudiccan rebellion in AD 60–61.

Beyond this, 19 coins of Vespasian have been found and one of Titus. Only one

of the Vespasianic coins and the coin of Titus date from post-AD 75, so Hobley suggested these were isolated losses and not a sign of consistent loss during occupation. This, and the fact that there were no coins for the reign of Domitian, led him to conclude that the fort was probably abandoned sometime in or around AD 80 as the main forces of the Roman Army moved further north with Julius Agricola. A magnificent hoard of 37 Trajanic coins was excavated from a ditch by the eastern gateway. This again is thought to be an isolated burial and not evidence of further occupation. This fine hoard of silver is on display in the Lunt museum.

Only four further coins were found at the site, one each belonging to the reigns of Gallienus (AD 260–268), Victorinus (AD 269–271), Carausius (AD 286–293) and Magnentius (AD 350–353). Hobley suggests that these coins probably do not indicate substantial occupation; he allows that the Gallienus coin, along with a decorated rim of a piece of grey ware pottery of the Wappenbury type that was independently dated to the late third century, suggest that the fort may have been reoccupied briefly at this time. He stated in the conclusions to his 1973 report that the Gallienus coin was found in the soft bedding fill between sandstone packing in the post hole of a gateway, which indicates it was lost at the time of construction rather than demolition.

To this can be added the evidence for what Hobley calls the period IV

defences, with the new ditch enclosure and southern gate which overlay the earlier fort. It is though impossible to say exactly what form this later occupation may have taken.

Hobley, however, goes as far as to suggest that this last period of occupation may coincide with the turbulent period when the home-grown emperor Postumus rebelled against the emperor Gallienus in AD 259 and established the Gallic Empire (*Imperium Galliarum*), an independent empire in Britain, Gaul and Spain. This rebellion continued until the emperor Aurelian reunited the Empire in AD 274.

Alternatively he suggested that the reoccupation may have been due to incursions by Irish and Saxon sea raiders who were penetrating deep inland during the third century; again, this can only be conjecture.

The dating evidence can only ever remain speculative; future excavations may yet shed more light on the turbulent and tantalizing history of the province in the third century and the rebel empire of Postumus. What is certain is that Hobley had the vision to create a permanent record of what was essentially a temporary Roman fort, constructed during the fast-moving tide of occupation during the first century AD. The Lunt is a fascinating insight into Roman military engineering.

Martin Elvery.

Visiting Lunt Roman Fort

Lunt Roman Fort is open from 10:30am to 4:30pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays from April to October, and also on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during Coventry school holidays (28 July to 6 September 2012). Entrance is free to ARA members.

Phone: 024 7678 6142

Email: luntromanfort@coventry.gov.uk

Website: www.luntromanfort.org

Holidaying on Vectis Insula

The Isle of Wight is one of the most attractive and interesting places along the south coast, and has been a popular holiday destination since the 19th century, when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert built their palatial retreat of Osborne House. As well as medieval sites and spectacular landscapes, there are a number of Roman attractions, especially the villas at Brading and Newport (free to ARA members).

ARA members Dave and Tricia Reeves moved to the island on their retirement. Recently, Dave was appointed Chairman of the Friends of Brading Roman Villa. The couple have converted a large Victorian house at Sandown, which incorporates modernised self-catering apartments for holidays. The house is only two minutes' walk to the beach and just over a mile from Brading villa. Dave and Tricia are offering apartments to ARA members at an exclusive 10% discount. To obtain further details, visit their website: www.99stationavenue.co.uk

What's on

These events are not run by ARA. Most require booking; please contact the organisers if you wish to attend. If you know of a Roman-themed talk or event, please tell the Editor.

Mosaics – The Broader Picture,

Brading, Isle of Wight. 17 March 2012, 2:30pm. An illustrated talk by Dr Stephen Cosh on the meaning and inspiration for the mosaics in the Brading Roman villa and a consideration of who laid them.

Also, **Orphic Halls**, 1 September 2012, 3pm (provisional). An illustrated talk by **Bryn Walters** on the proliferation of 'Orpheus mosaics' in Roman Britain, with an emphasis on the detached villa buildings containing what he calls 'Orphic Halls'. A buffet will be provided.

These are both fund-raising events to support the preservation of the villa, organised by the 'Friends of Brading Roman Villa'. Tickets are £10 to non-members and £8 to ARA members and 'Friends'; book by telephoning 01983 611298.

Roman Army School, Durham.

31 March–4 April 2012. The Hadrianic Society will be holding its annual Roman Army School, a residential course meeting in Durham, open to anyone interested in the Roman Army. Non-residential places also available.

Topics include: Septimius Severus; Emperor Maurice; Roman Egypt; cavalry tactics; Vegetius; Heraclius. For further details apply to Mrs Pat Burgess, 59 Station Road, Golcar, Huddersfield, HD7 4ED or you can download an application form at www.hadrianicsociety.com.

Investigating the Roman archaeology of Kent,

Rutherford College, University of Kent, Canterbury. 14 April 2012, 2pm to 5pm. Talks on excavations at East Farleigh and Folkestone Roman villas, Reculver and Dover forts, and Roman Thanet. A joint event held by the Kent Archaeological Society and the Council for Kentish Archaeology. Free for Friends of the CKA, Kent Archaeological Review subscribers and members of KAS, £5 for non-members. Contact CKA, Dick Ansell, 7 Sandy Ridge, Borough Green, TH15 8HP.

The cost of living in Rome, Woodford County High School, Woodford Green. 11 June 2012, 7:45pm. Illustrated talk by Amelia Dowler of the British Museum. All welcome, voluntary donation appreciated from non-members. Contact: West Essex Archaeological Group, Anne Stacey, 020 8989 9294.

From Julius Caesar to Claudius: the Late Iron Age/Roman transition

Report on a conference at the University of Leicester, 5 November 2011

This was the latest of what is becoming an annual event centred on research and display of the Hallaton Treasure, and which is now attracting an ever-wider audience. The conference was introduced by Jackie Dickinson, Chairman of Leicestershire County Council, and Professor Colin Haselgrove of the Department of Archaeology & Ancient History at Leicester University.

Marilyn Hockey and Fleur Shearman of the British Museum Department of Conservation & Scientific Research gave a fascinating presentation on conservation of the Hallaton Helmet, originally excavated in two blocks of soil (see *ARA News* 25, p27). The smaller block contained fragments of the helmet and approximately 600 coins. The larger contained mainly the helmet but also included further coins, animal bones and extremely thin, folded sheets of silver that were most probably to be used as overlay. The iron helmet appears to have originally been covered in such a silver overlay, which in turn was gilded, though most of this has been lost.

Dr Simon James of Leicester University dealt with further interpretation of the helmet. It would have been worn on parade rather than in battle. Only a few such helmets are known, two of which have been recovered in excellent condition from the River Waal in Germany. There are no less than four right-hand and three left-hand cheek pieces, all depicting a mounted warrior (the Emperor?) riding down a defeated

barbarian, a common motif throughout the Roman Empire; what was really found, therefore, is various parts of four helmets. The helmet also has an elaborate brow guard depicting a female figure flanked by lions *passant*, which Dr James speculated might reflect worship of the Goddess Cybele, who was popular with the Roman army. The Hallaton Helmet was returned from the British Museum in January 2012, and is now on show at Harborough Museum in Market Harborough.

Continuing the input from Leicester University, Frank Hargrave considered the significance of shrines such as that at Hallaton in the context of *oppida* (Iron Age towns). Of undoubted relevance are ritual landscapes in Ireland often with walled, only partly defended sites, with evidence of feasting and often associated with high quality La Tène ware. There are obvious parallels between these and Hallaton, but they also occur scattered across northern France, central Germany and as far east as the Czech Republic.

Alex Brogden, a professional silversmith, then considered the Hallaton Silver Bowl. This was found together with an unused silver ingot. Both bowl and ingot are 85% pure silver content, but investigation has shown they are from different origins. The bowl was made from bullion but the ingot from melted down coins. Alex had been asked to produce a replica bowl and presented illustrations of this process, which is called 'peening', involving hammer working of silver sheet on a flat surface. We all expected to be told that this was a pretty lengthy process, so were suitably surprised to be informed that it was the work of about half a day.

After lunch, the conference considered a number of wider issues. Professor Mike Fulford of Reading University took us through recent excavation of the pre-Roman Iron Age *oppida* at *Calleva*, modern Silchester. Excavators found large-scale pottery imports from the Roman world dating from the mid-first century BC onwards. While most of the coins found were from Catavellaunian mints to the east of

Atrebatian lands, there were also some from northern central France, an original Atrebatian heartland. Other finds included a relatively large number of coin moulds, indicating an Atrebatian mint at *Calleva*. There were also considerable livestock remains, horse harnesses and a huge array of spindle whorls.

Dr Tom Moore of Durham University considered a potential history of the Dobunnian *oppida* at Bagendon, Gloucestershire. It would appear that a number of kings or chieftains existed contemporaneously, and this might explain their overlapping coin distributions – as well as the famous reference in Dio Cassius, where some of the 'Bodunni' are described as being subject to the Catavellauni and thus the most ready people to come over to the Romans. Excavations at Bagendon itself revealed evidence of a scattered settlement and horse corralling, possibly a 'Royal' estate but probably seasonal occupation. It was emphasised that there is only evidence for the site's use in the pre-Roman Iron Age.

Finally, Andy Taylor of Thames Valley Archaeology and Kelly Abbott of Wiltshire Conservation told us of the Iron Age Warrior Burial discovered at North Bersted, near Bognor Regis, West Sussex. The warrior was discovered with a splendid array of grave goods, including a helmet and an amazing cuirass, both in copper alloy, and an iron sword that had been ritually 'killed' by being bent in half. The cuirass consists of an ornamental lattice that probably fitted across the shoulders; if so, it could not possibly have had a use other than ceremonial. Both the helmet and cuirass are extremely fragile, and Kelly's well-illustrated account of the highly delicate conservation process had us on the edge of our seats. It was a fitting end to an excellent conference.

Stuart Bailey.

A book on the Hallaton Treasure by Vicki Score, *Hoards, Hounds and Helmets: A conquest-period ritual site at Hallaton, Leicestershire*, will be published soon (ISBN 9780956017963, hardback, £30, University of Leicester School of Archaeology and Ancient History, 320pp).



Fig. 1. The Hallaton Helmet.

Photo: © Leicestershire County Council.

The imagery of the Hallaton Helmet – Decoration depicting Roman victory revealed by restoration

The Hallaton Helmet's restoration allows us to glimpse something of the grandeur of this early first century AD creation, and the new reconstruction drawing by Robert Whale (Fig. 1) further elucidates this.

The cavalry helmet is one of the earliest discovered in Britain and also the only one to retain much of its silver-gilt plating, which in itself is a rare survival. The piece was fashioned from sheet iron that was then covered with a thin decorated sheet of silver that in itself was part gilded. When new it must have been a superb creation and one of the highest quality.

The decorative scheme is one of Roman victory. The bowl of the helmet is clasped by a wreath of bay laurel, the symbol of martial victory, whilst vegetal decoration is also present on the neck guard. The cheek and ear guards portray a triumphant rider accompanied by the goddess Victoria who holds another wreath above his head symbolising his triumph. Below the horse sits a figure in the pose of a mourner (Fig. 2). This pose with the hand raised to the cheek, whilst the torso is clasped by the arm in a self-comforting gesture, appears in Roman funerary art and may be seen on the great Horkstow mosaic now in Hull Museum where a triton comforts a grieving Nereid below the medallion holding the scene portraying the death of Penthesilea.

Although restored in the drawing as male, the seated figure on the cheek guards is without doubt female and wearing a woman's tunic, the folds of which may be seen clearly behind her left arm. She sits next to an abandoned shield and helmet, the arms of the conquered, and she represents a defeated province. Recalling how Britannia was later portrayed on coinage with shield and arms, it is even possible (if the

helmet does not predate the conquest) that not only does this show a province disarmed but that it shows Britannia herself. The earliest representation known so far of Britannia is from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias and shows her defeated by Claudius.

The most notable aspect of the Hallaton Helmet, however, is the brow guard. This is scalloped with its upper edge bordered by a ribbon-tied garland, the twisted ends of which continue around its lower edge. Dominating the guard is a female bust flanked by two lions with prey. This is surely intended to represent Cybele the great mother goddess. Originally the mother goddess of Asia, she was imported into Rome from Phrygia in 210BC in the form of a sacred stone, as a result of a prophecy that by doing so Rome would ultimately be victorious over Carthage. Her chariot in iconography was drawn by lions and she is depicted enthroned and flanked by them. Rome knew her as Magna Mater, and by Imperial times she had been transformed in the pantheon as being a Trojan goddess and the helper of Aeneas, the ancestor in folklore of the Roman people, to reach Italy. Apart from her connection with victory and as being a protector of the Trojan's descendents, Cybele was a natural choice for a cavalry helmet. During the early Imperial period the *Lusus Troiae* (the Troy Game) was widely promoted, remembering Julius Caesar's claim to Trojan ancestry. This was an aristocratic



Fig. 1. A reconstruction of the Hallaton Helmet. (Originally the Cybele may have worn a mural crown on her hair.) Courtesy of Bob Whale.

show of skill in conducting complex group equestrian drills, with much labyrinthine interweaving of horsemen. It is not by chance that parade helmets such as that from Crosby Garrett, with its Trojan prince's face and Phrygian cap, or this from Hallaton refer to sacred Troy in their imagery. Whether or not they were all actually used in *Lusus Troiae* or not, they would have given the wearer the kudos of an aristocratic background.

This year's ARA Long Weekend Summer Tour will include a visit to Harborough Museum to view the newly restored Hallaton Helmet (see p24).

Anthony Beeson.



Fig. 2. Left, a conserved cheekpiece (cf. *ARA News* 25, p27). Right, the author's identification of a female figure representing a defeated province (white), her shield (blue) and helmet (red).

Photo: © Leicestershire County Council.



THE LONDON MITHRAEUM ON THE MOVE

The first steps in the restoration of the London Mithraeum (see *ARA* 20, p71) have taken place with the start of a dismantling process on 21st November 2011 that will see the ruins restored to their original site and, eventually, a more faithful reconstruction than had previously been achieved completed.

Found during excavations conducted by Professor WF Grimes, Director of the Museum of London in 1952, the Mithraeum was, perhaps, the most famous of all Roman discoveries in the city during the 20th century. Its discovery was pure serendipity and the result of Grimes wishing to record a full section across the Walbrook valley in an effort to clarify the nature of this important feature in the topography of Roman London. The discovery engendered a huge amount of public interest in post-war Britain, and resulted in a press campaign that in itself generated heated debate over the preservation of the site. This was further fuelled by the discovery of the wonderful cache of sculptures that had been buried in the temple. The head of Mithras himself appeared on the final day of the 'dig'. The temple to Mithras was originally built during the mid-third century, but the main group of sculptures seems to have been buried during the first quarter of the fourth century when it fell out of use as a Mithraeum. The religious life of the building continued well into the Christian era and it is now suggested that the worshippers were followers of Bacchus.

Its original site lay on the east bank of the now covered Walbrook stream. As the idea of preserving the structure *in situ* failed and a new building (Bucklersbury House) was to be erected on the site, the temple was dismantled at that time and the Roman building material put into storage. For a while in 1954 it was re-erected on a temporary site in an angle between Budge Row and Sise Lane in the City. In 1962 the building was reconstructed on a windswept podium at Temple Court, adjacent to Queen Victoria Street. It is

some 90 metres from its original site, nine metres above its original level, set in modern cement mortar and adorned with its now notorious 'crazy paving' flooring. It was hoped and intended that in 2009 the temple could be relocated back to its original location beside the ancient Walbrook, as part of the demolition of Bucklersbury House, and the creation of the new Walbrook Square development. This project, however, ran into difficulties and faltered. In December 2010, Bloomberg LP purchased the Walbrook Square site to build its new European headquarters building. Following the granting of Listed Building consent for the dismantling of the 1960s Temple of Mithras reconstruction, specialist stone masons have been commissioned by Bloomberg LP to carefully extract the Roman building materials from the 1960s cement mortar. Then for a second time the material will be moved to safe storage. Finally Bloomberg LP will return the temple to its original Roman location and it will be presented to the public in a more historically accurate guise. Upon completion of the new Walbrook Square development, the restored ruins of the Temple of Mithras will be displayed in a specially designed and publicly accessible museum within the building.

Museum of London Archaeology press release – 17. 11. 2011

IMPORTANT SPANISH MOSAIC IRREPARABLY RUINED BY ART THIEVES

An important Spanish mosaic has been very badly damaged by thieves who have stolen three panels from the composition. They broke into the unguarded Roman villa outside of the tiny northern Spanish town of Baños de Valdearados and brutally hacked out the panels of a fifth-century floor mosaic dedicated to the god Bacchus. The theft was discovered on 28th December by tourists visiting the Roman villa of Santa Cruz. They noticed that several of the wooden slats of the cover building that encloses the pavement were missing and that sections of the mosaic were gone. The site had last been visited on 23rd and the pavement was then intact. There is no security at the villa during the winter and visits are only

possible through ringing a local telephone number for admittance by the key holder. The thieves easily gained entry into the wooden cover building by removing some of the wooden slats that comprise its walls, and then used hammers and chisels to smash out the panels. The loss of one panel is particularly upsetting. This was a central figurative scene that depicted Bacchus in Triumph (Fig. 1). Its loss is irreparable. Also stolen were two rectangular panels from the border at opposing ends of the mosaic. These each showed dogs called Notus and Boreas (the ancient names for the South and North winds) chasing a stag and a doe. Two remaining side panels escaped the disaster and portray the East and West winds personified by Eurus, a dog chasing a hare and Zefyrus (sic), a dog chasing a gazelle.

Even worse than the theft is the fact that the looters must have broken up the largest Bacchus panel in order to fit it through the entry hole that they had made into the cover building.

The floor was formerly one of the best preserved Roman mosaics of the Iberian Peninsula, rare not only for its size of 66 square meters (710 square feet), but also for its excellent state of preservation. At its centre was the rare depiction of two Bacchic scenes depicting the god's betrothal or marriage to Ariadne and his Triumphal return from India; it is paralleled by only two other known mosaics, one of which is in Córdoba, while the other one is in Israel. The two scenes are superimposed. The surviving marriage panel shows a drunken Bacchic procession with the tottering god leaning on the shoulders of his beloved young satyr Ampelos whilst clasping Ariadne by the wrist. The stolen panel (2.50m long and 2.22m high) represents the Dionysiac/Bacchic Triumph, with



Fig. 1. The central panel of the mosaic, showing the Marriage and Triumph of Bacchus.
© Anthony Beeson.

three figures participating: Bacchus, Ariadne and Pan, who appear on a background of decorative motifs: birds, Gordian knots, baskets and geometrical motifs. Bacchus is standing in his chariot, which is being pulled by two dark-coloured panthers, while Pan plays upon a *syrix* and Ariadne has to hand a woven *flabellum* or flag fan with which to fan her beloved.

It is now believed that the only recourse to safeguard what remains of the floor is to remove what is left of the mosaic and to take it to a museum.

The Roman villa of Santa Cruz was discovered in November 1972 during ground levelling work. Excavations only uncovered an estimated quarter of the site but revealed an elaborate villa with at least ten rooms, including baths heated by a hypocaust system, and four halls. The home is typical of late Imperial period (between the fourth and sixth centuries) *latifundia*, or great agricultural estates manned by vast numbers of slaves and owned by absentee landlords.

An excellent and recommended paper in English on the mosaic as it was found, written by Spanish mosaic specialist Guadalupe López Monteagudo, is available on-line at <http://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/19459/1/monteagudo.pdf>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2081175/Thieves-chisel-Roman-mosaic-Exceptional-Spanish-archaeological-site-thought-targeted-order.html#ixzz1jWzt9q5h>
Times (p14) – 12. 10. 1954

EXCAVATIONS AT CAMELON DISCOVER SIXTY PAIRS OF SANDALS

Excavation during the construction of a new supermarket at Camelon, near Falkirk in Scotland, has revealed further information about two Roman forts that were last excavated in the 1970s. The forts date from the Flavian and Antonine periods, and the latter would have been used while the Antonine Wall was being built. Boats would have come to the forts from the River Carron.

The Camelon site, home to the former Wrangler factory, has been cleared to make way for a Tesco store by contractors Barr Construction. AOC Archaeology, who excavated the land for them, uncovered a varied collection of finds including Samian pottery, trumpet brooches, a Roman axe and spearhead, coins and a remarkable

collection of leather shoes found dumped in a ditch near the gateway to the second-century fort. The footwear, comprising some 120 items, was presumably discarded by the soldiers. "I think they dumped the shoes over the side of the road leading into the fort," said Martin Cook, chief archaeologist on the site. "Subsequently the ditch silted up with organic material, which preserved the shoes." Despite being discarded, the hobnailed shoes are in relatively good condition.

The supermarket site includes the remains of a first-century Roman fort and ancient field systems, but excavations have centred on the area of the younger Antonine fort. Martin Cook describes this as "a really substantial structure, with stone walls and three or four ditches around it". Two previous excavations at the site, one in the 1900s and the other in the 1970s, also found evidence of Roman occupation. The fort was at the north-west frontier of the Empire and would have had a significant strategic role, as well as being in one of the most heavily populated areas of Scotland in Roman times. "The Roman fort at Camelon would have been one of the most important forts in Scotland. It had a port and was in a central location," Mr Cook said. AOC Archaeology has dug less than 5% of the fort, leaving much to be found by future generations of archaeologists. Most of the site will be preserved *in situ*. "The main body of the fort is on the other side, the north side, of the railway which shows just how big it really is," Mr Cook added. The new Tesco supermarket is to be built on the east side of the site to allow the archaeology to be preserved under new car parks.

The Camelon excavation team is hoping for evidence that could challenge the accepted date of the Roman abandonment of the region, but so far this has proved elusive.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-tayside-central-15165914>
Falkirk Herald – 30. 9. 2011
National Geographic News – 10. 10. 2011

POSSIBLE ROMAN BROTHEL TOKEN FOUND IN LONDON

An extremely rare bronze token claimed to be one used for admission to a brothel in *Londinium* has been found by pastry chef Regis Cursan whilst metal detecting on the banks of the Thames

near Putney Bridge in West London. The token is smaller than the modern ten pence piece and has on the reverse side the numeral XIII (14) and on the obverse a depiction of a couple engaged in a sexual act. They are depicted as on a garlanded and mattressed couch. The heavier, active, figure is kneeling and about to penetrate the other from behind. The second passive figure is slighter and presumably represents a youth or a woman. He or she supports themselves on their elbows and grasps the couch end whilst appear to be turning towards the man. What seems to be a leg belonging to the passive participant is raised behind the active partner suggesting a side penetration, somewhat similar to one of the positions depicted in the two scenes of men and youths on the Warren Cup in the British Museum.

Whilst there is some delight in thinking that this is a brothel token, it must be said that although these items do appear throughout the Roman world, none, to my knowledge, has been found in a building that could without doubt be claimed to be a brothel. The other suggestion is that this might well be a gaming piece and that the number is actually the obverse side and the sex scene just reverse decoration as with a modern pack of cards. A row ticket to the theatre or amphitheatre might be an alternative suggestion.

However, even if it is not a brothel ticket it is the first such example known from Britannia and a welcome addition to the province's corpus of erotic art. As a brothel token the numeral XIII has been interpreted as the cost of the token at 14 asses (about a day's pay for a labourer in the first century AD) or the number of the sexual position requested by the customer from the brothel's menu. It must be said, however, that the same position appears elsewhere on other such tokens but with different numbers, so sexual positions were obviously not standardised in the brothels of the Empire!

The token has been donated to the Museum of London, where it has been put on display for a limited period. Members are advised to ring the Museum to confirm that it is still on show before travelling there for a special visit.

National Geographic News 10. 10. 2011
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/8991212/Roman-brothel-token-discovered-in-Thames.html>

Latin epigraphy: How to read and understand Roman inscriptions, Part II

This is Part II of a two-part article on how to read Latin inscriptions. In Part I, (ARA News 26) I discussed the variety of inscriptions that exist and their historic value, and I provided some background information that can help when reading and interpreting inscriptions. In this part, there is practical advice on how to read inscriptions, illustrated by specific examples, followed by a bibliography, and a list of common abbreviations and expressions.¹

Introduction

The inscriptions selected for this article are all carved in stone, as they are the most commonly found, and the easiest to read for a novice. The letter forms in themselves should not cause problems to the reader, as they are the same capital letters that we still use in upper case.

However, note that the Romans did not have separate letters for I and J, or for U and V: this distinction between the vowel and the consonant started in the Renaissance. In classical Latin, I/J was pronounced like the French or Italian 'i' (somewhere between 'ship' and 'sheep') whether it was used as a vowel or a consonant: 'ibi' or 'iniuria' (spelt 'injuria' from the Renaissance onwards, and the origin of our word 'injury', but pronounced 'in-yew-riah'). Unlike their Renaissance forebears, modern editors respect classical usage and usually transcribe the word as 'iniuria'.

Similarly, U and V were interchangeable, representing the Italian vowel 'u' (as in the English 'book') or the English consonant 'w'; this sound was written as a 'V' in capitals, and as our 'u' in certain 'lower case' book scripts. Thus VOTVM is the same as 'uotum' (pronounced 'wo-toom'). Some editors nowadays use 'u' throughout to respect classical usage, but many modernise the spelling to 'votum' which is easier on the eye for the reader.

A reminder that the letter 'C' originally stood for the sound 'g'; this archaic use is found in the first names C. and CN. which stand for 'Gaius' and 'Gnaeus' respectively. Thus 'C. IVLIVS CAESAR' will normally be transcribed as 'G(aius) Iulius Caesar' in the original Latin text, though English commentary will then refer to him as 'Julius'.

Unlike English, Latin is an inflected language, where the end of words changes according to the grammatical role of the word in the sentence. In the phrase 'the master hits the slave', the master is the *subject* of the verb 'hits' and the poor slave is the *object* of his action. In Latin, the word for 'master' would end in '-us' (*dominus*) and the word for slave in '-um' (*servum*) to reflect their relationship with the verb. Similarly, in the expression 'the son of the master', the word for master would end in '-i' (*domini*), and in 'he gives a present to the slave', or 'the work is done by the slave', the word for slave would end in '-o' (*servo*). These are known as 'case endings', and there are separate endings for the same word in the plural, as well as numerous other endings for other types of nouns. Adjectives follow the pattern of the nouns. If you don't know Latin, it is well to be aware of this, so that you are not put off when you find the same word with different endings (e.g. in the first two examples, you will find the word for 'soldier' as 'miles' or 'militi', because in the first example the soldier is the subject of the inscription, in the second, the inscription is dedicated to him). Verbs too have many endings, to a much greater degree than English. Knowing even the bare elements of Latin

grammar (how to decline a noun and conjugate a verb, even at a basic level) would take you to a whole new level of understanding, enabling you to grasp the relationships between the words (who is doing what to whom?). Fortunately, for basic formulaic texts, whose structure remains the same, you can get the general sense without having to turn to Latin grammar!

Three detailed examples of how to read inscriptions (from the British Museum)

Pudens tombstone (Fig. 1)

T(itus) Valerius T(iti) f(ilius)
Cla(udia tribu) Pudens Sau(aria)
mil(es) leg(ionis) II A(diutricis) P(iae)
F(idelis)
c(enturia) Dossenni
Proculi a(nnorum) XXX
aera [V]I h(eres) d(e) s(uo) p(osuit)
h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

Titus Valerius Pudens, son of Titus, of the Claudian voting-tribe, from Savaria, a soldier of the Second Legion Adjutrix Pia Fidelis, in the century of Dossenius Proculus, aged 30, of six years service. His heir at his own expense set this up. Here he lies.

Note the conventions used: in curved brackets are the letters supplied by the editor when expanding the abbreviations into complete words. In square brackets is a letter, the 'V' in 'VI', which is missing in the original and which the editor has reconstructed based on his own observations and knowledge. These conventions are standard, generally used by all scholars.

The heavy abbreviations may seem unintelligible at first, but imagine abbreviating all the formulaic language in English. You might end up with something like:

T. Valerius Pudens, s. of T.,
of Cla. from Sav.,
sold. of the 2nd leg. A. P. F.
of the c. of Dossenius
Proculus, 30 y.o.
etc.

If these abbreviations and formulae were used for every soldier's tomb, you would soon know them by heart. The only variable information is that



Fig. 1. Tombstone found in Lincoln, now in the British Museum (RIB 258 – see bibliography).

Photo: © Marigold Norbye.

¹ I wish to thank my colleague Dr Benet Salway for his helpful suggestions and advice.

pertaining to the individual soldier, and this tends to be the least abbreviated. If most members of a particular unit came from the same area, even that place name (here Savaria) got shortened.

The Latin abbreviations in this inscription are fairly typical:

- First names are almost always abbreviated: here Titus and his father Titus become 'T'.
- 'Son/daughter of': 'filius/filia' becomes 'f'.
- All male citizens belonged to a voting-tribe of Rome (if, like here, they were from outside Rome, they were still associated with one of the original Roman tribes): there were 35 of these tribes, each with their standard three-letter abbreviation. (Full list in Keppie, *Understanding Roman Inscriptions*, p140).
- Military terms, such as soldier, legion, century, etc. would be routinely abbreviated.
- Each legion had its own names associated to it, which would be familiar to the military men who saw these tombs: here the 2nd legion Adjutrix (to distinguish it from the 2nd Augusta) is known also to be qualified as Pia and Fidelis (god-fearing and faithful).
- Age and years' service: the words beside the numbers are regularly shortened, especially the word for year ('annus').
- Years' service: the word 'aera' literally means 'copper coins', by extension 'military pay', and thus years of military service.
- Standard declarations like 'his heir at his own expense set this up' get drastically shortened, just as we do with expressions such as 'a.s.a.p.'
- 'Here he lies' is directly comparable to our 'Rest in peace' or 'RIP', and gets abbreviated accordingly.

Note the example of how one letter can represent different abbreviations according to the context: 'f' here stands for 'filius' in the man's name, and 'fidelis' for his legion's name.

In this particular case, the 'V' is missing from his years' service. Scholars reconstructed this number by looking at the width of the missing space; it would have to be V or X. From their knowledge of the history of the 2nd legion Adjutrix, which was created in AD69, they calculated that VI would give a date of death of AD76 when the

legion was still in Lincoln, whereas XI would take it to the year 81, by which time the legion was in Chester. Savaria was a Claudian colony in Pannonia Superior (modern-day Szombathely in Hungary). Much of this legion was recruited from the Ravenna fleet, which would explain the nautical decorative elements (dolphin and trident). Thus background historical knowledge is necessary for the full interpretation of this inscription.

Saufeius tombstone (Fig. 2)

Try to guess some of the abbreviations of this tombstone:

C SAVFEIO
C F FAB HER
MILITI LEGIO
VIII
ANNOR XXXX
STIP XXII
H S E

Line 1: We start with his name: C is for Gaius, followed by Saufeio (in the dative case: 'to Saufeius').

Line 2: C is for Gaius again, and F for 'filius': son of Gaius (we won't worry about the proper case endings). After his father's name, we have his voting tribe. The list in Keppie would inform you that FAB is the Fabian tribe. One would need some more historical and geographical knowledge to work out the name of his home town: Her(aclea).

Lines 3 and 4 are straightforward: 'militi' is 'soldier', in the dative case like his name, of the 9th legion.



Fig. 2. Tombstone found in Lincoln, now in the British Museum (RIB 255). Photo: © Marigold Norbye.

Line 5: 'ann...' is usually the word for 'year', so he was 40 years old.

Line 6: some specialist vocabulary, he was on a 'stipend' (military pay), i.e. in military service, for 22 years.

Line 7: the standard 'he lies here' phrase.

G(aio) Saufeio
G(ai) f(ilio) Fab(ia tribu) Her(aclea)
militi legio(nis)
VIII
annorum XXXX
stip(endiorum) XXII
h(ic) s(itus) e(st)

To Gaius Saufeius
son of Gaius, of the Fabian voting-tribe,
from Heraclea
soldier of the 9th legion, 40 years old,
22 years' service
he lies here.

Valeria Victrix inscription (Fig. 3)

This short building inscription introduces some imperial titles:

Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris)
Traian(i) Hadri-
ani Aug(usti) p(atris) p(atriciae)
leg(io) XX V(aleria) (Victrix)

[This work of] the Emperor Caesar
Trajan Hadrian
Augustus, father of his country,
the 20th legion Valeria Victrix [built].

Note that any superfluous words are removed ('built' 'this work/building'), all that is left is the essential information: the name of who built it, and in whose honour. As in the previous example, the name of the legion is highly abbreviated. The 20th legion, which had been based in Britain since the invasion by Claudius, used the titles 'Valeria Victrix': 'Valerian and victorious'. There are interpuncts separating the words, but in two cases, they are not dots but little ivy leaves (after 'Imp' and 'Traian'). In the word 'Traian', there is a ligature between the final A and N, with the two



Fig. 3. Building inscription found in Moresby in Cumbria, now in the British Museum (RIB 801). Photo: © Marigold Norbye.

vertical strokes of the A doubling up as the first two strokes of the N. Unusually, the Gs in 'Aug' and 'leg' are shaped like Cs, probably reflecting the fact that the original letter for the sound 'g' had been a 'C'.

Here we have the names and titles of an emperor, which tend to be heavily abbreviated. Most emperors used the tripartite name Imperator Caesar Augustus, initially the adopted forename, family name and *cognomen* of the first emperor Augustus. In effect, these three names became titles as much as names. To identify themselves, emperors would insert their personal names between these standard three names. Note that this can be confusing, especially when an emperor adopted one or more names from previous rulers: here, the emperor is Hadrian, who also uses the name Trajan from his predecessor. It cannot be Trajan himself, because he preceded Hadrian and did not use the name Hadrian.

Looking up a list of Roman emperors is essential. Keppie (pp136–7) has a useful list showing which names each emperor used. In it, one finds out for instance that three emperors used exactly the same combination of names: Marcus Aurelius (the 'good' philosopher-emperor), Caracalla and Elagabalus (known to posterity by their nicknames and reviled as 'bad' emperors). Each emperor had a string

of titles, handed down the generations, after their names; more and more titles got added in the course of the centuries. One of the earliest titles, first bestowed on Augustus, was that of 'father of the country', Pater Patriae. Hadrian only adopted this title in 128; therefore this inscription can be dated to between 128 and his year of death, AD138.

More examples, with general commentary (inscriptions from Museo delle Terme, Rome)

Marcus Claudius inscription (Fig. 4)

This is a typical example of good quality 'monumental' capitals, the most common letter form found in formal inscriptions.

Marcus Claudius was freeborn as indicated by fact of his father's name being mentioned, and he was the president of a group of scribes who worked for two sets of town officials. His executor who had the monument erected was his senior freedman, rendering a final service to his former master. The text is highly abbreviated, being full of standard official job titles and other common words such as 'son' or 'freedman'. There is no verb in the main sentence, as the expression 'this (monument) was erected' was so formulaic that it was often left out altogether, as seen above in the Moresby inscription.

narrower and more curvy shapes. Here is an example of small rustic capital letters, with the long vowels indicated by an 'apex' (which looks like an acute accent). The text is in poetry, elegiac couplets, which would be a particular reason for wanting to distinguish the length of the vowels. Note that this piece of poetry, an original composition albeit not of high quality, is not abbreviated at all. Though difficult to see in the photograph, there are still small interpuncts (dots) separating the words.

Nothus was a *librarius* (secretary, copyist) and this stele was dedicated by his wife. Unlike the previous scribe, this man was a former slave; his *cognomen* is a Latinised form of Greek. The fact that he was married to his wife ('*coniunx*' in line 1) suggests that they were freedpersons, as slaves could not legally marry. For reasons of space, perhaps, the names of his former master, which he would have adopted as his own, are not inscribed.

Published in *CIL VI 6314* (i.e. in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, volume 6, item 6314).

Title (not in photograph): Nothi librari a manu

Nón optata tibi coniunx monumenta locávit
ultima in aéternis sédibus ut maneant
spe frustra gávisa Nothi quem prima ferentem
aétátis Plúton invidus éripuit
hunc etiam fletit quaequális turba et honorem
supremum digne funeris inposuit.

Of Nothus, a scribe by hand. Your wife had no desire to place this monument for you so that your final remains should survive in an eternal dwelling. In vain did she delight in the object of her hope, Nothus whom jealous Pluto snatched in the prime of life. Indeed, a multitude has mourned for him and has rightly bestowed the supreme honour of funeral rites.

Libya: Cyrene, Leptis Magna and Sabratha

The ARA-organised trip to Libya in 2009 revealed some interesting inscriptions, of which the following are a small selection. Inscriptions from the western part of the country (Tripoli and surroundings) were published in JM Reynolds and JB Ward-Perkins, *The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* (British School at Rome, 1952). This is now online (referred to as *IRT* below) at



M(arcus) Claudius
M(arci) f(ilius) /
scr(ibarum)
mag(ister)
q(uaestorum) et
aed(ilium) /
cur(ulium) arbitratu
/ Philarguri maioris
l(iberti).

Marcus Claudius, son of Marcus, president of the scribes of the quaestors and the curule aediles. By the decision of Philargurus, his senior freedman [this was erected].

Nothus inscription (Fig. 5)

The other common form of capital letters is called 'rustic' or *actuaria*, with slightly



Fig. 4. Funerary monument to a president of the association of scribes, end of 1st century BC (upper inscription).

Fig. 5. Funerary stele to the secretary Nothus, first half of the 1st century AD (lower inscription).

Both at Museo Nazionale Romano (Museo delle Terme), Rome. Photos: © Marigold Norbye.

<http://irt.kcl.ac.uk/irt2009/index.html>. There is a similar project for Cyrenaica (the eastern part) but as yet, there is no search facility online.

Bilingual Hadrian inscription (Fig. 6)

Cyrene in North Africa was founded by the Greeks, and was still Greek-speaking when part of the Roman Empire, hence this inscription to Hadrian being in Latin then in Greek.

Imp(eratori) Caesari / divi Traiani parthi-
ci filio divi Nervae / nepoti Traiano /
Hadriano Aug(usto) pontif(ici) /
max(imo) trib(unicia) pot(estate) II co(n)
s(uli) II / civitas Cyrenensium.

To the Emperor Caesar, son of the deified Trajan Parthicus [i.e. victor in Parthia], grandson of the deified Nerva, (to) Trajan Hadrian, chief priest, in his 2nd year of tribunician power and 2nd year as consul, the city of the Cyrenians [offered this].

The Greek is not abbreviated, unlike the Latin, and stops after the word 'Hadrian'. Historians of language would be interested by the fact that 'Nerva' is transliterated into 'Neroua' in Greek script, suggesting that the letter 'V' was still pronounced 'w' as in 'Norway' rather than the later 'v' as in 'nervous' which it became in late antique Latin and the Romance languages. The inscription can be dated to AD 118 from the emperor's titles.



Fig. 7. Official dedication to the emperor Gallienus and his wife Salonina, AD 265. Leptis Magna, Libya.

Photo: © Marigold Norbye.

Gallienus and Salonina dedication (Fig. 7)

A good example of a stone inscription in rustic (*actuaria*) capitals, dedicated by the inhabitants of Leptis Magna in Libya. Note the two uses of the word 'imperator': as the emperor's very first name, usage dating back to Augustus the first emperor; and meaning 'acclaimed victor' followed by the number of times he was acclaimed. Published and translated in *IRT*, number 456.

Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) P(ublio)
Licinio Gallieno Germanico Pio Fel(ici)
Aug(usto) pont(ifici) max(imo) /
Germanico max(imo) trib(unicia)
pot(estate) XIII imp(eratori) XII co(n)
s(uli) VI p(atr) p(atr)iae proco(n)s(uli) /
et Corneliae Saloninae sanctissimae
Augustae n(ostrae) / coniugi Gallieni
Aug(usti) n(ostri) / Lepc(itani)

Sept(imiani)
Saloniniani
publ(ice).

To emperor Caesar Publius Licinius Gallienus, victor in Germany, Pius, Felix, Augustus, chief priest, greatest victor in Germany, holding tribunician power for the thirteenth time, acclaimed victor twelve times, consul six times, father of the country, proconsul, and to Cornelia Salonina our most virtuous Augusta, wife of Gallienus, our Augustus; the Lepcitanians Septimian and Saloninian [set this up] publicly.

Severan Basilica inscription (Fig. 8)

An inscription *in situ*, still part of the monument to which it belongs, the grandiose Severan Basilica in Leptis Magna. The fragments tell us that Septimius Severus (a native of Leptis Magna and later emperor) started this building in AD 210 and that his son Caracalla completed it in AD 216. Note the tall 'l' of 'Imperator' (compared to the previous 'l') which indicates that it is a long vowel. *IRT* online, number 428:

[o]cties imperator: 'octies' refers to the 18th year of Septimius's tribunician power ('trib. pot. decem et octies') (AD 209/10), followed by 'imperator' in the sense of 'acclaimed victor' which would have had a number after it.

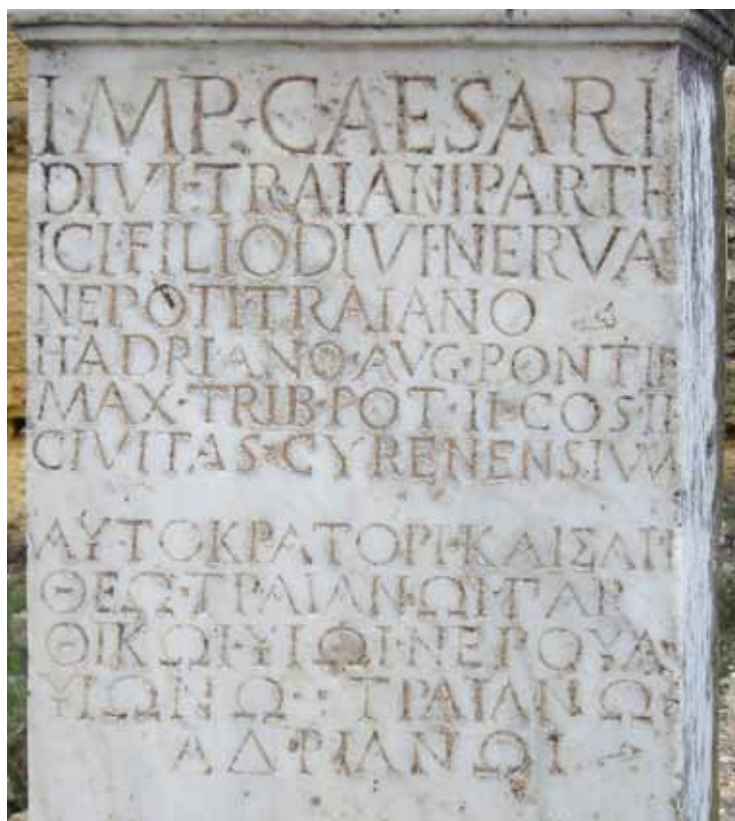


Fig. 6. Bilingual inscription to the emperor Hadrian (AD 117–138), AD 118. Cyrene, Libya.

Photo: © Marigold Norbye.



Fig. 8. Fragment from the Severan Basilica, AD 209–10. Leptis Magna, Libya.

Photo: © Marigold Norbye.



Fig. 9. A bilingual dedication in Latin and Punic, AD 1–2. Leptis Magna, Libya.

Photo: © Tim Arnold.

Annobal Rufus inscription (Fig. 9)

A copy of the original inscription (now in the National Museum in Tripoli) dedicating the theatre of Leptis Magna. Leptis was in Tripolitania, which had been under Carthaginian (Phoenician/Punic) influence before being conquered by Rome. One and a half centuries later, the local magnate (Annobal Rufus, see line 2) who paid for the theatre building still used the Punic language in his official dedication, showing that regionalism was not entirely dead in the Roman Empire. The first names of both the magnate and his father betray their Phoenician origins. *IRT* online, number 323:

Imp(eratore) Caesare Divi f(ilio)
 Aug(usto) pont(ifice) max(imo)
 tr(ibunicia) pot(estate) XXIV co(n)s(ule)
 XIII patre patr(iae) / Annobal Rufus
 ornator patriae amator concordiae /
 flamen sufes praef(ectus) sacr(orum)
 Himilchonis Tapapi f(ilius) d(e) s(ua)
 p(ecunia) fac(iendum) coer(avit) /
 idemq(ue) dedicavit.

When Emperor Caesar Augustus, son of the deified (Caesar), chief priest, (was) holding tribunician power for the twenty-fourth time, consul for the thirteenth, father of the country, Annobal Rufus, adorer of his country, lover of concord, flamen (local priest), suffete (magistrate in a Phoenician city), in charge of sacred things, son of Himilcho Tapapius, saw to the construction at his own expense and also dedicated it.

Christian tombstone (Fig. 10)

This tombstone from Sabratha in modern Libya dates from the troubled period when the Empire had fallen in the west and Tripolitania was occupied by the invading Vandals (439–530), before the Byzantine emperor Justinian reconquered it for the Empire. The rough script of the inscription tells its own story.

The dating element is at the beginning, relating to 'the 3rd year of the indiction'. An indiction was a 15-year cycle, first invented for tax collecting purposes, then gradually used as a general dating tool in the Roman Empire, and lasting in certain contexts throughout the Middle Ages. However, as individual indictions were not numbered or qualified, one needs other dating clues; in this case, all we have is the general context of a cemetery. The tombstone is Christian, as evidenced by several clues. There are two crosses at the top of the stone. The number of years the dead person lived is qualified as 'plus minus', to show Christian disdain for the exact time spent on this earth (the eternal life being more important). The deceased 'went to rest in Christ'.

Linguistically, the inscription's non-classical spelling reflects evolutions in the pronunciation of the Latin language: 'bone memorie' would be 'bonae memoriae' in classical Latin,

but the 'ae' sound was no longer pronounced 'a-e' but simply 'e', which became reflected in the spelling ('e' gradually became the norm in medieval Latin writing). The letter 'V', which had earlier been pronounced like the English 'w', evolved phonetically to a sound between 'b' and 'v' and was therefore often written 'b': hence 'bixit' for 'vixit' ('lived') and 'requiebit' for 'requievit' ('went to rest').

The abbreviation for 'Christo' is 'xpo', the 'x' being the Greek letter representing 'ch' and the 'p' the Greek for 'r', making the abbreviation 'chr-o'. This abbreviation has survived to the present day, hence our 'Xmas'.

IRT online, number 212:

+ Ind(ictione) III + /
 Bone memor- / ie Liberatae /
 bixit annos / XL pl(us) m(inus) pa- /
 uci et mali et / requiebit in / (Christ)o
 men(se) lu- / lio com(- - -) VIII

(cross) In the third indiction (cross).
 To the good memory of Liberata.
 She lived approximately 40 years, few
 and bad, and went to rest in Christ in
 the month of July, eight (?).

Back to Britain: keeping the 'barbarians' at bay

And finally... here is a cast of a plaque erected at the Antonine Wall by the detachment ('vexillatio') of soldiers recording the completion of a section of the wall. The men belonged to a legion which we encountered building for Hadrian in figure 3.

Antonine Wall inscription (Fig. 11)

Try to read what is on the photograph; then match it to this basic transcription:

IMP CT AEL HADRIANO ANTONINO
 AVG PIO P P VEX LEG XX V V FEC P P III
 (bar above the III)



Fig. 10. Christian tombstone, 5th–6th century AD. Sabratha, Libya. Photo: © Marigold Norbye.



Fig. 11. Distance slab concerning the Antonine Wall, found at Hutcheson Hill, Bearsden in 1865, original destroyed by fire in 1871, cast in Hunterian Museum, Glasgow, AD 131–169 (RIB 2198). Photo: © Nich Hogben.

There are numerous distance slabs found along the wall recording the achievements of various army units in building sections of the wall, many of them livened up with decorations. This legion had a wild boar as a badge, and the boar often appears as a decorative motif. The inscription itself is fairly plain, but there are attempts at serifs on some letters, and the triangular interpuncts are clear. Note the ligature between the A and V of 'AVG' at the end of line 4, probably to squeeze the word in the available space.

This emperor has numerous names, followed by a traditional title. By what name(s) do we know him? After the legion and its titles, we have the word 'fec': this is the verb 'fecit' ('made'). The inscription finishes with what the men made: the quantity is III with a bar over it, which multiplies it by 1000. The unit of measurement, preceded by the abbreviated preposition 'per' ('through, for') is P: this could stand for 'pedum' ('feet') or 'passuum' ('paces'). Some translators of these distance slabs assume that they refer to paces, but others interpret them as feet. At this stage, unless one can find incontrovertible evidence, for example a comparable distance slab where the word starting with P is written in full, the editor-translator gives way to military historians and archaeologists who can debate which unit of measurement is the most likely.

Now for the full transcription:

Imp(eratori) C(aesari) T(it)o / Ael(io) Hadr(iano) An(tonino) Aug(usto) / Pio P(atr) P(atr) vex(illatio) / leg(ionis) XX V(aleriae) V(ictricis) / fe(cit) / p(er) p(assuum) or p(edum) III (milia).

To the Emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, the father of his Country, a detachment of the 20th Legion Valeria Victrix constructed 3000 paces (or feet) [of the wall].

The emperor is known to us as Antoninus Pius, adoptive son and successor of Hadrian, who adopted the title 'Pius' at the beginning of his reign. In this inscription, we also see the traditional imperial title Pater Patriae.

Note that we have two abbreviations 'P P': one for the imperial title, the other for the measurement of distance.

Select bibliography: collections of inscriptions concerning Britain

RG Collingwood and RP Wright, *The Roman inscriptions of Britain. Vol. 1, Inscriptions on stone* (1965, new edition 1995); Vol. 2, *Instrumentum domesticum* (1995); Vol. 3, RSO Tomlin et al, *Inscriptions on stone, found or notified between 1 January 1955 and 31 December 2006* (2009).

This is THE reference work, which has superseded the *CIL* volume dedicated to Britain. It contains transcriptions, drawings, translations, bibliographies and brief descriptions of the inscriptions found in Britain. Volume two was published in separate fascicles, covering personal belongings and such like: e.g. military diplomata, metal ingots, dies, labels, vessels of metal and glass, jewellery, objects of wood and leather, stamps and graffiti on tiles, painted letters (dipinti) and graffiti on pottery, etc. Organised geographically, by place of discovery of the inscriptions. Abbreviated to *RIB*, with the number that follows relating to the item number in the book. There is a summary of Vol. 1 on the www.roman-britain.org website.

AC Burn, *The Romans in Britain. An Anthology of Inscriptions* (1969) (available second hand).

A selection of inscriptions, transcribed and translated, placed within a continuous historical narrative, used as illustrative material and commented upon in detail. A few black and white photographs. Short glossary of abbreviations, several indices. Much information about military life.

Inscriptions of Roman Britain, published by the London Association of Classical Teachers, Original Records No. 4 (LACTOR 4), 1st edition 1969, 4th edition 2006 (available from LACTOR, some earlier copies available second hand). Apart from the selection of inscriptions, it contains a map of Roman Britain, a date-chart of Romano-British history, several indices, and a concordance with Collingwood's *RIB*. The inscriptions all concern Britain, the vast majority being found in Britain: transcriptions, translations and brief commentaries.

The same association has also produced as a source book for students *Inscriptions of the Roman Empire*, published by the London Association of Classical Teachers, Original Records No. 11 (LACTOR 11), 1st edition 1971, 2nd edition 1996 (available from LACTOR, some copies available second hand).

List of common abbreviations and expressions

This list overleaf is in alphabetical order for ease of reference. It includes the most used abbreviations found in the examples above, as well as other common abbreviations culled from the list by Keppie and from inscriptions in the LACTOR collection concerning Roman Britain.

Similar and more abbreviations can be found online on <http://www.roman-britain.org/latin-abbreviations.htm>. There are lists in the books by Keppie and Gordon in the bibliography in Part I, as well as by one of the authors of the *RIB*, in RG Collingwood, *The Archaeology of Roman Britain* (Methuen, 1930) chapter XI, pp178–184.

As Latin is an inflected language, the same abbreviation can represent the same word with several endings, which only the grammatical context will reveal (e.g. 'd' could be 'dedit' or 'dederunt': 'he gave' or 'they gave'). Names, nouns and adjectives on their own are usually in the nominative ('subject') case; I give a second case if it differs confusingly from the nominative.

I have put abbreviations and abbreviated expressions in capitals to reflect the appearance of the inscriptions. Full words are in lower case for ease of reading. Occasionally, some words or expressions appear twice, when they are used both in abbreviated and full forms in the inscriptions themselves. Single letter abbreviations of two words or more come after the single words.

A: annus; year, years old
A: Adiutrix; (legion) Adjutrix
abnepos, abnepotis: great-grandson
A D: ante dies (followed by number); [n] days before (see section on dating in Part I)
ADIVT: adiutor; assistant, auxiliary
AED: aedilis; magistrate in charge of buildings
AEROR: aerorum, from aes; 'copper coin', by extension 'military pay' and thus 'military service'
ala: wing of an army, division of about 500 men
ara: altar
arbitratu: by the decision of
a solo: from ground-level (when restoring a building)
AVG: Augustus, third name/title of emperors, *cognomen* of the first emperor
AVGG: Augusti; the two Augustuses when there were four emperors at once: two senior ones called Augustus, and two junior ones called Caesar
Augusta: title of the wife of the emperor
AVR: aureus/a; of gold
BAL: balneum; bath-house
BEN COS: beneficiarius consularis; one seconded for special duties by the provincial governor
bonae memoriae: of good memory
BRIT: Britannicus, Britannia; Britannicus (imperial title), British; Britain
C: Gaius
C: the number 100
C: centuria; century, unit headed by a centurion
C: centurio; centurion
C: cives; citizen
C: coniunx, coniugis; spouse (usually a wife)
CA: curam agente; having the matter in charge
CAES: Caesar, second name/title of emperors; late Empire: junior emperor
CASTR: castrum; camp, fort
ensor: censor, a type of magistrate in charge of morals
CHO/COH: cohors, cohortis; of the cohort (military unit)
civitas: the city (usually followed by the name of its inhabitants)
cives: citizen
CLA: Claudia tribu; of the Claudian tribe
classis: fleet
COL: colonia; colony

collegium: guild, college
COR: corona; crown
COS: consul; consul, followed by the number of times elected in the case of emperors
CVR: curulis; curule (relating to the official chair used by the aediles)
CVR: curator; guild-treasurer
curante: under the charge of
curia: assembly
D: the number 500 (often written with a bar through it)
D: decreto; by the decree of
D: decurio; decurion
D: dominus; lord
D: donum; gift
D: dedit/dederunt: gave
D: dedicavit/dedicaverunt; dedicated
DEC: decurio; decurion (military); member of the council of a municipality/colony, councillor
dedicavit/dedicaverunt: dedicated
DESIG: designatus; designate, i.e. nominated for next year's office (usually consulship)
de suo: at his/her (expense)
deus/dea: god, goddess
dies: day(s)
dis manibus: to the spirits of the departed
divus/a: deified (of an emperor or member of the imperial family)
domo: from the home town of
domus: house
DON: donavit; s/he gave
DM: dis manibus; to the spirits of the departed
DN: dominus noster; our lord (the emperor)
DD NN: domini nostri; our lords (two emperors)
DDDD NNNN: domini nostri; our lords (four emperors)
DI M: deo invicto Mithrae; to the invincible god Mithras
DSP: de suo posuit; at his/her own (expense) set up
DSP: de sua pecunia; with his/her money
EBOR: Eboracensis; from York
EQ: eques; member of a cavalry regiment
EQ: equitata; part mounted (of a military unit such as a cohort)
ex decreto: by decree
ex testamento: under his/her Will

F: filius/filia; son, daughter
F: fecit; made/built (this), had it made
FAB: Fabia tribu; of the Fabian tribe
FABR: fabri; smiths
FAC: facere/faciendum; to make/set up, to be made
FAC COER: faciundum coeravit; saw to it being done
FC: faciendum curavit/curaverunt; had (this) made/set up
FEC: fecit; did/made/built (this), had it made
FEL: felix; fortunate, successful; used as a title ('Felix') for emperors and legions alike
flamen: priest
Fortuna: the goddess Fortune
G: genius; presiding spirit or genius of a place
GERM: Germanicus; conqueror of Germany, used as a title Germanicus
GVBER: gubernator; pilot
H: heres; heir
HC: hoc constituit; set this up
HISP: Hispanus/Hispania; Spanish, Spain
HS: sesterce (money unit), always followed by a form of 'nummus' ('coin')
HSE: hic situs est; here s/he lies
I: the number 1
ID: Idus; Ides
IMP: imperator; 'Imperator' (name/title of emperors), by late second century also means 'acclaimed victor'
IOM: Iovi Optimo Maximo; to Jupiter/Jove the Best and Greatest
iudiciis: by the decrees
K or KAL: Kalendae; Kalends
L: Lucius
L: the number 50
L: Latinus; Latin
L: libertus/a; freedman/woman
L: laetus or libens; gladly or willingly
lato clavo exornatus: adorned with the (senatorial) broad stripe (on his toga)
LEG: legio; legion
LEG: legatus; legate, ambassador
LEG AVG PR (or PRO) PR: legatus Augusti pro praetore: emperor's legate with powers of a praetor (title of governors of the province of Britain)
LIB: libertus/a; freedman/woman
LOC: locus; place
M: Marcus
M: mensis; month
MAG: magister; school master; president, master

memoriae: to the memory
MEN: mensis; month
meritus/a: well-deserving
MIL: miles; soldier, military
MIL: militaris; military
MIL: militavit; served in the army
MON: monumentum
M P: milia passuum; miles (a thousand paces)
MVNIC: municipium; borough, municipality

N: nummus; coin, always in the form 'nummum' when 1000s are indicated
N: noster/nostri; our (often after 'dominus/a': lord/lady; later title for emperors)
NAT: natus; born, aged
nepos/nepotis: grandson
NN CC: nobilissimi Caesares; the two 'most noble Caesars' in the era of four emperors
NOB: nobilissimus/a; most noble
NON: Nonae; Nones
NVM or N: numen, numinis; divine power (e.g. the Divine Power of the emperor)

P: Publius
P: pedes/pedum; feet (unit of distance)
P: passus; paces (unit of distance)
P: posuit/posuerunt; set (this) up
PATRON: patronus; patron
P C: ponendum curavit; had (this) set up
P D: pecuniam dedi; I gave the money
per: through, through the agency of
P F: Pia Fidelis; loyal (and) faithful
PL M: plus minus; more or less (on Christian tombs)
PONT MAX: pontifex maximus; chief priest (imperial title)
posuit/posuerunt: set (this) up
P P: pater patriae; father of the country (imperial title)
P P: primus pilus; chief centurion
PR: (abbrev. of many titles, including) praeses, praesidis; governor (of Britain after Diocletian reorganisation)
PRAEF: praefectus; prefect, overseer, in charge of
PRAETOR: praetorian (the emperor's praetorian Guard in Rome)
praetor: leader, president, chief magistrate, commander
PRINC: principia; the headquarters building
princeps/principis: leader, commander
PR (or PRO) PR: pro praetore; on behalf of the praetor (see 'legatus')

PROC: procurator; manager, administrator, procurator
PROCOS: proconsul; proconsul
pro salute: for the health/welfare
PROVINC: provincia; province
PVBL: publice; publicly

Q: Quintus
Q: the number 500,000
Q: quaestor; quaestor (a class of magistrate, often in charge of the treasury)

R: Romanus; Roman
reddidit/reddiderunt: restored
REG: regionarius; in charge of the region
requievit: went to rest
restituit/restituerunt: restored

S: sacra (plural); sacred things/matters
SAC: sacerdos, sacerdotis; priest
SACR: sacra (plural); sacred things/matters
sanctissimus/a: most virtuous (in the pagan sense)
S C: senatus consulto; by decree of the Senate
SCR: scriba; scribe
SIGN: signifer; standard-bearer
S P Q R: senatus populusque Romanus; the Senate and People of Rome
STIP: stipendium; military pay; in the plural: years of military service
STTL: sit tibi terra levis; may the earth lie lightly on you
sub cura: under the charge

T: Titus
TER/TERT: tertium or tertio; for the third time
TEST: testamentum; Will
TI: Tiberius
TR/TRIB/TRIBVN: tribunus; tribune (military rank)
TRIB POT: tribunicia potestate; holding the tribunician power (followed by the number of years)
tribu: of the voting-tribe (with name, usually abbreviated to three letters, of one of the 35 tribes)
TVR: tur(ma); regiment

VRB: urbanus; urban
uxor: wife

V: the number 5
V: vir; man
V: vixit; lived
V: vovit; vowed
VC: vir clarissimus; most distinguished gentleman (of senatorial rank)

VET: veteranus; veteran soldier
VEX: vexillatio; a detachment of soldiers united under one flag
vexillarii: soldiers in a vexillatio
VIC or VIK (later): vicani; inhabitants of a 'vicus' a subordinate unit of a 'civitas' (town)
vigilis: member of the vigiles (night watch)
vixit: lived (usually followed by number of years)
VM: votum merito; the vow (was) deservedly (fulfilled)
VOT: votum; vow
V S L M: votum solvit libens merito; willingly and deservedly fulfilled (his/her) vow
V S L L M: votum solvit laetus libens merito; gladly, willingly and deservedly fulfilled (his/her) vow
VV: Valeria Victrix (epithets of the 20th legion)
X: the number 10
XPO: Christo; in Christ

Abbreviation by suspension: a few word endings were quite regularly shortened at the end. Nouns and adjectives with the case ending '-ibus' often appeared as 'ib.' with a full stop.

Words ending with '-que' could be written '-q.'; those ending with '-dem' '-d.'

(I) or Φ: the number 1000 (many variants on that basic shape)

I)) : 5000 I))) : 50,000
 ((I)) : 10,000 (((I))) : 100,000

Superposed bars over numbers:

Any numeral can be multiplied by 1000 by means of a superposed bar.

A numeral can be multiplied by 100,000 by a three-sided box around it.

But... a bar can also be used over numerals to indicate numerical prefixes of composite words like 'decemvir' (literally: 10-man, a member of a ten-man official body). Usually the prefix is separated from the noun by some punctuation, e.g. X.vir (with a bar over the X).

Ordinal numbers are regularly barred when they are adverbial: 'for the nth time'

Ordinal numbers are generally barred when designating the number of a legion or cohort.

There are other uses of bars, see Gordon (p47) for details.

The Lost City of the Legion

Preliminary excavations in Caerleon's monumental suburb hint at great future discoveries

On the 30th August last year Grahame Soffe and I gladly accepted an invitation, on behalf of the ARA Board, from Dr Peter Guest, Senior Lecturer in Roman Archaeology, Cardiff University. This was to attend the Tea-On-The-Dig closing celebrations for the excavation at Caerleon, headed by Peter for the University's School of History, Archaeology and Religion. The purpose of the 2011 excavation was to make preliminary investigations into the tremendous find of 2009–10: a previously unsuspected range of huge public-style buildings buried beneath the sloping meadows between the amphitheatre and the River Usk. The discovery was a pure piece of serendipity, and made by students surveying this extra-mural area of *Isca* during a training exercise in the use of geophysical equipment. It was followed in 2010 by the digging of two small test pits that located what appeared to be a quayside wall. ARA members are directed to my earlier accounts of this discovery in the last two editions of **ARA News**.

The meadows below the amphitheatre show signs of buried architecture in their irregularities, and structures had been long predicted in the area, but no one could have imagined that such large buildings lay beneath. The fields seem only to have been used for pasture following the desertion of *Isca* and thus much survives even after the inevitable stone robbing of past centuries. The 2011 excavations were

conducted all over the vast site, through the digging of nine trenches, in order to assess the nature and quality of what remained. Time Team were present and conducted their own three-day investigation into an enigmatic building in the centre of a vast courtyard that fronted on to the presumed quay.

I visited the exciting excavation for the first time four days before the closing ceremony, and was both astonished and thrilled by some of the archaeology that I beheld. It was also extremely rewarding to see the same trenches at the later visit and witness how far the investigation had progressed even in such a short time. Peter Guest has promised ARA his own paper for the **ARA Bulletin**, but in the meanwhile I have had his permission to report on my impressions as a visitor to the investigations. The geophysical results suggested the presence of two large building complexes. The first, fronting onto the presumed quayside, consisted of a vast courtyard almost the size of the amphitheatre surrounded by corridors and rooms and 'centred' by a small building, presumed to be a temple. A range of important rooms

backed this courtyard, and behind these was another complex seemingly constructed around two smaller courtyards and thought to have been centred on a basilican hall. These buildings lay on the same alignment and presumably connected with the large baths discovered next to the amphitheatre in the 1920s. The huge apsidal or near-circular chamber of one of the rooms of these baths remains uncovered and was dated, in its earliest form, by REM and TV Wheeler to the Flavian period.



Fig. 2. The quay or 'Tegula Wall' under excavation. Visitors stand where the original dockside would have been. The later infilling that expanded the dock into the river can be seen in the foreground. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.



Fig. 3. A possible shallow pool constructed from slabs in Trench 5 with two drains running beneath a flagged floor. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.

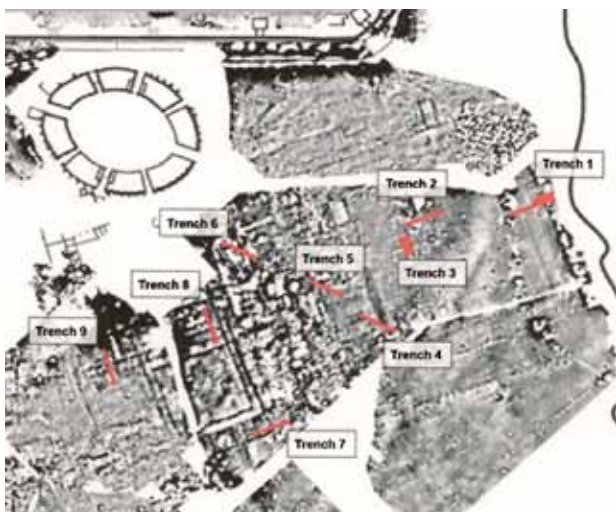


Fig. 1. A plan of the trenches placed over the geophysical plan of the monumental suburb of Caerleon. The River Usk is to the right and the amphitheatre is top left. Courtesy of Cardiff University.



Fig. 4. The damaged edge of a mosaic or tessellated pavement in a chamber in Trench 5, buried under the fall of roofing tiles. Many of the tesserae are rectangular and in their singularity perhaps suggest a military rather than a civilian mosaicist. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.

Evidence has now emerged of a port at Caerleon. The river here is tidal and it would be expected that it would have been used for transport and supplies, but to find proof is very rewarding. The quayside wall was built of *tegula* roofing tiles, and was founded on a timber sill beam which itself is no doubt sitting on a row of wooden piles. This was referred to on-site as the 'Tegula Wall'.

At some later date the quay was expanded out into the river with an infill of tile and stone. That this quayside was quite evident in the twelfth century is suggested by references in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* and Gerald of Wales' account of the site where they imagined foreign dignitaries using the port to visit King Arthur.

For on one side it was washed by that noble river, so that the kings and princes from the countries beyond the seas might have the convenience of sailing up to it.

History of the Kings of Britain,
Book 9, Chapter 12.

Caerleon is beautifully situated on the bank of the River Usk. When the tide comes in, ships sail right up to the city. It is surrounded by woods and meadows. It was here that the Roman legates came to seek audience at the great Arthur's famous court.

Gerald of Wales,
Journey Through Wales, Chapter 5.

It is assumed that beyond this quay visitors or produce entered through a gateway into the vast formal courtyard. Here was the small rectangular and enigmatic tile-built building partially excavated that final week by Time Team. It is now believed to be administrative rather than religious, and is larger than

at first thought. Its axial position, however, suggests that it was of some importance. Its excavation discovered a beautiful intaglio decorated with Capricornus, a dolphin, an eagle and a cornucopia: all symbols of good fortune and Rome (the Capricorn was the birth sign of Augustus and a symbol of the Second Legion). The surface of the courtyard is described as being of 'beaten earth', which is an enigma, and this has now suggested to the excavators that perhaps it was a stockyard for holding the large number of cattle needed for the Second Augustan Legion. Whilst this is a possibility, it should be remembered that in peacetime the cattle drove was the traditional manner of moving herds rather than by sea or river. Also, it would seem more logical that cattle stockades would be sited in the meadows surrounding the settlement and would not require a backdrop of formal architecture or the problems of driving livestock into it. Again the mess and smells generated by vast numbers of cattle would hardly be a benefit to those occupying the surrounding chambers. Even if lacking the architectural refinement of paving, I would be more inclined to see a more formal or military use for this great courtyard. Either way, this must be mere speculation; it is too early to decide until a fuller investigation has taken place.

However, another clue is provided by the fact that in Trench 5 the edge of a room was located that appears to be on a direct alignment with the riverside courtyard entrance and was obviously built to impress. We were shown the remains of collapsed tufa from vaulting or from a single or double-arched entrance, and fallen box-flue tiles. In the



Fig. 5. The lead water-pipe beneath a flagged floor under excavation in Trench 6. A branch from it, seen below the excavator on the left, probably fed a fountain close by. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.

same room the very edge of a mosaic has been located still buried under roofing tiles. Enough was visible to show the use of white and unusually shaped rectangular *tesserae*. This is exciting because the Second Augustan Legion's baths at Exeter provided fragments of the earliest figurative and polychrome mosaic in Britain and this may well be another first-century pavement and perhaps the work of a military rather than civilian mosaicist. Indeed the exciting prospect is that the buried buildings may hold a gallery of early mosaics. Trench 5 cut diagonally across the western range of rooms of the massive courtyard building; the corner of one room with plaster still remaining on the walls was displayed, as well as what appeared to be a shallow pool made of stone slabs together with its drain. The monumental suburb seems to be honeycombed with drains, which is only to be expected considering the vast expanse of roofs that the complex must have had. Managing the rainfall at Caerleon must have been an art in itself. Considering the traces of architectural quality in Trench 5 one again wonders what the function was of the great courtyard that they looked out onto.

For me, one of the most exciting finds was in Trench 6, the nearest excavation to the amphitheatre. There a splendid length of Roman lead water-main remained *in situ*. The large-bore pipe was tapped by a smaller branch that almost certainly fed a nearby fountain situated, tantalisingly, somewhere beyond the excavation. The upper and excavated end of the pipe showed a square plate and nails that attached it to a lost wooden pipe or tank. The Wheelers' excavation of the amphitheatre yielded several pipes that may have drawn water from the same source as this one.



Fig. 6. The stone inscription reading AVG found near the entrance to the great courtyard by the quay. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.



Fig. 7. The beautiful panther or lion's head mount was probably a furniture or leather ornament and was discovered in the excavation in Priory Field in 2010. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.

Trenches 7, 8 and 9 were positioned to examine the remains of the two courtyard complexes covering the western side of the monumental suburb. Both of these appear on the geophysical plan to be reminiscent of *fora*, courtyard marketplaces with basilican buildings attached on their northern sides. Trenches 8 and 9 disclosed the walls of these buildings, whilst the rooms between were clogged with rubble and roof tiles. In Trench 9 two successive *opus signinum* floors were found superimposed, hinting at the amount of use and longevity of the rooms that they floored. Fishbourne Palace has a similar example of superimposed mosaic floors. Trench 8 disclosed a wall with a roughly-constructed drain of stone and broken tile that emptied into a courtyard that again seems to have been unpaved. Perhaps this and the great courtyard were grassed in antiquity rather than just of beaten earth. One wonders how differently 'well-trodden earth' and 'beaten earth' compare in the archaeological record. Trench 7, the most westerly excavation, contained the remains of a badly robbed hypocaust. *Pilae* tiles had supported red sandstone slabs and an *opus signinum* floor, the ruins of which had sealed the remains of the last firing of the stoke hole, perhaps providing dating evidence. Red, blue and white wall plaster was discovered on the floor and lifted. The walls had been robbed completely from this section of the complex. Stone or tile robbing seems to be piecemeal on the site, with some parts barely touched whilst others are stripped bare.

Finds on display to visitors included a beautiful bone die found in Trench 6, together with a fragment of inscribed stone bearing the letters AVG that may have come from the entrance to the courtyard by the quay. Some of the conserved finds from the 2010 Priory Field excavation were also on display, including an exquisite bronze decoration for furniture or leather in the form of a panther or lion's head.

What is noticeable about the monumental suburb is the great amount of tile used both in construction and in roofing, much if not all bearing the legionary stamp of the Second Augustan Legion. It would be interesting to know if this tile was made on site or imported from legionary bases elsewhere to build the suburb. Fine examples of nearly complete *imbrex* and *tegula* roofing tiles were displayed. Various sizes of curved segmented tiles used in Roman buildings for columns are amongst the finds, and rare for Britannia. The columns formed by them were generally stuccoed, fluted and painted. The Temple of Claudius at *Camulodunum* employed them in its precinct.

Parts of the site may have resembled in the appearance of its buildings what we now see at Ostia Antica near Rome, and one cannot forget Gerald of Wales' description of what he observed on his visit when the buildings of *Isca* had not



Fig. 8. A selection from the enormous quantity of tiles found on the site: almost complete *imbrex* and *tegula* roofing tiles, and rare examples of the segmented tiles commonly used in Italy for constructing columns quickly and inexpensively. Photo: © Anthony Beeson.

yet been robbed for their materials:

It was constructed with great care by the Romans, the walls being built of brick.

Journey Through Wales, (Chapter 5).

It was noticeable that the small building excavated by Time Team showed no sign of rendering or marble cladding. I mentioned the presumed similarity of the appearance of the tile-built buildings of *Isca* to those of Ostia and elsewhere to Peter and he quipped "Ah, the Ostia of the North!" That has a rather nice ring to it.

Hopefully the exciting excavations at Caerleon, which have raised so many questions, will be continued in future years with the support of the ARA. Without a doubt the site is one of the most impressive in Britain and of the utmost importance for our understanding of the Romans in Wales. It could prove to be a wonder of Wales if made the subject of a lengthy campaign of excavation. It will be extremely interesting to read Peter Guest's own conclusions of his work when published. I must stress that the above impressions are purely my own observations and interpretations as a visitor to the site.

For a wonderful impression of the structures at Roman *Isca* as they might have been in mass rather than detail, there is a 3D digital animation produced by 7reasons, an Austrian company specialising in computer reconstructions of ancient and medieval sites. This is available on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7VDgTLAAM8>



Fig. 9. A reconstruction of the monumental suburb and the fortress of *Isca* by 7reasons.

Image: © 7reasons.

Anthony Beeson.

Ramblings of an ancient volunteer archaeologist digging through his memories

On a sunny afternoon at the end of July 1964, in the North Wing of the celebrated Roman Palace at Fishbourne, human remains resting in a hollow cut into the *opus signinum* floor were being excavated when senior police officers in a hurry came to advise the young Barry Cunliffe about a possible threat to the remains. Apparently an active coven of witches responsible for desecrating churchyards in the Chichester area, would, if aware of their existence, like to use these pagan bones for their revels. It was Lammas Eve, a high point in the witches' calendar for carousing with the devil. Volunteers were called for, so that night a colleague and I placed our sleeping bags either side of 'Yorick' and, after lighting some joss sticks placed around him, settled down to a sleeping watch. Fortunately for our immortal souls, no hellish hags appeared and we awoke unscathed to another fine day for trowelling.

Action stations! We were to be honoured by a visit from Sir Mortimer Wheeler, at the time the most famous living archaeologist, star of TV and radio. Hours were spent making the site immaculate, trench sides were shaved and made plumb, grass was mown and stray wisps trimmed with scissors and spoil heaps sculpted. Chattering and loose soil were to be kept to a minimum during his tour. The great man arrived, and moving swiftly through he came to my trench. He glanced down, sniffed and passed on – something of an anticlimax from archaeological royalty.

My interest in archaeology was inspired by the great discoveries in the Near East and fostered by spending Saturdays doing unpaid work at my local museum (Red House Museum, Christchurch, to be visited by the ARA in July 2012). I believe I was about nine years old when this began, and I wonder: would this be possible today? Would health and safety and other legal considerations allow a museum curator to give a youngster free rein amid the collections scattered in various storerooms?

My first taste of excavating was a Roman inhumation cemetery at Bitterne, Southampton, with the late Mrs Molly Cotton. Alas, the dig was never published; all records and finds are

believed lost, and even the location of the dig site was unknown until the ARA visited the area in 2010 and pinpointed its precise location under the driveway of the appropriately named 'Roman House'. Following the Second World War, many excavations were instigated in Southampton prior to rebuilding the damaged city. Young volunteers were the backbone of this endeavour and led by freelance archaeologists; one I recall was John Wachter, who later held the chair in archaeology at Leicester and was the author of several books on Roman Britain.

Southampton was once dominated by a castle; it was long ago demolished and the site built over. Amongst the post-war investigations was one very deep trench cut to ascertain the dimensions of the castle's moat/defensive ditch. This trench was so deep that we excavators had to throw the soil forcefully upwards onto a platform, from which it was again thrown upwards to the top of the trench. Inevitably, some spoil did not make it and rained back down on the excavators. There was not a hard hat to be seen: those were the days!

For several years I dug at Rockbourne Roman villa. Those of you who have visited (using your ARA 'passport') will recall it was discovered in 1942 by a farmer digging out his lost ferret from an old cricket pitch. After trial trenching proved the villa's existence, Mr Morley Hewitt, a local estate agent with a passion for archaeology, purchased the field, organised its excavation and established an on-site museum. The excavation had the ethos of a family affair. Diggers came with their children



Excavating the skeleton at Fishbourne Roman Palace.
Photo: © Sussex Archaeological Society.

who also got involved, cleaning finds, fetching and carrying. I remember a happy crew of all ages wending their way, sometimes singing "we'll dig, dig, dig!" as they walked to the village inn at lunchtime. The other volunteers had occupations and so could only dig at weekends; however, before I left school for the Royal Navy, Mr Morley Hewitt was happy to let me work midweek on my own during the summer holidays – a schoolboy with a whole Roman villa to himself! One of my tasks was to clear the ash from the furnace that served the bath-house hypocaust. Although it had been buried for centuries, trapped gases rose from the ash, smelling as though the fire had only quite recently been extinguished – quite spooky! The day after exposure, the smell had gone.

When out in the Far East, I and a shipmate wandered into the Hong Kong museum and casually enquired if any digs were currently under way in the colony. The enterprising Curator of Antiquities asked if we would look at a Warring States Period (481–221 BC) site on the neighbouring island of Lan Tau. Taking some members of the crew of HMS Triumph, camping gear, rations and tools, we set off for the village of Man Kok Tsui which occupied the site. There farmers, refugees from Guangdong China, used every patch of land to grow crops; to make a living they worked all the hours of daylight. From a Western viewpoint they were desperately poor, having few possessions other than their agricultural tools, yet they were possessed of a quiet dignity and a great generosity of spirit. Every evening after sundown the villagers came to our campsite for an hour or so to socialise with us. Despite not knowing each others' languages, I recall the friendly



Left to right: Grahame Soffe, Lisa Thomas, Prof Tony King and Michael Looker, in front of Roman House at Bitterne, Southampton.
Photo: © G Soffe.



Mosaic in Room N19, Fishbourne Roman Palace.
© Sussex Archaeological Society.

chatter and laughter going back and forth... Sadly our test pits revealed only badly disturbed ground.

In *ARA News*, March 2011, the article 'Folkestone Roman Villa' by archaeologist Keith Parfitt ended with an invitation to ARA members to join the 2011 season's excavation. Manna from Heaven! I answered the call, as did one other ARA member. We both had a very rewarding time! For me it was a step back in time, to the family style

atmosphere of Rockbourne Roman villa, although this time there was no village pub to troop to so our singing was saved for the End of Dig party in December. Why a party so late in the year? Folkestone produced so much more grade one archaeology than had been expected that we continued until the middle of November rather than the end of August as had been anticipated. There was a small touch of comfort: there were public toilets with washing facilities alongside the site, and although these were normally closed over the winter, they were kept open until the end of the dig by the kindness of officers of the local council. They were much appreciated!

Back to where I started this piece: 1964, North Wing, Fishbourne Roman Palace. In what was to become Room N19, I jokingly told the future Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe that, if he was lucky, a mosaic would stop us carrying out his instructions to dig quickly down to the base of the foundation where dating evidence might be found. This elicited

a "Humph," and a "Get on with it". A short while later I called him back – and he was not best pleased! Several years later while visiting the palace I was surprised to see the modest black and white mosaic I had found conserved and on display, despite being very badly damaged by ploughing and cut by the water main that led to the palace's discovery. It now has an entry in the scholarly *Roman Mosaics of Britain* by Neal and Cosh.

For the last three or four decades some have eschewed the involvement of non-professional archaeologists. But I know that volunteers have made and will continue to make a significant contribution towards writing of the story of our shared past. I urge anyone who has the passion and the chance to volunteer and get trowelling. The rewards include fresh air, exercise, the company of like-minded people, friendly banter and maybe seeing your discoveries displayed and written into the archives.

Michael C Looker.

A MAJOR ROMAN BATH BUILDING DISCOVERED AT SOUTHWARK

Just as the Museum of London publishes *Londinium*, a splendid new map and fold out guide to Roman London, yet another significant find has been made in Southwark on the south bank of the Thames. This time it is in the form of a major Roman bath building. The remains have been found on land being cleared by Network Rail for the Thameslink project on a site at the corner of Borough High Street and London Bridge Street, the approach to



Cold plunge bath, Southwark. © Network Rail.

the oldest Thames crossing. The newly discovered complex includes an apsidal cold plunge bath and hypocausted rooms, and is being described as one of the most significant finds on the South Bank in recent years. Elsewhere on the site, substantial walls have been found that are thought to belong to predecessors of St Thomas' hospital, which used to stand on the site.

Up until a couple of decades ago Southwark was imagined to have been a somewhat mediocre southern suburb of *Londinium*, but exciting finds of monumental buildings and religious precincts have quite transformed archaeologists' understanding of life on the city's opposite bank. Roman Southwark was a network of small islands separated by creeks. It now seems that although it housed warehouses it was also a major settlement with important buildings and expensive architectural details and was far more official in character than the rickety district of Shakespeare's age that has so deeply entered the public imagination. Network Rail commissioned a team of archaeologists

from Oxford Archaeology and Pre-Construct Archaeology to excavate the site. Chris Place, the archaeologist for Network Rail, said: "This is a significant find and offers a further insight into London's long history. In Roman times the main settlement was on the north bank of the River Thames and was connected to the settlement at Southwark by the first London Bridge. Much archaeological work has been done in Southwark over the years, but we were still surprised to discover [a] ruin of this nature and size." The bath-house site has been earmarked for a new office block, but the developers are exploring how to preserve the remains, and will give key finds for display to the Museum of London.

Meanwhile, on an adjacent site at London Bridge Place, early structural remains from around AD80 have been discovered. These include traces of a hypocaust and the walls of two buildings.

Londinium; a new map and guide to Roman London. Museum of London Archaeology, 2011, £6.25
http://www.networkrail.co.uk/Roman_bath_house_unearthed_at_Thameslink_site.aspx
<http://www.london-se1.co.uk/news/view/5520>

Director: Bryn Walters BA
75 York Road, SWINDON, Wiltshire, SN1 2JU
Telephone/Facsimile: 01793 534008

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