Welcome
A warm welcome to this XIth issue of Epistula, the twice-yearly newsletter from the Roman Society. This issue particularly reports on our very successful Roman Archaeology Conference held in Rome during March, as well as numerous other Roman Society activities that have taken place since Epistula X.

This issue also describes important recent finds from Roman Britain, including fieldwork at Verulamium and Brading Roman Villa, and newly discovered artefacts from Lincolnshire and the Isle of Wight. From further afield comes a report on recent fieldwork in Sicily. Thanks to Emma Buckley and Neville Morley for commissioning contributions reflecting on Livy, teaching Latin in Antiquity, and new resources on Roman migration.

This newsletter relies on you for information that you think will interest your fellow Romanists, whether archaeology, art, ancient history, literature or any other aspect of the Roman world, so please do send in your news on recent research, upcoming talks or new publications for the next edition. If you have suggestions for an event that you would like to host in your area, please contact the Archaeology Committee (office@romansociety.org).

Maureen Carroll and Roberta Tomber
Editors

Society news
Joint Library of the Hellenic and Roman Societies: A message from the President

Members will be delighted to know that the new agreement between the Hellenic and Roman Societies (through HARL) and the University of London, with regard to the management and finance of the Combined Library was finally signed on 28th April 2016, after many months of negotiation.

The Joint Library of the Hellenic and Roman Societies has long operated in combination with the ICS Library to form the Combined Library. The Combined Library (around two thirds of whose holdings belong to the Societies) is, as members will know, a world-class research library, which offers magnificent resources, expert staff and a calm working environment to numerous scholars from undergraduates to emeritus professors, many of whom visit regularly from overseas to make use of its facilities. In recent years, the University of London’s space charges (subject to unpredictable and often dramatic increases) have made financial planning increasingly difficult. Several possible solutions have been explored but the new agreement (covering arrangements for the next 25 years in the first instance) offers a very satisfactory outcome: essentially the University is now responsible for providing space, while the Societies are responsible for costs associated with the librarians, with other costs being shared; the governance structure is now clearer and more robust.
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(a draft version of the final agreement was circulated prior to the EGM in December 2015).

We are very grateful for all the hard work put in by many people to make this possible, including, within the University of London, Greg Woolf (Director of the Institute of Classical Studies), Roger Kain (Director of the School of Advanced Studies), Elaine Walters (Deputy Chief Executive of SAS) and John Stewart (Director of Legal Services), as well as, of course, the President and other Officers of the Hellenic Society. Our own Treasurer Philip Kay has kept a vigilant eye on the vitally important figures, while our Honorary Secretary, Liz McKnight put her legal acumen, drafting expertise and super-human reserves of patience at our disposal throughout the process of drafting and fine-tuning the agreement. We were also very fortunate to be able to call on the tact, knowledge and organisational skills of Fiona Haarer, the Roman Society’s own Secretary, who has also been serving as Secretary for HARL. My predecessor, Dominic Rathbone, played a critical role earlier in negotiations. As ever, the Honorary Librarian Michael Crawford has been tireless in pursuit of the library’s best interests.

The new agreement involves a larger financial commitment in the short term but has the inestimable advantage of allowing us to plan for the future, with a very clear sense of our financial liabilities. We feel confident that this will be a great encouragement to potential donors, who will be able to see exactly what their contributions will be used for. We estimate that the Societies (via HARL) need to raise an endowment of £3 million to secure the future of the library in the long term. We shall soon be launching our fund-raising campaign. More details of this will follow in the near future.

Catharine Edwards

Events round-up

The M.V. Taylor Lecture

The M.V. Taylor Lecture was delivered on 3 February at Senate House by Professor Jean-Louis Ferrary (an Honorary Member of the Society) on the subject: Scaevola, politics and ideology on the eve of the Social War: sixty years after Badian.

The lecture is available to watch on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_Yp0o_xCiw

Dura Europos

On 8th March, over 80 members and guests gathered in the Chancellor’s Hall at Senate House for an evening of lectures on the threatened Syrian site, Dura Europos. Professor Pierre Leriche gave an account of his twenty-five years of work there (The new image of Europos-Dura on the Euphrates in the light of 25 seasons of archaeological research) and Dr Jen Baird explored the fascinating archival evidence for the excavations (Yale’s Dura Archive: new excavation histories). The evening was introduced and chaired by Professor Simon James.

The lectures are available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YLnQ2UH9jwk
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USCS1U8FSqg

On 4th February, members and guests enjoyed a visit to...
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the Museum of London where curators, led by Dr Rebecca Redfern, have been studying the DNA of Londinium’s Roman inhabitants to reveal that London was an ethnically diverse city even then. This is the first multidisciplinary study of the inhabitants of a Roman city anywhere in the Empire. Through the analysis of ancient DNA of four different individuals, curators have been able to establish the hair and eye colour of each individual, and their chromosomal sex, and to identify the diseases they were suffering from.

A talk by Dr Redfern was followed by a guided visit to the exhibition.

Roman Archaeology Conference/Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference
Rome, 2016

The 2016 meeting of RAC/TRAC, hosted by Sapienza University of Rome in March, was the biggest and most ambitious joint-conference to date. More than 700 delegates from 34 countries were treated to a veritable feast of fascinating papers, lectures and debates over four full days, covering almost every conceivable aspect of Roman archaeology (277 papers were presented in 44 sessions!). Highlights of the conference included the splendid keynote lectures by Simon Keay on Trajanic Portus (whetting our appetites for the trip to the site on Sunday) and Fausto Zevi on the Privernum Fasti.

Just as it was impossible to see everything, it is of course difficult to convey adequately the range and depth of the presentations on offer. Feeling thoroughly spoilt for choice I attended a lively session on the possibility of integrating regional survey databases that generated heated debate on the first day. Innovative approaches and methodologies were particularly evident throughout, for instance in the panel on sensory approaches to movement and space, which explored journeys up the Tiber and the sounds of Ostia. Other fascinating sessions delved into Britain, Dacia and Lusitania, diverse identities in ancient Syria, transformations of community space, and standardization in the Roman world, among many other topics.

It was wonderful to see so many younger scholars taking part, both as speakers and in discussions. I had the particular pleasure of presenting the Society’s biennial Archaeology Dissertation Prize to Alasdair Gilmour of the University of Exeter (rather more informally dressed than he had intended as his suitcase had gone astray at Stansted!). His dissertation was a very accomplished socio-political analysis of coin issues in the Kentish region from 55 BC to 43 AD.
course by Prof. Christopher Smith, Director of the British School at Rome, whose insights, contacts and diplomatic skills were invaluable in brokering complex negotiations - yet another indication, if we needed one, of the absolutely vital role played by the BASIS institutes, above all the BSR, in enabling the international collaboration which is an essential component in world-leading research.

As President of the Roman Society I am delighted to see the Roman Archaeology Conference continue to grow and engage more people from more places than ever before. As is now traditional, the venue for the next conference switches back to the UK and it gives me very great pleasure to confirm that RAC2018 will take place at the University of Edinburgh. Details will be announced in due course via the RAC website (www.romansocietyrac.ac.uk), but I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Stories in Stone, Corinium Museum
The Corinium Museum in Cirencester hosted a day conference “Stories in Stone” in partnership with the Roman Society on the 14th May. The conference had been organised by the Museum’s Director Amanda Hart following the discovery of a Roman tombstone in the town in February 2015, which has recently gone on display in the Museum. The talks focused on the religious, iconographic and epigraphic significance of Romano-British sculpture from the Cotswolds.

Dr Alison Brookes, Head of Collections at the Corinium Museum, introduced the conference participants to the fine collection of Romano-British religious, funerary and architectural sculpture discovered in the town of Corinium Dobunnorum and the wider Cotswolds since the 1830s. The vast reserve collection includes many unseen and rare pieces, whilst two significant

Dissertation prize
At the opening ceremony, the Society’s BA dissertation prize was awarded to Alasdair Gilmour from Exeter University. Alasdair’s dissertation was entitled: Authority and Influence in Late Iron Age Inscribed Kentish Coinage.
acquisitions were made in 2016, including the Bodicacia tombstone and a votive relief portraying three *cucullati* and seated *Mater*. Professor Miranda Aldhouse-Green, Cardiff University, gave a thought-provoking lecture on fragmentation, iconoclasm and the treatment of body-parts as complete entities in Romano-British sculpture which explored the issues surrounding sculpture-breakage and suggested avenues of enquiry in order to offer a fuller understanding of intentional fragmentation.

Dr Kevin Haywood, Reading University, shared his research on identifying the source location of the limestone from Romano-British sculpture. Dr Martin Henig, Oxford University, gave a fascinating overview of gods, heroes and humans in funerary sculpture from southern Britain, whilst Penny Coombe highlighted her recent research on the scenes depicted on tower tombs. Neil Holbrook, Chief Executive of Cotswold Archaeology, talked about the archaeological context of sculptural finds with particular reference to the Bodicacia tombstone and the Corn Hall excavations, both in Cirencester. He also shared an image of a rare wing from a Roman bronze sculpture that had just been discovered during excavations in Gloucester. Amanda Hart ended the conference with a talk about the epigraphic evidence from the Corinium Museum tombstone collection and what that reveals about individuals and wider Roman society.

**Relief sculpture showing three hooded spirits or genii culullati and a seated mother goddess**

**Roman Society AGM and colloquium**

A large audience gathered for the colloquium: *Families and the Law in Rome* which followed the AGM on Saturday 4th June.

Dr Valentina Arena began with a lecture on *Roman Family Between Private and Public*, followed by Professor Alison Cooley, *Roman Families in the Ashmolean*, and Dr Margaret Mountford on *The Apion Family Archive*.

The afternoon finished with a panel discussion exploring some of the common themes between the papers.

**Participants at the colloquium. From left to right: Catharine Edwards, Valentina Arena, Alison Cooley and Margaret Mountford**

**Joint Roman Society and Friends of the British School at Athens Lecture**

The Roman Society was delighted to collaborate with the Friends of the BSA in holding this inaugural joint lecture. Professor Tim Whitmarsh delivered a fascinating lecture entitled *Historians Against Rome* to a packed lecture room at Senate House on 7th June.
Cycling around the Empire

On 1 June I set off on what I hope will be the first leg of a complete circuit of the perimeter of the Roman Empire. A route of 2200km along the Rhine, Moselle and Danube rivers to Vienna beckons – and all by bicycle! The trip will primarily be a research excursion, as I'll start a DPhil project in October aiming to set the provincial sculpture of Britain in its Continental context and ascertaining the links especially with the Rhineland.

I am very grateful indeed for support from the Roman Society’s General Fund, which is helping to speed me on my way. A full report will follow, but you can also track my progress as I go on my blog:
https://cyclingarchaeologist.wordpress.com

Penny Coombe

Time for a brief pause on a bridge over the Oude Rijn in the Netherlands. The Romans would probably have recognised this branch of the delta

Dates for your diary

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th October
Visit to Helmsley Archaeological Store and Cawthorn Camps

Helmsley Archaeological Store, Friday 9th October

The English Heritage Trust have kindly agreed to a Roman Society group visit to their archaeological store in Helmsley which holds archives from Guardianship sites across the north of England. The material includes the vast reserve stone collections from Housesteads and Corbridge, the Beadlam mosaic and material from Roman Aldborough.

The tour will be led by Susan Harrison, the English Heritage Collections Curator responsible for the store. It will start at 3pm and will last an hour. Numbers are limited to 20 and therefore booking is essential. There will be charge of £10 which will go to support the work of English Heritage.

Cawthorn Camps, Saturday 10th September

Members attending the Helmsley visit have the option of joining a visit to the well-preserved early Roman military earthworks at Cawthorn that will be led by Pete Wilson who excavated on the site in 1999 and 2000. The visit, which will involve considerable walking, will start at 10.30am and last around 1.5 hours. There is no charge for this visit. Members staying for the visit will be responsible for arranging their own accommodation etc.

Further information and a booking form are available on the website:
http://www.romansociety.org/events/exhibitions-visits.html

Thursday 13th October
Sunken Cities. Egypt’s Lost Worlds
Stevenson Lecture Theatre, British Museum

Lecture & Exhibition Viewing

The lost cities of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus lay at the mouth of the Nile, just east of modern Alexandria. Thonis-Heracleion was one of Egypt’s most important commercial centres for trade with the Mediterranean world and, with Canopus, was a major centre for the
worship of the Egyptian gods. Preserved and buried under the sea for over a thousand years, the objects in the exhibition range from magnificent colossal statues to intricate gold jewellery. Their amazing discovery by Franck Goddio and his team over the last twenty years is transforming our understanding of the deep connections between the ancient civilisations of Egypt and Greece. These spectacular underwater discoveries are displayed alongside objects from major Egyptian museums for the first time in the UK.

**Timetable**

10.30  Meet for coffee in the Clore Education Centre West Foyer
11.00-12.00  Lecture by the Exhibition’s Curator, Aurélia Masson-Berghoff (Stevenson Lecture Theatre)
12.00  Lunch – please make your own arrangements

Early afternoon  Staggered timed entry into the exhibition
4.00  Departure

**Tickets**

Tickets cost only £20 for members, and up to one guest. Tickets for additional guests cost £27.50

Further information and a booking form are available on the website: [http://www.romansociety.org/events/exhibitions-visits.html](http://www.romansociety.org/events/exhibitions-visits.html)

**Saturday 29th October**

**Romans and Natives in Central Britain**

A one day conference at the Devonshire Institute, Grassington BD23 5AA, hosted jointly with Dales Landscape Heritage and Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society (Prehistory and Roman Antiquities Sections).

Recent large projects, many funded by developers, have highlighted a growing interest in the frontier lands on either side of Hadrian’s Wall, an area that can loosely be called Central Britain. The focus of this geographical region is arguably centred on territory that came to be associated with the Brigantes, but a gulf still exists between the historical and archaeological evidence. From landscape studies and excavation to scientific artefact analysis, a range of papers at this conference will consider the evidence for interaction between native groups and Roman conquerors in and around this central zone.

**Speakers**

John Cruse, YAHS Yorkshire Quern Survey  
*Quern research in Central Britain*

Mike Haken, Roman Roads Research Group  
*The northern road network*

Fraser Hunter, National Museum of Scotland  
*Roman–Native interactions*

Sonia O’Connor, Bradford University  
*Artefact analysis: bone spoons*

Sue Stallibrass, Liverpool University  
*Animal bone analysis and interpretation*

Richard Tipping, Stirling University  
*Environmental impact in Central Britain*

Dave Went, Historic England  
*Investigating a Roman period landscape*

Tony Wilmott, Historic England  
*Roman impact around Hadrian’s Wall*

Pete Wilson, Rarey Archaeology  
*Roman impact behind the Wall*

Further information and a booking form are available on the website: [http://www.romansociety.org/events/exhibitions-visits.html](http://www.romansociety.org/events/exhibitions-visits.html)

Detail from the Bridgeness distance slab
Saturday 5th November
The Roman Empire Off Limits
BP Lecture Theatre, British Museum

A conference hosted with the Association for Roman Archaeology

This year we explore the archaeology of countries where sites have been damaged or destroyed, and where fieldwork is not currently possible. The experiences of Gertrude Bell remind us that the political and archaeological issues in these areas are hardly new.

Programme
1.30-1.45 Introduction
1.45-2.30 Dr Robert Bewley (EAMENA): Endangered Roman Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa
2.30-3.15 Dr Philip Kenrick (University of Oxford): Roman (and therefore European) heritage in Libya: What is at stake and what can be done?
3.15-3.45 Tea
3.45-4.30 Professor Kevin Butcher (University of Warwick): Civil war and its aftermath: Lebanon and Syria.
4.30-5.15 Dr Mark Jackson (Newcastle University): ‘It isn’t merely a responsibility to Iraq but to archaeology in general’; Gertrude Bell then and now
5.15-5.30 Closing remarks

A booking form may be downloaded from here: http://www.romansociety.org/events/conferences.html

Exempla – the good and the bad

At the heart of Livy’s monumental history of Rome is a single idea, repeatedly instantiated: that the past has something useful to teach the present. That utility lies in a series of exempla, paradigmatic actions which the reader might choose to imitate or avoid. Exemplarity – the term for the whole cognitive process from reading to imitation or rejection – thus comes in only two flavors: good and bad. The first we are meant to imitate, the other to avoid.

But how does one spot a bad exemplum? Livy offers little guidance: a bad exemplum is ‘rotten from beginning to end’, a formulation that implies a consistency of behaviour rarely manifested in the history. Take, for example, Brutus, the founder of the Republic, whose life and deeds Livy narrates in the first and second book of his history. As the closest thing the Republic had to a founding father, Brutus held a unique position in Roman historical memory, and we might reasonably assume that his life offered an important paradigm for Romans in years to come – that is, a textbook case of ‘good’ exemplarity. But the name Brutus also meant ‘heavy’ or ‘stupid’, and even though the founder allegedly adopted it as a means of survival in a cut-throat court, it nevertheless suggests a strand of deceit, a duplicity of character. Brutus was never been plainly what he seemed.

Further, Brutus’ career was long and complex, centred on the deep and active fault line between monarchy and republicanism. Ushering in the new regime required difficult choices, and those choices have read ambiguously to audiences since. For instance, shortly into Year One, Brutus drove his partner-in-revolution into exile for sharing the same name as the Tarquins, which Brutus claimed was agitating the people. The Republic could never rest while a Tarquin resided in it. It is easy to be cynical about Brutus’ intentions, not least since he was himself related to the erstwhile kings. But Livy, who doesn’t offer his own opinion on the episode, tells the story as part of a cluster of episodes which together throw the nascent Republic into decidedly dubious light.
For the very next thing Brutus does is preside over the treason trials of his own sons, condemned to death for colluding with the Tarquins and working towards their restoration. Serving as consul, their father has no choice but to preside over their execution. The episode can be read in multiple ways, most conventionally as a parallel to the execution of the young Manlius Torquatus, a classic exemplum both of paternal seueritas (‘sternness’) and of public duty prevailing over personal bonds and affection.

This focus, however, exploits only half of the exemplum’s rhetorical force. The most striking feature of Brutus’ grief is its emphatic tension with the demands of the consulship. Were Brutus not the father of the accused, the execution would have been a routine trial, no less dramatic perhaps, but without the moral dilemma introduced by ties of family. Filicide, in this context, is problematic not only for its own moral quandaries, but also because it replicates to some degree the perversion of family bonds under the monarchy to which Brutus himself had drawn particular attention. Tullia’s abuse of her father’s body finds a complement in Brutus’ execution of his own sons. Thus, the emotive response Livy clearly expects of his audience is, I suggest in my recent book, not only the result of the tragic plot, but also used as an interrogative device: just as familial indignation led to political change following the rape and death of Lucretia, so too it grounds a similar inquisition of the ethical dimensions of republican ideology. Put otherwise, the fact that Brutus is both consul and father is simultaneously comforting and disquieting; comforting because justice is seen to be done, and disquieting because that justice seems also cruel and unfeeling, making insupportable demands in the name of ideology.

Is Brutus, then, a bad exemplum? On Livy’s formulation, certainly not. His long and varied career, encompassing the expulsion of the kings and tremendous self-sacrifice, can hardly be called ‘rotten from start to finish’. Yet neither is he free from the taint of his harsher actions, a lesson that no public duty, no legal authority, can ever satisfactorily absolve one of wrongdoing. Rather, as both founder and filicide, he cuts a compellingly ambiguous figure, a Robespierre to Romulus’ Sun King. What price, therefore, republicanism? What price exemplarity? In showing the audience – not telling them – the answers, realised in the tumultuous lives of individuals and communities, Livy’s history speaks across the ages.

Learning Latin in Antiquity

Our need to learn Latin as a foreign language if we want to read Roman literature in the original is, we tend to think, one of the major barriers that distance us from the Romans. But in Antiquity many citizens of the Roman Empire, people who considered themselves Romans, were not native speakers of Latin; they too had to learn the language if they wanted to read Latin literature in the original, or if they travelled to Latin-speaking areas. What was their Latin-learning experience like? Did it resemble ours?

Fortunately, these are questions we can answer, because many of the textbooks and other materials used by ancient Latin learners survive, some on papyri and others via the medieval manuscript tradition. A selection of these materials has just been published, in Learning Latin the Ancient Way (Cambridge University Press). At first glance, these materials suggest that ancient Latin learning was radically different from the modern experience, because ancient Latin students, who were often speakers of ancient Greek, started with very different knowledge from modern students. They struggled to learn the Latin alphabet, which poses no trouble for us, but breezed through the genders and the case system (except for the ablative). The grammars they used were written entirely in Latin, which must have been tough going for beginners, but the texts they read were, at least at the elementary stages of language learning, fully bilingual: rather than being given a sentence or passage of Latin and asked to translate it, an ancient beginner was given a passage with translation and asked to memorize and recite it.
the same texts we do (Cicero’s *Catilinarians* and Virgil’s *Aeneid* were particularly popular in ancient Latin classes), and once they had got beyond the stage of needing a running translation they tackled these texts using the same kind of tools we use today. Ancient students prepared their Latin reading by looking up the hard words in dictionaries and commentaries and writing them into their copies of the texts; they also prepared to read the Latin aloud by marking long vowels.

Some of the most notable similarities, however, relate to how we learn modern rather than ancient languages. After all, in Antiquity Latin was a modern language, and many people learned it for purely practical reasons rather than in order to appreciate Latin poetry. In fact, some of these practical learners were so focused on oral proficiency that they did not bother learning the alphabet and relied on materials in Greek transliteration. Just as a modern learner of French might study dialogues in which someone goes to a café in Paris for a croissant, ancient learners of Latin studied dialogues in which people went to the public baths, bought food and clothes, borrowed money, got into fights, and rebuked people who came home drunk. Like their modern equivalents, these dialogues aimed to teach culture as much as language; now, therefore, they offer priceless insight into the daily lives of ordinary Romans during the empire.

Eleanor Dickey
University of Reading

New Film: How Migration Shaped Britain Part 1

With the introduction of the topic of ‘migration’ into OCR’s GCSE History curriculum, children can acquire a far more complex view of the nature of Britain’s population in the past. This new film presents the results of research into ancient mobility and migration in an accessible way for those taking their GCSE in history, as well as for others wanting a history that rightly includes migration. Hella Eckardt of the University of Reading worked with Ray Laurence and Julie Anderson of the University of Reading to create a script and to commission a short animated film, just 75 seconds, which will provide the public, schools and policy-makers with a better understanding of the long-term history of migration in this country.

The film uses two bodies of evidence; the first from the (now well-known to Society members) Roman Diasporas Project, and the second from the First World War. Thus it looks back into the early twentieth century and then further back into the first millennium CE. The film was made by Cognitive, a Folkestone-based animation studio, who have worked recently with BBC Radio 4 on a number of projects.

The film makes a fundamental point that migration is what humans have always done and are likely to continue to do in the future. Yet, migration is one of the key planks of debate as the UK negotiates with the EU in the light of the recent UK referendum, where migration will again be a focus of discussion, closely associated with issues of identity and this country’s cultural relationship with other European states.

Youtube link: [https://youtu.be/LGpn04KVjwg](https://youtu.be/LGpn04KVjwg)

Ray Laurence
University of Kent

From the field

Latest news from Roman Sicily

Excavations in 2015 at a late Roman villa at Gerace in the heart of Sicily have revealed a huge cache of carbonized seeds in two storerooms, burnt in a fire which destroyed the villa towards the end of the fifth century AD. Initial analysis shows that thousands of seeds of barley are present, and hundreds of bread wheat, as well as lentils, broad beans and grapes.
From the field

The find is an appropriate one in the land of Ceres, whose major cult centre lay ten miles north of Gerace, at Enna, and whose daughter Proserpina was snatched by Pluto on the banks of Lake Pergusa (according to one Sicilian version of the legend), just 7 km away. In an earlier building phase (the second quarter of the fourth century), the estate boasted an impressive basilican granary 50 m long with a paved stone floor and (probably) timber grain bins lining the walls: it calls to mind Peter Brown’s recent comment (Through the Eye of Needle [2013] 14) that ‘great granaries were a sight calculated to trigger disquiet in late Roman minds’. Its architect used the ‘Samian’ (or Ionian) foot (34.8 cm) in constructing it – an interesting example of Greek architectural conservatism in late Roman Sicily.

The late Roman villa, built after an earthquake had destroyed its predecessor (including the granary) in AD 361/3, seems to have belonged to a certain Philippianus, who had a mania for stamping his name or allusions to it on its roof-tiles. Some stamps associate him with the image of a victorious racehorse, but whether this was merely a play on his name (‘lover of horses’) or Philippianus was an agnomen to reflect a real passion for horses, in an island which was a well-known source of supply for circus ponies in the late Empire, is uncertain.


Roger Wilson
University of British Columbia

A tile stamp recording Philippianus’ name from Gerace, late 4th century AD

Roma/Amor on Wight

A recent metal-detected find from the Isle of Wight is the first discovery from Britain of an intriguing monogram brooch. The circular brooch, reported by a metal-detectorist to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in 2015, carries within its 34 mm diameter frame a monogram formed by three openwork letters in the form of serifed capitals. From left to right these read R, M and A, the M and the A being ligatured. This sequence is a lightly abbreviated form of R(o)ma, standing for Dea Roma, the deity personifying the city of Rome. A military connection can be suggested for this brooch type. Its distribution focuses on the garrisons of the Danube frontier and Dea Roma sometimes appears as decoration on Roman armour alongside other images of Rome and its martial traditions, such as Mars or the she-wolf and twins. By bearing her name its wearer hoped, perhaps, to enhance his chances of survival and victory in battle.

Other interpretations of the monogram are also possible. Followed from right to left, the letters instead read as Amor, ‘love’ or its divine male embodiment, Cupid. Since the synonym Roma-Amor was widely recognised in Antiquity, readers could recognise the playful incongruity of the alternative sequences. The letters could also be reordered as MAR, an abbreviated form of Mar(tis), ‘of Mars’, another protector.

The Isle of Wight’s position on a cross-channel trunk route may explain the presence of this exotic form, dated to the 2nd or 3rd centuries AD and made in central Europe. No forts are yet known on the island, but metal fittings from military dress are not uncommon finds in Roman Britain’s countryside, arriving as chance losses by
From the field

A curse from Lincolnshire

A likely non-literate curse tablet has been discovered on the Lincolnshire Wolds. It comprises a strip of lead, which was found with both ends of its long axis folded-in and tightly closed (c. 80 mm by 40 mm). On the outside and on the interior, in particular, are impressions where a nail has been laid on the lead strip, on its side, and impressed into the lead (presumably hammered down to create indents). Opened, the strip measures c. 160 mm in length. The impressions (average c. 10 mm in length) are arranged laterally to the (opened) strip and evoke the impression of writing, perhaps by intention mimicking what one might see on an inscribed defixio.

Martin Henig has seen photos of the find, and notes a parallel with items discussed by Balliot and Symmons (2012) and, not least, that it was common for the ‘fixing’ of a curse (de fixio) that it be ‘nailed up’ (cf. RIB I nos 6, 7 and 221). Roger Tomlin draws attention to tablets with scratches not writing (‘pseudo-inscriptions’) amongst the collection from Bath (Tomlin 1988). The find comes from a field near Hatcliffe village. The University of Kent have been working in this area of the central Wolds since 1998 and along the valley of the Waithe by Hatcliffe Top since 2007.

This find was made at a location a little distant from our excavation site, where project detectorist Stan Little recovered it from ploughsoil, together with several coins and other metal items of Roman to Medieval date but where no pottery or settlement evidence occurs. Might there have been a shrine hereabouts? The present item follows the recovery of a literate tablet from our work at the roadside settlement at Nettleton/Rothwell reported by Roger Tomlin (Willis 2013). Whilst the find reported here was unstratified, its immediate association with other Roman items and the presence of a literate curse from nearby (11 kilometres away) lends weight to an interpretation that it represents a message invoking the Roman gods by a non-literate believer, wherein the message or magic was recited as the hammer fell upon the symbolic nails.

Willis, S. 2013. The Roman Roadside Settlement and Multi-Period Ritual Complex at Nettleton and Rothwell, Lincolnshire. The Central Lincolnshire Wolds Research Project, Volume 1, Canterbury: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd and The University of Kent.

John Pearce
King’s College London

Frank Basford
Isle of Wight Archaeology and Historic Environment Service/Portable Antiquities Scheme

Sally Worrell
University College London/Portable Antiquities Scheme

Roma brooch from near Newport, Isle of Wight (IOW-DA5661)

The curse as found

soldiers, scrap metal or as mementoes of service taken home by veterans to the family farm.

Further information may be found on the PAS website under the brooch’s identifying code IOW-DA5661 (www.finds.org.uk).
Revealing a ‘new’ wing at Brading Roman Villa

The north range aisled hall at Brading Roman villa was excavated between April 1880 and September 1881 and dates from the late second or early third century AD. After the 1881 excavations the majority of the site was reburied, remaining undisturbed until 2008 when Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe started a three-year series of excavations. Because of the costs involved, it was not possible to leave the remains on display and they were back filled in 2010.

The hall was 44 m by 15 m, with two lines of large padstones dug into the ground along its length to carry substantial oak pillars and cross-beams supporting the slab-stone roof. The estimated pitch of the roof is 35%, requiring 25 slabs to cover one square metre. Each slab weighed on average 5.5 kg. About 21,800 slabs with a total weight of 120,000 kg (c. 119 tons) would have been needed. The west end of the hall provided private accommodation for the owner and his family – there were nine rooms, one of them with a hypocaust system, and a great barn area at the centre for the estate’s daily activities. Later additions were a bath-suite and a corn drying oven at the east end, separated from the main area by partitioning.

In 2015, the Friends of Brading Roman Villa took on the task of marking out the outline of the monument in chalk. It was obvious that this would be too big a job for the volunteers to physically undertake, but a generous donation from Mr Michael James enabled a specialist landscape firm to complete the work. The work also included renovating an Edwardian shed covering the hypocaust system and landscaping of the surrounding area, enabling ease of access to the site. Using Sir Barry Cunliffe’s plan of the building, volunteers used GPS points to outline the buildings with grass ‘paint’. As it was not possible to use heavy machinery, approximately 25 tons of earth was removed by hand by the landscaping team, and 20 tons of crushed chalk was used to define the outline of the monument.

New surveys at Verulamium

In 2013, as part of the AHRC funded project Sensing the Late Iron Age and Roman Past: Geophysics and the Landscape of Hertfordshire, a magnetometry survey was undertaken of Verulamium Park, St Albans, which covers the south-west half of the Roman city. The preliminary results will be published in Archaeological Prospection later this year. In 2015, the Community Archaeology Geophysics Group (CAGG), a cross-archaeological society team created by the original grant, began surveying the north-east part of the town that lies within the Gorhambury Estate. The team had access to the land during August and completed 17.5 hectares of survey using a Foerster cart-based magnetometer. In addition, we were able to borrow a Malå GPR from the Centre for...
Magnetometry map of Verulamium Park, St Albans

Doctoral Training in Science and Engineering in Arts Heritage and Archaeology (SEAHA) with which we completed four hectares of survey.

The initial examination of the data has revealed a plethora of features (see figure). The so-called ‘1955 ditch’ — the later first century AD boundary of the town — shows clearly. Large town houses are evident, such as Insula XXVI building 2 and Insula XXX building 6. A concentration of smaller buildings occur around the cross-roads of Streets 11 and 25.

Two highly magnetic structures can be seen in the data. The northernmost of these was also surveyed using ground penetrating radar (GPR) but no stone foundations were detected. Our initial interpretation is that these represent timber structures that were destroyed by fire. One of the more enigmatic features is a long ‘sinuous’ ditch that runs across the north of our surveyed area. Our preliminary interpretation, suggested by CAGG member Mike Smith, is that this may represent an aqueduct.

We are grateful to the Earl of Verulam for allowing us access. We intend to continue the survey this August, probably completing the area within the town’s walls in 2017. Interim results of all CAGG’s surveys can be found at hertsgeosurvey.wordpress.com.

Kris Lockyear
University College London
Ellen Shlasko
CAGG

Conferences and meetings

The Roman Finds Group

9th-10th September 2016

This year the Roman Finds Group’s autumn meeting is taking place at the University of Reading, where it will be kindly hosted by the Department of Archaeology.

The conference will focus on the archaeology of southern Britain, with five sessions showcasing the excellent finds research being carried out in the region. Session titles are as follows: 1) Ongoing Research at the University of Reading; 2) Urban Southern Britain; 3) Roman London; 4) Rural Southern Britain; and 5) Small Finds, Short Papers (10 minute papers). Research posters and finds from the Silchester excavations will also be on display over the two days.

Confirmed speakers include: Nina Crummy (keynote), Hilary Cool, Hella Eckardt, Ruth Shaffrey, Martin Pitts, Michael Marshall, Ben Paites, Glynn Davies and Richard Hobbs.

The full conference line-up and details about attending will be available soon on the Roman Finds Group website (www.romanfindsgroup.org.uk), Twitter (@RomanFindsGrp) and in July’s edition of the RFG newsletter Lucerna. If you have any questions about the event please contact the Organising Committee: RFGReading2016@gmail.com.
**August Events at Brading Roman Villa**

**Living History Weekend: 6th-7th August 2016**

This weekend will comprise a living history display and enactments, consisting of a children’s army, weaponry, Roman cooking, metal working, military training, Roman soldiers and shop keepers. Activities will include dressing up in armour and enlisting as a legionary for the day. Members of three Roman legions will be in attendance, the Legio XIIIii (Roman Military Research Society), Legio XX (Deva Victrix) and Legio VIII Augusta. This is a free event, including parking. See [www.bradingromanvilla.org.uk](http://www.bradingromanvilla.org.uk) for more details.

As part of the weekend join us for a gladiatorial spectacle and reconstruction of Roman games featuring performers from the Ridley Scott movie *Gladiators* and television shows including *Life & Death in Rome* and the BBC’s *Horrible Histories*.

Tickets are on sale at Brading Roman Villa: Adults £14.90; Children and concessions £12.50; Family ticket (which must be used together) for 2 adults and up to 3 children (to age of 16) £49.95.

**Meet the Gladiators Sponsorship event: 5th August**

As part of the Living History weekend please join us for the evening on Friday 5th August to sponsor the gladiatorial games. The event will begin at 6 pm with a talk on the Roman games by Dr Jerry Toner, Fellow and Director of Studies, Churchill College and Director of Studies at Hughes Hall, Cambridge. A buffet meal and a glass of wine will be served in the interval, followed by the gladiatorial event. Feel free to dress as a Roman and join us for a special night out!

Tickets are £35 per person (Gift Aid is available to UK tax payers). To reserve tickets please contact David Reeves on 07775 606 812 or by emailing [friends@bradingromanvilla.org.uk](mailto:friends@bradingromanvilla.org.uk).

**British Epigraphy Society Autumn Colloquium**

12th November 2016

Full information will be available on our website this summer. All welcome. [http://www.britishepigraphysociety.org/](http://www.britishepigraphysociety.org/)

Registered charity number: 1090249

**Berkshire Archaeology Society’s Saturday Afternoon Talks**

September 2016-April 2017

Held at 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm at The RISC Centre, London Street. Reading, RG1 4PS. (01189 586692).

Members and non-Members welcome at no cost.

17th September 2016

Henry Russell

*Timber buildings: How earlier buildings may be concealed behind later remodelling*

15th October 2016

Dr Diane Davies

*The Ancient Maya: Fact and fantasy*
Main topics of the conference will include relations between Roman imperialism and regional/local communities or marginal social categories and the creation of different life experiences; social and cultural dynamics of interaction; complexity and variety of socio-cultural realities and imaginations; diversity of construction and communication of identities; reflexive history of Roman studies; Roman heritage.

Confirmed speakers to include Inés Sastre Prats (Instituto de Historia, Madrid), Ton Derks (VU University, Amsterdam), Jörg Rüpke (University of Erfurt), Martin Pitts (University of Exeter), Alka Domić Kunić (Croatian Academy of Science and Arts), Dragana Grbić (Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts), Danijel Džino (Macquarie University).

The price for all four days is €120, price per day is €35. Price includes accommodation, meals and all resources of the Petnica Science Center.

For further details please contact:
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The Departments of Archaeology and Classics would like to invite you to the 2017 Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, 28th-31st March at Durham University.

• Innovative • Multidisciplinary • International •

Call for sessions to follow, save the date!
Easter 2016 saw the re-opening of the Clayton Museum at Chesters Fort, Hadrian’s Wall. The collection on display is the result of 50 years of excavation on Hadrian’s Wall by John Clayton in the 19th century. This re-interpretation project aimed to bring the Clayton story to the forefront, both on the site and in the museum. New panels on site explain the Roman remains alongside a Clayton vignette, telling both the Roman and Victorian story. A new family trail encourages visitors to explore the full extent of the site and really understand the activities in each part of the fort.

Within the museum the Victorian atmosphere has been enhanced, with more sympathetic lighting and interpretation which reflects the original 19th century display. Cases in the main gallery look at the life of Clayton, his land purchases and excavations (Fig. 1), alongside cases on individual artefact groups. In the smaller gallery a new display in a historic piece of furniture places Clayton in his wider antiquarian network (Fig. 2). Panels above the cases place the objects into their Roman context, but also utilise archive images to show visitors how Clayton and his colleagues viewed these items (Fig. 3).

A new museum guide in the form of a kindle echoes the original 1900 hand-list available to the first visitors. Its case imitates a 19th century book with gilded edging and the contents allow the visitors to find out more about each object in a case. Highlight labels draw attention to some of the key pieces of stonework amongst the vast array. Overall, this project has really focused on bringing out the importance of Clayton in saving parts of Hadrian’s Wall, his collection legacy and Chesters fort as we see it today. Please do visit and let us know what you think of the changes.

Frances McIntosh, English Heritage
Frances.mcintosh@english-heritage.org.uk

Books

David J Breeze
2016 The Roman Army
London: Bloomsbury.

Bloomsbury have published this account of the Roman army by David Breeze in their Bristol Classics series. It includes discussions of the history of the army, its structures, tactics, duties and developments as well as describing some of its most significant battles.
Learning/Books

WallQuest, Walking Hadrian's Wall: The Route through the Urban Areas, Newcastle upon Tyne

This is a guide to the visible sections of Hadrian's Wall in urban Tyneside. It is based on research carried as part of a community archaeology project, WallQuest (http://www.hadrianswallquest.co.uk/). It includes maps showing walking routes through the area, and is supported by an app 'Walking Hadrian's Wall'.

R.J.A Wilson, 2016 Caddedi on the Tellaro. A Late Roman Villa in Sicily and its Mosaics
BABESCH Supplement 28, Leuven: Peeters
ISBN: 9789042933880. €80
http://www.peeters-leuven.be

The late Roman villa of Caddedi, near Noto in south-east Sicily, first came to light over forty years ago. Built in the second half of the fourth century AD, it is chiefly known for its three figured mosaic pavements, which after careful restoration in Syracuse were returned to the site prior to its opening to the public in 2008. This book describes in detail these and other pavements at Caddedi, and comes to the conclusion that, as at the more famous villa of Casale near Piazza Armerina a generation before, they are likely to be the work of North African mosaicists fulfilling an overseas commission for the villa’s owner.

The book attempts to place the mosaics and the villa itself in their wider Sicilian and Mediterranean context, with discussion ranging over such topics as late Roman villas elsewhere in Sicily, the iconography of myth and personification, peacock-feather helmets, the participation of the military in the Roman animal trade, the parallels between the mosaic floors of Caddedi and those of Roman North Africa, the development of a new Roman saddle type in the fourth century, and military footwear fashionable at the same time. Of particular note are the 197 illustrations, 184 of them in full colour, which highlight the vividness and vivacity, as well as the polychromatic variety, of these stunning late Roman mosaics.

Patricia Witts, 2016 A Mosaic Menagerie. Creatures of Land, Sea and Sky in Romano-British Mosaics
BAR British Series 625, Oxford
ISBN 781407315416. £53
Order Online: http://www.barpublishing.com/a-mosaic-menagerie.html

Over 700 creatures of land, sea and sky have been recorded from at least 140 Romano-British mosaics.

This comprehensively illustrated book is the first detailed study of them. It identifies and discusses the animals, assesses their role in floor decoration, and explains how they were much more than appealing decoration.
This book offers an analysis of the varying and divergent practices of material culture in the British provinces under Roman rule by examining patterns in depositional practice as well as the geographic and site distribution of copper alloy vessels in Roman Britain. It also seeks to offer a useful classification system for the study and discussion of copper alloy vessels by adapting established typology as well as introducing new vocabulary. Patterns in the deposition of vessel forms during the Roman period in Britain are analysed, and their spatial relation to other objects and their use of decoration is addressed. Insight is also offered into the functional application of these objects and how changing cultural practice led to the shifting of use from smaller vessel forms in the early Roman period to larger vessel forms by late Antiquity. Additionally, the discussion offered in this book serves as a case study in the application of small finds research to the larger theoretical debates concerning Rome and its provinces.

Copies can be ordered directly from Oxbow Books, 10 Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford OX1 2EW. Tel: 01865 256780. Email: oxbow@oxbowbooks.com. Website: www.oxbowbooks.com

This volume draws together for the first time all the fieldwork known to have taken place at Silchester from the earliest located trenches in the 1720s up through the modern campaigns of Fulford. It integrates this work with a new geophysical survey of 217 ha to provide a new overarching narrative for the town.

The volume starts with a historiography of work on the city from the earliest antiquarian investigations. This sense of changing interpretations of the site permeates all the later discussion, showing how new discoveries have transformed understandings.

The core of the volume contains the empirical data, mapping the past excavations alongside evidence from aerial photography, fieldwalking, LiDAR and geophysics. The final sections provide essays in interpretation, with thematic reviews of: the defences; the development of the oppidum; the military connection; the mortuary landscape; trade and industry; and public entertainment. Finally a narrative overview examines how the town’s remains have been interpreted within an historical setting.

Cover Image: The Structured Deposit from Kingston Deverill reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (used by kind permission of Katie Hinds, © Courtesy of the Portable Antiquities Scheme)
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