



Editorial

Many editorials will this year reflect on the impact of COVID-19, but in the case of *Britannia* 2020 this has been minimal. Papers have come in as expected and the copy editing has been carried out efficiently but remotely in Britain, Australia and India. Sincere thanks to the CUP team and to our new copy editor Gina Coulthard!

The loss of income from visitors caused by the pandemic has, however, had a very serious impact on many Roman sites, especially those run by charitable trusts, as evidenced by recent appeals for financial support from Fishbourne and Brading villas. The knock-on effects of the crisis on university life and on professional archaeology will be felt for some time and may be reflected in fewer submitted papers next year. It has also meant that I am unable to carry on in my role as sole editor for the intended four years. My 'day job' as head of a busy archaeology department is seeing a significantly increased workload required to deal with the financial and educational challenges caused by the virus. Will Bowden, editor elect for 2023, will therefore take over for the 2022 volume. The editorial committee, together with some welcome help from Michael Fulford (a former editor of *Britannia*) will make the editorial process even more of a team effort for 2021.

Last year, a review of contributor data from the last ten years highlighted patterns relating to gender, professional affiliation and the types of topics covered in the pages of this journal, and I made some suggestions as to how the diversity and range of contributions could be increased. The editorial committee now reviews this information at its twice-yearly meetings. At the last meeting, we discussed ways of breaking down barriers for submissions, especially from PhD students and community projects. 'Spotlight on new research' will summarise information on PhD theses completed in the previous year, much as 'Sites explored' does for fieldwork. This information has been gathered from Ethos (<https://ethos.bl.uk/Home.do>), university supervisors and the TRAC Committee, and each of the PhD students listed has provided an abstract. It is hoped that this additional section will not only signpost readers to current research, but also encourage newly qualified colleagues to submit papers based on their research to *Britannia*. The committee would also like to encourage community projects, which may currently self-publish interim reports only, to submit summaries of their work to 'Roman Britain in 20XY'. Finally, we are very keen to receive papers that aim explicitly to debate a topic or papers that together could form a themed section of the journal.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW RESEARCH: PHD THESES ON ROMAN BRITAIN COMPLETED IN 2019

Carroll, E. 2019: *Burning by Numbers: Cremation and Cultural Transitions in Late Iron Age and Roman Britain (100 B.C. – A.D. 410)*. University of Reading; supervisors: M. Lewis and J. Creighton. e.l.carroll@hotmail.co.uk.

Late Iron Age and Roman Britain witnessed numerous cultural transitions. While these processes have received significant attention with regards to material culture, it is only recently that bioarchaeological research has considered the role of funerary practices and what they can

contribute to our understanding of these phenomena. The primary mortuary rite during this period was cremation. Although previously thought to contain limited information compared to inhumation burials, current research now recognises that cremations hold the potential to reconstruct entire funerary sequences, from the building of the pyre to the final deposition within the grave. Recent methodological advances in the field allow us to infer a wealth of information concerning burning practices and pyre technology that could not be achieved before. This study conducted a large survey of 2,375 cremation deposits from Britain, dating from the first century B.C. to the fourth century A.D., to establish trends according to both region and settlement type. The results found that while age, grave and pyre goods remained consistent across all settlement types and regions, the male/female ratio and burial type changed following the Roman conquest. This demonstrates the prolonged continuation of late Iron Age traditions, alongside the uptake of more Roman-styled customs. Further trends were identified; these are primarily rooted in different methodological practices adopted by different analysts and emphasise the need for standardisation. The primary analysis in this thesis focused on 102 cremation deposits from Hertfordshire combining archaeological, environmental and osteological data. It found that cremation technology differed on inter-cemetery and settlement-type bases. It is possible that these differences were caused by the introduction of *ustores* or professional cremators to Roman towns, representing increased ‘industrialisation’ of funerary practices. This project has also developed a new method for quantifying microscopic heat-induced alterations in burned bone using petrography. This technique reduces the risk of inter-observer bias that hinders other, qualitative methods and allows for the statistical categorisation of burning intensity. Overall, this thesis has demonstrated the value of funerary data (cremation) in the examination of cultural transitions in late Iron Age and Roman Britain; it highlights how society was a fluid concept characterised by the continuation of pre-conquest ideals, the uptake of Roman customs and the creation of new cultural identities.

Cottam, S.E. 2019: *Developments in Roman Glass Vessels in Italy, France, Britain and the Lower Rhineland, c. A.D. 40 – A.D. 110*. King’s College London; supervisors: J. Pearce and W. Wootton. sallycottam@hotmail.com.

This thesis focuses on Roman glass vessels from the mid-first century A.D. to the very early second century A.D., specifically c. A.D. 40–110. These years have long been identified as representing a significant episode in the story of ancient glass and witness a particularly remarkable period of change in glass-vessel production across the Roman world. The purpose of this thesis is to further our understanding of the nature of these changes, when they occurred and the causes behind them. The first chapter presents the background to the research and demonstrates how the thesis relates to previous work in this field. The following three chapters focus on identifying those aspects of glass vessels that changed during this period and establishing a firmer chronological framework for these developments than has previously been possible. This is achieved by the analysis of carefully selected, closely dated glass assemblages from Britain, France, the lower Rhineland and Italy. The rationale behind the choice of sites is explained and factors influencing dating and quantification are discussed. Glass vessels from the selected sites are examined in detail in chapter 4 and information relating to changes in form, colour and decoration are analysed and discussed in chapters 5 and 6. The implications of these findings are then assessed in the context of the development of the early Imperial glass industry, particularly in relation to raw glass manufacture, scales of production, relationships between glass-workers and their materials, and the impact of glass-working techniques on vessel form and finishing. The final chapter discusses wider factors in the Roman world that might have played an influential role in the manufacture and consumption of glass during this period – such as patterns of production and trade, political and military events, and trends in other

categories of decorative media – and proposes new approaches to understanding glass development during this period.

Dawson, M.J. 2019: *Rethinking Small Town Market Status in Roman Britain: A Review of the Data for Five Case Studies in the Thames Valley Region*. University of Kent, Canterbury; supervisor: S. Willis. mary-janedawson@hotmail.co.uk.

Small towns in Roman Britain have traditionally been considered market centres, yet this role has been neither widely investigated nor established empirically. Many small towns have now been identified in the landscape and been subject to archaeological interventions, resulting in an accumulation of data of varying quality. These settlements remain little understood in the wider context of Roman Britain, ensuring that the lack of any alternative characterisation has been met by continued belief in a market-centre role.

The aim of this research is to rethink the role of small towns as market centres using a systematic review of the archaeological data, with two objectives: to examine the veracity of the claims made for market-centre status and to establish an alternative characterisation of these settlements based on a fresh interpretation of key evidence. The thesis is arranged in sections. The first conducts a thorough appraisal of the pertinent literature and theoretical background which have informed the research methodology employed here. The second section considers the data for five case studies for the purpose of appraising the nature of specific claims for market-centre status. The case-study small towns and local rural settlements (within a radius of 10 km) have been carefully selected for their market-centre potential, based on their geographical locations peripheral to the new major Roman centre of *Londinium*, on major roads, with access to the Thames Valley river system and as central places in relation to agricultural hinterlands. The towns selected are Roman Braughing, Dorchester-on-Thames, Ewell, Roman Neatham and Staines-upon-Thames. The third section reviews the archaeological evidence for production, storage, preparation and distribution of food staples (meat and cereal), followed by detailed assessment of pottery and quern-stone assemblages from both individual towns and hinterland rural sites.

The findings of sections two and three support the conclusion that the small towns were not market centres in the traditional sense: the evidence for specific claims is very weak. Fresh interpretation of the evidence, however, strongly suggests that these towns should be better understood as independent agricultural communities. It is argued that, although they developed as a response to change under Roman authority, these small towns did not fulfil any organised role as Roman market centres, but traded goods as needed through established socio-economic networks and with passing road travellers.

Felice, E.M. 2019: *Multilingualism and Language Choice in the Imperial Roman Army*. University of Oxford; supervisors: A. Mullen and P. Probert. egiziamaria.felice@gmail.com.

This thesis is a sociolinguistic study of language choice in the Roman army, focused on the period between the first and the third centuries A.D. Its main aims are to revisit our understanding of language choice in military administration and to identify patterns of language choice in communication between soldiers and their associates. These themes are approached through a tripartite framework inspired by discourse analysis, which includes the concepts of audience, identity and practicality. The case studies examined in the thesis show that Latin was not the only language of military administration, but that it played a vital role in written contexts where the army acted in its institutional function. This ‘institutional’ use of Latin is reflected at the interpersonal level, where it enabled soldiers and their associates to express belonging to the military experience. Latin and other languages appear also as *lingue franche* and as markers of different types of identities, often connected with questions of prestige. Overall, this thesis

enables us to refine our understanding of the reasons that prompted soldiers and their associates to use one language instead of another, when a choice was available, and to renew our appreciation of cross-linguistic communication in Roman military environments.

Jarman, R. 2019: *Sweet Chestnut (Castanea sativa Mill.) in Britain: A Multi-Proxy Approach to Determine its Origins and Cultural Significance*. University of Gloucestershire; supervisors: F. Chambers and J. Webb. robinajarman@gmail.com.

Sweet chestnut, *Castanea sativa*, has been regarded as a Roman archaeophyte in Britain since the 18th century A.D. This research re-examines this thesis, collecting new evidence from genetic, dendrochronological, archaeological and historical analyses, and employing archived specimens, published reports, peer review and novel fieldwork. The main research and original fieldwork focuses on England and Wales, within a British, Irish and continental European context. Sweet-chestnut landscapes are identified as ancient enclosures, ancient coppice woods, historic boundaries, historic gardens, historic deer parks and designed parklands, historic formal avenues and more recent high forest and production coppice. Genetic analysis determines that the oldest British sweet chestnut trees/stools derived from parts of France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Romania. Some of these sources were refugia during the Last Glacial Maximum for sweet chestnut and other nut-bearing trees (oak, hazel, beech). Innovative clonal analysis verifies individual tree and stool antiquity for the first time. Modern (post-A.D. 1800) trees and coppice in Britain are genetically differentiated from ancient trees and coppice. Historic garden trees (from the 12th to 13th century A.D.) originated in northern Portugal and northern Spain; and Welsh sites are differentiated from Irish and English sites. Dendrochronological analysis reveals that sweet chestnut tree-ring series replicate oak reference chronologies, so archaeological specimens of sweet chestnut wood can now be dated precisely. Several iconic ancient trees are dated accurately for the first time, the oldest to A.D. 1640. Archived specimens purported to be 'Roman' 'sweet chestnut' are examined and rejected as neither. No pre-A.D. 650 sweet chestnut finds could be verified as having grown in Britain. The earliest written record of sweet chestnut growing in Britain is from A.D. 1113. Other 12th-century A.D. records evince nut growing and coppicing: these sites pre-date their written records, possibly by several centuries. Overall, no evidence is found for the 'Roman introduction' thesis. Further research should focus on finding sweet chestnut pollen and wood specimens amenable to dating.

Now published as Jarman, R., Hazell, Z., Campbell, G., Webb, J., and Chambers, F. 2019: 'Sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa* Mill.) in Britain: re-assessment of its status as a Roman archaeophyte', *Britannia* 50, 49–74; PhD at <http://eprints.glos.ac.uk/7484/> (accessed June 2020).

Keeble, H.D. 2019: *Roman Archaeology in the News: The Contribution Made by the Provincial Press to the Dissemination of Roman Archaeological Information in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. University of Leicester; supervisors: S. Scott and J. Taylor. heather.dw.keeble@gmail.com.

This research examines the role of the provincial press in disseminating Roman archaeological information between 1800 and 1899. Many archaeological discoveries in this period were made accidentally, often by labourers, but little consideration has been given to the consequences of this and, in particular, to what happened to this information. This study looks at the ways in which archaeological knowledge was selected and exchanged, starting at the point of discovery and following its publication route, possibly through a local newspaper and going further afield to the regional and metropolitan press and/or crossing over into the 'professional' sphere of journals. Focus is placed on two Yorkshire case studies, York and Ilkley, setting the newspaper reporting within its locality and against the wider context of contemporary Romano-British archaeology. Analysis of the newspaper content demonstrates that it reflects the editors' and reporters' understanding of archaeology and their views of the Roman past. It also highlights

the exposure that the reading public had to Roman archaeology through this medium. This research reveals that local newspapers played a key role in spreading Roman archaeological information, not only as chroniclers of new discoveries, but also as communication tools for antiquarian societies and as platforms for individual antiquarians to showcase their knowledge and share it with a wider public. The flow of archaeological information is complex, with each stage being filtered for a variety of motives. Only close examination of the whole process can lead to an understanding of the influencing factors and therefore the bias of the information that is later claimed as ‘fact’ and which guided the development of archaeology itself.

Lauritsen, M.L. 2019: *Exeter from Fort to City: A Faunal Perspective*. University of Exeter; supervisors: A. Outram and S. Rippon. malene.lauritsen91@gmail.com.

This research project investigates Roman, medieval and post-medieval faunal material from Exeter in the south-west of England. This analysis aims to examine variation over time, as well as spatial variation within the city, such as, for example, patterns of food consumption within higher and lower status areas of Exeter and between secular and monastic communities. To study the variation, a range of analyses are employed, in particular butchery analysis, fracture patterns and metrics, alongside complementary techniques such as skeletal-part abundances, age profiles and taphonomy. The analyses confirm the broad patterns identified in previous studies by Mark Maltby and Bruce Levitan, and achieve a better understanding of the spatial variation and which methods are best suited to differentiate social groups.

Wilkinson, R.E. 2019: *Iron Age Metalwork Object Hoards of Britain, 800 B.C. – A.D. 100*. University of Leicester; supervisors: C. Haselgrove and Julia Farley (British Museum). rachel_wilkinson31@hotmail.com.

This thesis investigates Iron Age metalwork object hoards from Britain (800 B.C. – A.D. 100), identifying geographical and chronological patterns in hoard contents, landscape locations and depositional processes. This significantly advances our understanding of object selection and the practices surrounding deposition in different times and places. Results demonstrate some continuation in depositional practice from the late Bronze Age through to the earliest Iron Age, with a shift to site-focused deposition in the middle Iron Age. From the Roman Iron Age onwards (after 150 B.C.) object hoards were deposited at an increasingly diverse range of sites, with a wider variety of object types represented. A new object form, the coin, was introduced to Britain in the second century B.C., and this thesis examines the findspots of both object and coin hoards to identify similarities and differences in deposition. Two case-study areas, south-west and south-east England, are selected to explore local variation in hoarding practices, in particular the relationship between metalwork hoarding and other forms of deposition, including burial of material in settlements, and contemporary finds from graves, rivers and shrine sites.

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