

The RAG

Climate Change during the Roman Empire

—*Good or Bad?*

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Is this a native American tepee?
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In the 1950s and 1960s humankind was doomed by an imminent global thermonuclear war. In the 1970s and 1980s we were doomed by a worldwide population explosion. In both cases the socio-political responses have so far obviated the worst risks. We are currently doomed by climate change, although for some years now, perhaps a decade, there has always been a decade left within which we can save ourselves. Why it is not nine and a half years, or eleven and three quarters is not clear. And why it is not already too late is more amazing than the idea that something significant will be done about it. The effect of carbon on climate seems to be calibrated against the glacial pace of the progress of international cooperation. Maybe that is good: the cooperation seems unlikely ever to happen and we shall have a decade left indefinitely.

Apparently the doomsday clock established in 1947 is no longer overwhelmingly governed by the threat of nuclear conflagration. Its minute hand was on 7 minutes to midnight until recently when it was advanced by 2 minutes to reflect the massive threat of manmade environmental impacts on the earth's ecosystems and climate. The vast majority of the world's people do not have the time, so to speak, to worry about the clock: they are too busy trying to feed, clothe and shelter themselves. The clock is a conceit of the west; as is the idea that humanity has reached the point where it can tweak the world's temperature regimes.

Enter the Palaeoclimatologists. These are students of ancient climates. Amongst the things that contain the data they need are permanent icefields which in effect accumulate and retain a permanent record of change in atmospheric conditions. Core samples supply the evidence. In a similar way trees maintain a record of the conditions in which they grow, and the record is contained in their growth rings.

The journal *Science* has recently published a study of climate change over the past 2,500 years conducted by the Swiss Federal Research Institute for Forrest, Snow and Landscape. An international collaboration, which

included archaeologists, produced some 9000 bits of wood sourced in Western Europe, including from ancient ruins, providing a profile for the 2,500 year period. The profile enabled the palaeoclimatologists to determine, within the statistical limits of the study, the annual rainfall and temperature for the period of the study. Growth rates vary in direct proportion with each of temperature and rainfall, and are reflected in tree ring width. The results of the study were correlated with the record of social and political history over the period, calibrated against an oak tree ring-width chronology. The findings were that periods of Roman prosperity were associated with especially warm and wet summers, whilst exceptional variation in climate occurred over the third to sixth centuries AD. The third century AD was the period of barbarian invasion and widespread political unrest for ancient Rome, and the report made a point of noting the correlation of that with what it referred to as the third century 'drying'.

It may be a lot of nonsense of course but there followed upon this report predictable headlines that had the Roman empire being 'brought down' by climate change. A negative headline is more to be desired than a positive one, but the story could just have easily been reported as 'climate change made Rome's enemies prosperous.' That headline would have been as silly as the negative one, and it would have been politically incorrect as well because we are not supposed to say (or think) anything positive about climate change.

Change, like climate, is neither inherently good nor inherently bad. Climate change is a feature of the behaviour of the earth as a planet (of which human beings are a natural component), and the capacity for change is a feature of the human species as a socio-political organism.

The effect of climate change on humankind depends of course on the socio-political response to it, but it is that response that is good or bad—one way or another, the change is inevitable.

Ed.

How an Archaeological Collection Happened

Joan Howard

Our RAG member Joan Howard shares her home with a fine collection of ancient archaeological artefacts put together in the course of some twelve years when she lived in the Middle East pursuant to the career of her husband Colonel Keith Howard who had been a distinguished war veteran. She tells here how she came by these artefacts and highlights the Roman material.

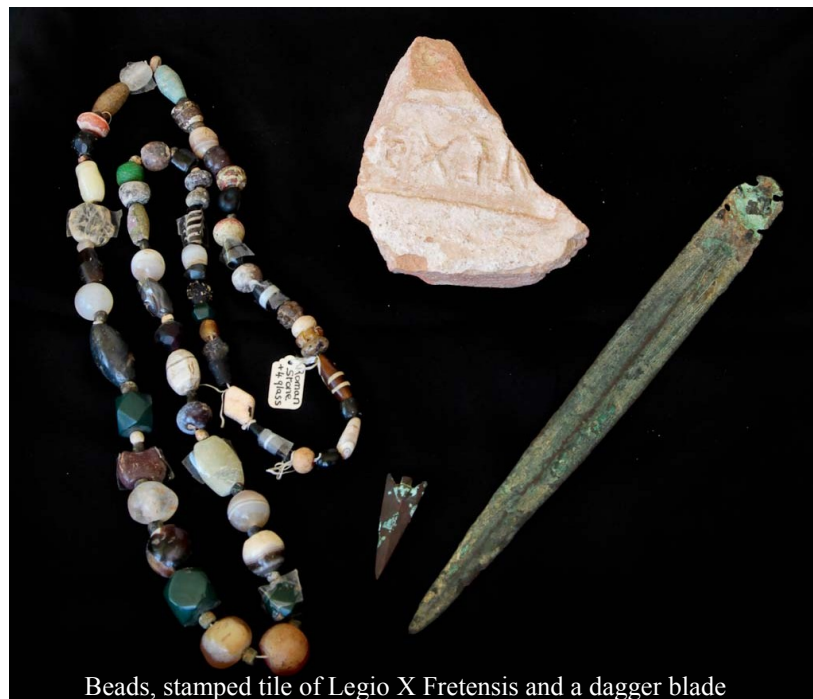
The joy of making a collection of archaeological artefacts is surpassed by the finding. This was evident to me nearly 45 years ago, between 1967 and 1978 when my husband, as Deputy Chief of Staff, United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), was monitoring the hostilities and supervising the truce between Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Israel.

The United Nations issued me with a 'Carte Blanche' to cross "cease fire lines", "buffer zones" and country borders, and to volunteer or observe at archaeological excavations in these five countries.

While I was living in Damascus it was possible for me to attend Prof. J. B. Pritchard's 'dig' in Lebanon, travel from Egypt to Caesarea where Dr. Bull was working and to move from Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee to Samaria where Sydney University's (John) Basil Hennessy was with the British School. My studies were at the Albright Institute in Jerusalem, the Beirut Archaeological Museum, the libraries of the Jordanian Rockefeller Archaeological Museum and I attended lectures given by Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, OP, from École Biblique in Jerusalem.



Tesserae from a mosaic, pin, bracelet, rings, dice, sigillata



Beads, stamped tile of Legio X Fretensis and a dagger blade

When the official excavations were completed the treasures discovered were dispersed as follows: the host country had first choice, and I guess it took at least half of the finds; the Institution, University or Archaeological School financing the project, had second choice; and the professional digging team had third choice. Volunteers, such as I, were given an item or two from what was left and these items were gratefully received.

Because of the continuing unsettling situation and the three savage wars during these eleven years, the excavations were hurried, and were sometimes terminated with short notice. From 1967 teams were precluded from excavating in Petra, the West Bank of the Jordan, the Egyptian Gaza Strip, the Sinai and East Jerusalem.

Digs and their dumps became open sites if the teams were evacuated never to return. With perseverance, sifting through this discarded soil would perhaps yield a bead, a bronze finger ring, a few tesserae, half a spindle whorl, and certainly pottery shards.

One particular area of interest for me was the huge dump of spoil from the 1923 excavations at ancient Byblos/Jbeil in Lebanon, where the French team under Pierre Montet investigated the tomb of the Phoenician King Ahiaram (c.1000 BCE). The dig was

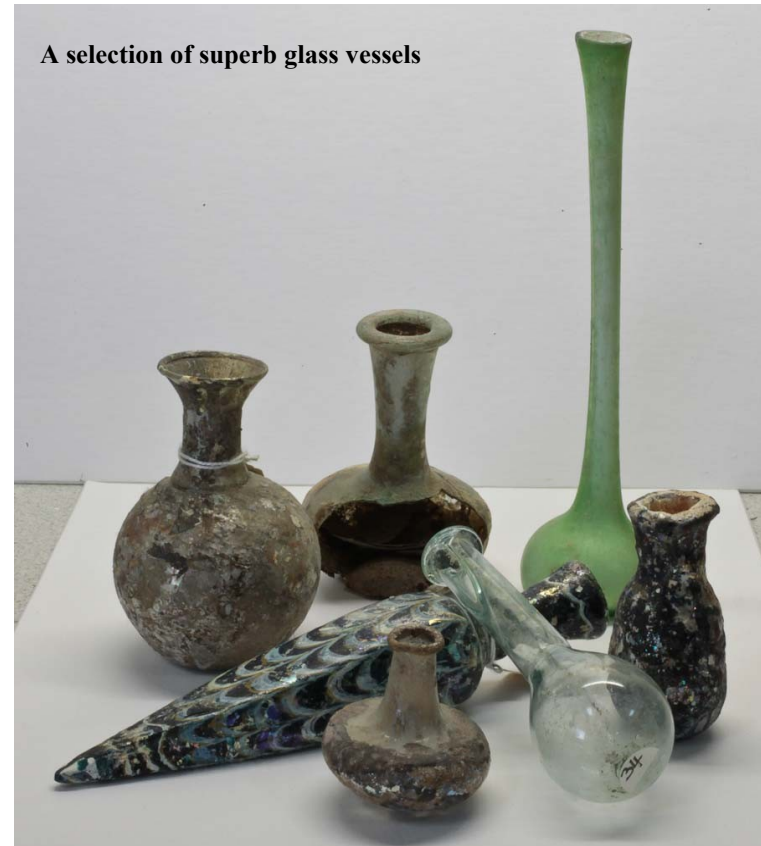
not carried out with the same meticulous techniques as would be employed today, and Montet built a tiny rail to tip huge quantities of unsifted soil and rubble over the cliff onto the beach below. It only takes the daily tide or a rain storm to expose small treasures, literally sticking out of the cliff. Local people still ‘beachcomb’ every day, and others pan on the waters edge for flakes of gold which they collect in tiny files. It is amazing how much is found. After checking with the Beirut Museum, I was allowed to keep many items, some of which are shown in the photo. Also at the Roman level in this cliff,



Roman coins – mainly 3rd and 4th century AD and Byzantine

was a skull which I have now donated to the Perth Museum, together with a Middle Bronze Age II terracotta pot and a broken amphora.

Byblos and Damascus, each claiming to be the oldest continually inhabited city in the world, warm my heart. The three years living in Damascus, enabled me to freely enjoy the wonders of Palmyra (see RAG 3.1), Aleppo, and Bosra (see RAG 5.3) where the ancient Roman Empire is so well represented, as seen at massive Baalbek and tranquil Jarash (see this issue of RAG).



A selection of superb glass vessels

One day at my home I received a message from the U.N: “Proceed immediately to Jerusalem for onward journey to Cairo. Colonel Howard already in Cairo”. It meant just that, move to another county. NOW! Lock up, and I’m on a Swiss plane sitting on boxes of medical supplies heading for Cairo. This flight could not be direct because the Egyptian airport was being bombed, so the route was over Cyprus, along the Mediterranean, across Libya and entry to Egypt from the West.

Now in Egypt my studies were directed to the Dynasties of the Egyptians. After Egypt’s loss in the Six Day War in 1967, the Egyptian Museum was selling small items such as scarabs, faience ushabti (funerary figurines), mummy masks (cf. RAG 2.1) and mummy beads. A few of these I was able to purchase and add to my collection, including a “heart” scarab of the Eleventh Dynasty.

The final two years of my husband’s commitment in the Middle East was at the Headquarters of UNTSO in Jerusalem - El Quds, “The Beautiful”. It was here I received the gift of the Roman 10th Legion tile showing the stamp: LE X FR = *Legio X Fretensis* (photograph next page). The legion was based in Jerusalem from the end of the First Jewish War (AD 66-71) till c. AD 300 when it was shifted to Aila (modern Aqaba) on the Red Sea. Scores of its stamped tiles have been found in Jerusalem, the Roman city of Aelia Capitolina (after Constantine, ‘Capitolina’ was dropped from the name)(see RAG 5.4).

By 1975 hostilities between Israel and her neighbours Syria and Lebanon had quietened a little, so many international dignitaries visited us in Jerusalem during our final two years there. These kind people often showed their appreciation for any help or hospitality I had given them during their visit, so I sometimes received a treasure such as this Roman tile, a Roman oil lamp, Roman coins and glass (photographs above), book vouchers and once, a pair of Roman gold earrings—Ladybird Johnson gave me her signed autobiography with a warm message.

It is easy to walk down-hill following the old Roman road from Jerusalem to Jericho and to the site of Kypros, there to rest in the dry rubble of the Winter Palace pool of Herod the Great where he drowned his Cypriot wife. In the dirt are small pieces of stucco, coloured fresco, pieces of sigillata (a red gloss pottery akin to the Samian Ware familiar in the Roman West) and mosaic tesserae, quite exposed.



Stone theatre masks

As a result of all this, my collection comprises some gifts, some purchases but mostly finds from diggings. One sad thing is that, being connected with an United Nations Organisation operating in a war zone, I was not allowed a camera so I have no pictorial mementoes of the areas nor of the people in the archaeological teams.



A selection of Roman lamps. Note the cross.

Even though unrest was ever present and sometimes all movement limited or evacuations necessary, I found my studies and digging activities absolutely enthralling. It is sufficient that in 1967 my husband was shot in the thigh and in 1970 one side of my hair was singed off from a bullet that missed—just.

Perceptions and Reality— in an Arab Country *Ann Boyer*

Despite having travelled to Jordan on a number of occasions I am not an expert on Jordanian society. I offer this as a brief record of my personal observations.

Jordan is a predominantly Muslim country and unless one is deaf this is evident all through the day and night. Living in the small but busy town of Jarash, c. 40 km north of Amman, one hears each Muezzin/Imam call enthusiastically from his mosque—one on each town block starts at a slightly different time and has a unique call. There are many mosques and some Imams are more musical than others! On that same block you may also find a Catholic Church, an Orthodox Church and a Baptist Church, all co-existing happily. The delightful, and formal, religious greeting is well worth learning as people respond to the respect it requires of both parties – A salaam Alaykum – “Peace be to you”, or – “The peace of Allah/God come to you”. The reply being - Alaykum salaam – “Allah/God come to you with peace”. This defuses most situations, and overcomes officious ticket collectors, who have not noted your pass that is hanging around your neck. (Thanks to Stafford for producing such official looking badges!) Then all that is needed is Shukran – “Thank you” and Ma’a asalaama – “Goodbye – more peace”!



Ann Boyer, accompanied by the Royal Jordanian Army Buskers, showing the locals how to dance

Jordan is a male dominated society but this has its advantages unheard of in the West. My friend Anne (with an ‘e’) Poepjes did not need to worry about buying her car – a male neighbour did that for her and registered it. When it was damaged in a car crash – he and a friend took it to Amman for the repairs and returned it to Anne with fresh paint and a new windscreen as an added bonus. Drive through the streets at night and see all the men scurrying home with bags of groceries. Men are happy to buy anything their women need including very personal items! Need more cooking gas – the trucks drive around the streets playing music, like an ice-cream van; and they will carry the empty tank down from your apartment and return with the full one. Don went to the best Dentist in Amman and returned completely thrilled by the beautiful lady Dentist who offered him a second opinion from a male dentist, which he declined. Great service and very reasonable account. The local Pharmacy is also priced for the Jordanian average wage and serves the population well for minor ailments

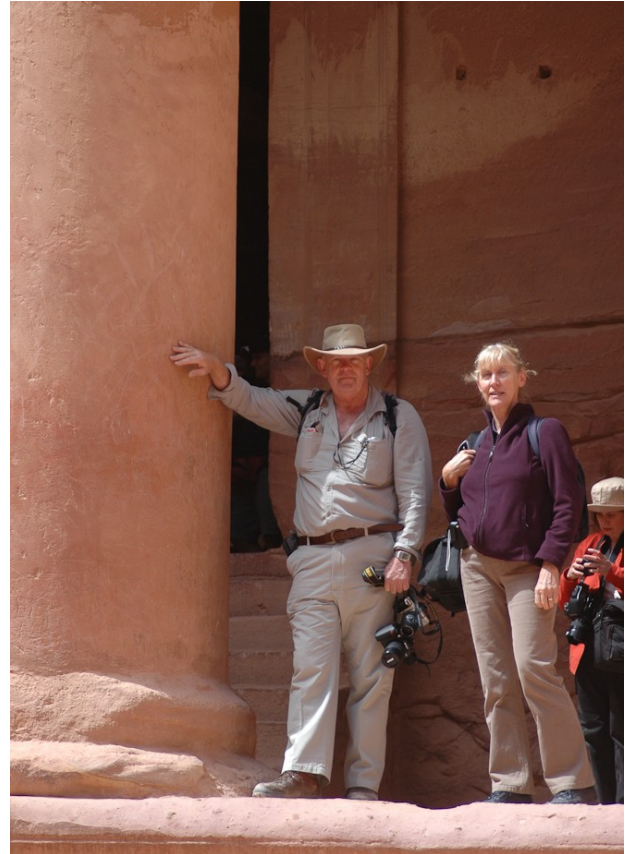
– he will discuss symptoms and cures with tourists without embarrassment.

Women wear the hijab – not all of them – the Queen is seen on huge posters in evening dress with beautiful flowing hair. Many modern women in Amman choose not to wear the hijab. The makeup is wonderful on many who choose to wear it and sometimes the outfit is colourful, tight fitting and shows all the curves. It does, however, prevent too much exposure to the sun, and pale skin is considered beautiful in Jordan. Watch a lady in full flowing gown and hijab walking down the street arm in arm with her Christian neighbour and friend, who wears tight jeans, hair exposed and has bare arms and neck. Visit the Baptist Church with the lady organist in red, short-sleeved blouse and black trousers but watch another lady in a Dutch Lace cap – worn only for prayers and communion. Be greeted by the pastor with both hands holding yours – and he will translate the hymns and explain his sermon in perfect English so you feel part of the congregation. Watch young women in bright coloured hijabs and jeans sitting in cafes in Amman smoking their shisha (or hookah or bubblepipe) with sweet-smelling fruit tobacco such as apple or cherry or grape. Visit the Hamam, Turkish bath house, on Ladies Day and nobody is wearing anything for the massages!

Men and women don't mix – After a wonderful evening meal overlooking the floodlit Citadel in Amman we walked along Rainbow Street – Amman's equivalent of Northbridge – interesting cafes, book shops, jewellery stalls and the following day a wonderful craft souk. The men in my group were ahead and seemed to have forgotten me. I was walking slower to take in the family groups – sitting, smiling, eating from stalls, talking and greeting me as an obvious tourist with genuine hospitality – “Welcome to Jordan.” Cars stopped at side roads to allow pedestrians to cross. No one became impatient at frequent traffic jams as taxis dropped off customers in the narrow street. At no time did we feel unsafe even when using the machine outside the bank – there were no drunks – Muslims do not approve of alcohol but are happy to drink large quantities of sweet tea with lemon or mint and small cups of coffee. Taxi drivers beep gently when they see a lady walking down a road in Amman to tell her that they are available. They are a very cheap form of transport and offer change for the fare. She walks on the road because the pavement outside big houses is planted with olive trees. The gardens within the walls have fruit trees – all Jordanians prefer to retain their relationship with the land and own some olive trees at least.

Hospitality – This is amazing. We could be working on the survey when someone – a stranger - would appear, to ask us in for a cup of tea – even during the day during Ramadan. We learnt to get off the streets before sunset during Ramadan or total strangers would send out the teenage son to invite us to Iftar – the evening meal that breaks the fast during Ramadan. The landlady of Anne's daughter appeared with trays of coffee cups for the visitors, and the coffee is black, usually sweet and delicious. People would slow their car and call out – “Welcome to Jordan.” My husband Don, and Karen Henderson, working in the southern Basalt Desert, were approached, in the middle of nowhere, by the local police with – “Welcome to Jordan”, before they were asked for their papers. The following day the police appeared, this time in uniform, walking across the desert with a bucket containing ... kettle, cups and teabags to refresh the visitors! This can slow up the Archaeology, but who could refuse such nice people?

You have to bargain when you buy – Well, yes you do but Anne's advice was pay what you think it is worth. What she had forgotten to mention was, once they consider you a friend or a friend of Miss Anne, they may not allow you to pay the full price – most embarrassing watching the buyer try to pay 5JD when the seller only wants 3JD. My beautiful embroidered tablecloth came with a special discount because Anne teaches the lady's son. The lady in the Post Office at the tourist souk in Jarash – very efficient but firm about the rules and capable of coping with English, French and German tourists - assured me that we were now friends as I had asked for her help and visited her Post office three times wearing my badge. After that nothing was too much trouble.



Ann and husband Don

Jordanians do not fix their plumbing – I am not sure who installs it in the first place, perhaps an overseas worker, but this is one perception, which is unfortunately true. When we asked for help with the bathroom water heater three men stood in the bathroom discussing loudly the burnt plug – banged the heater with a fist, dropped ash on the floor from their cigarettes, and left. The heater worked after that, the plug heated too, but the toilet still wobbled precariously, as it had two years before, and the seat was still only attached on one side. Don't ask about the wiring – electricity connections are a miracle or a mess, or both. Each Jordanian man must be his own boss – not work for others - unless he works for the Government. You can find three Mobile phone shops, all about two metres wide, next to each other on any street.

Thanks to David Kennedy's initial invitation we have enjoyed visiting Jordan with its quirky plumbing, its wonderfully hospitable people and its amazing historical sites. I recommend it as a safe place to visit - even the helicopter pilots who fly David's aerial surveys perform miracles to keep their passengers safe.

The Peoples Present in Scotland during the Roman Period

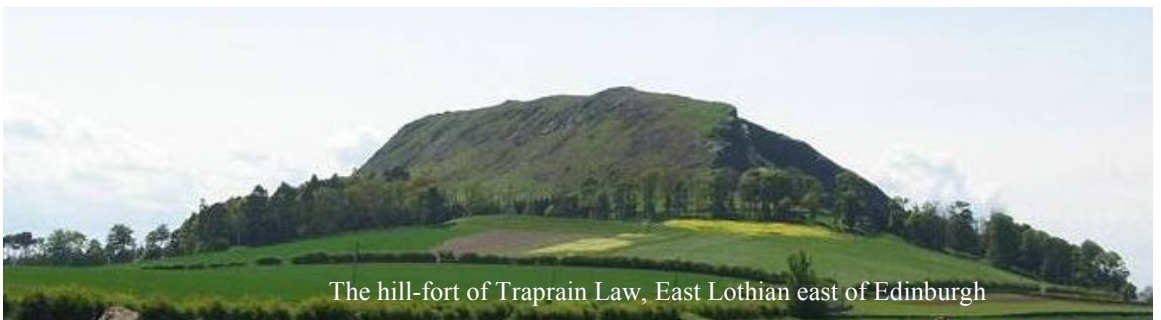
Norah Cooper

Prior to the Roman invasions of the island referred to as Britannia (beginning with Julius Caesar's two incursions 55 and 54 BC), it was regarded as a mysterious, frightening and barbaric place - across *Oceanus*, at the end of the world and filled with people who were uncivilised. In fact after Caesar's campaigns had failed to bring massive riches back to Rome, Cicero said that there was no longer "any prospect of booty except slaves" and (sarcastically) that these slaves were not expected to be "accomplished in literature and music". However, as Mattingly (2007) says, AD 43 (date of Claudius' invasion of Britannia) "does not mark the start of civilisation and history in Britain ... it marks just one stage in a much longer process of integration of parts of Britain with a wider European world".

The northern Britons at the time of the Roman occupation were a disparate and complex group of peoples. Often the only way of discovering who these people were, and understanding their way of life at this period, is to look at the archaeology which is best represented by physical, often stone, structures. This article, the second of two (see RAG 5.2, *Roman presence in Tayside area of Eastern Scotland*, whose subject was stone structures known as souterrains), focuses on the fortified structures in Scotland, including hill forts, crannogs and, in particular, brochs (stone buildings unique to Scotland), and what these structures tell us about the people who built them.

In this article, for clarity, I will refer to Scotland as we know it today, though the place did not exist as a nation until the 9th century and to the Romans it was simply the northern part of the island of Britannia, partly in but largely outside their province of the same name. Most of it was not part of the Empire and, in fact, the Romans never penetrated the Scottish highland region though they skirted round the eastern edge and have been traced as far as the Moray Firth plain between Inverness and Aberdeen.

The Scottish countryside is dotted with fortified sites (photo opposite) most of which date from the Iron Age (600 BC- AD 78). Prior to the Romans in Britain, the hill fort, or *dun*, played a major role in the



The hill-fort of Traprain Law, East Lothian east of Edinburgh

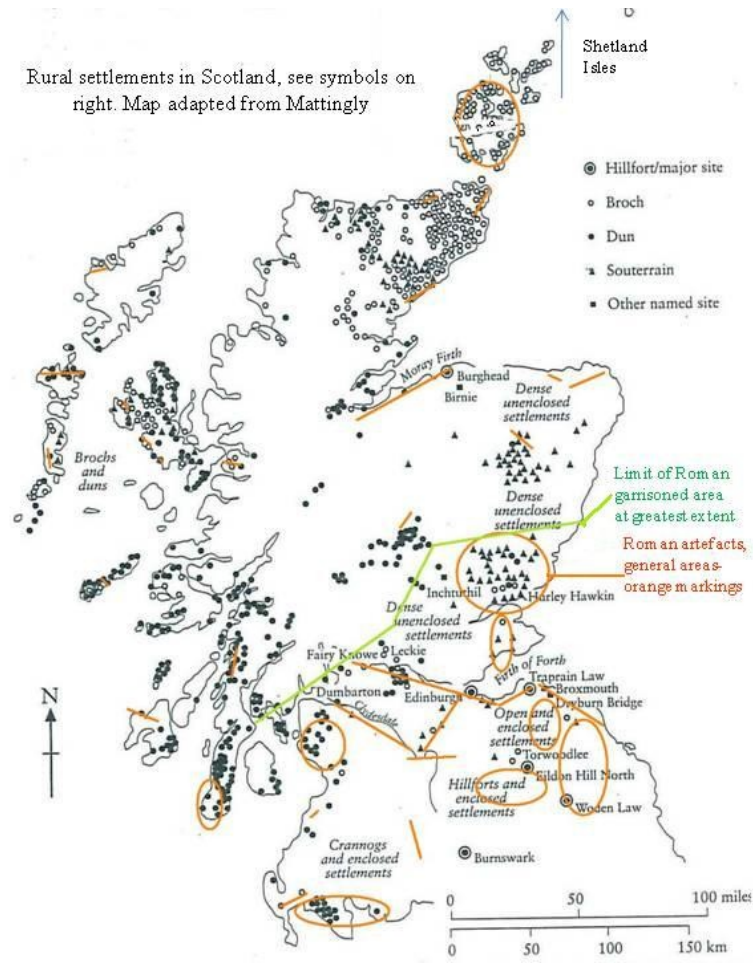
indigenous society. A dun encloses an area of c. 375 sq m., usually circular or oval and characterised by a thick dry-stone wall. Duns have a wide distribution in western and southern Scotland with most occurring on rocky hills. They are normally built with a solid rubble core between stone facings with timber lacing to stabilise the walls. Although timber-faced duns may be as early as 700-600 BC, it is thought that most solid walled duns were probably contemporary with brochs (see below) in later centuries. The term dun is still commonly used in Scotland as part of place names e.g. Dundee, Dunblane and Dunkeld.



A reconstructed crannog

Crannogs were timber houses built on an artificial island linked to the shore by a stone causeway or timber gangway from 1st millennium BC till historical times (photo opposite). The remains of crannogs are found in many Scottish lochs, particularly in the Highlands. Crannogs, like the Oak-bank Crannog near Kenmore on Loch Tay which dates from 500 BC have been reconstructed as a result of underwater archaeological excavations. They are circular, timber platforms, with a large, timber round-house built on oak piles driven deep into the loch bed. The walls are made of hazel rods, woven together, and the thatched roof is pitched steeply enough to allow rain to drain off. Inside, the floor is covered with bracken and ferns, with a flat, stone fireplace in the centre which would have been the focus of family life.

<http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/53/Crannog> -



Scotland in the Roman period: adapted from Mattingly (2007)

Brochs, from Lowland Scots ‘brough’, meaning (among other things) fort, are circular stone towers that stood alone or more usually were associated with small settlements. There is debate over the dates of brochs (from 600 BC-AD 100) but certainly, by 100BC it was a new type of fortification which had evolved in and was unique to Scotland. Almost 500 have been recorded mostly in the far north of mainland Scotland, the Northern Isles, western Scotland, the Hebrides, the Orkney and the Shetland Isles (Map opposite). They were built over a short span of 200 years, before what is regarded as the Pictish era (see below).

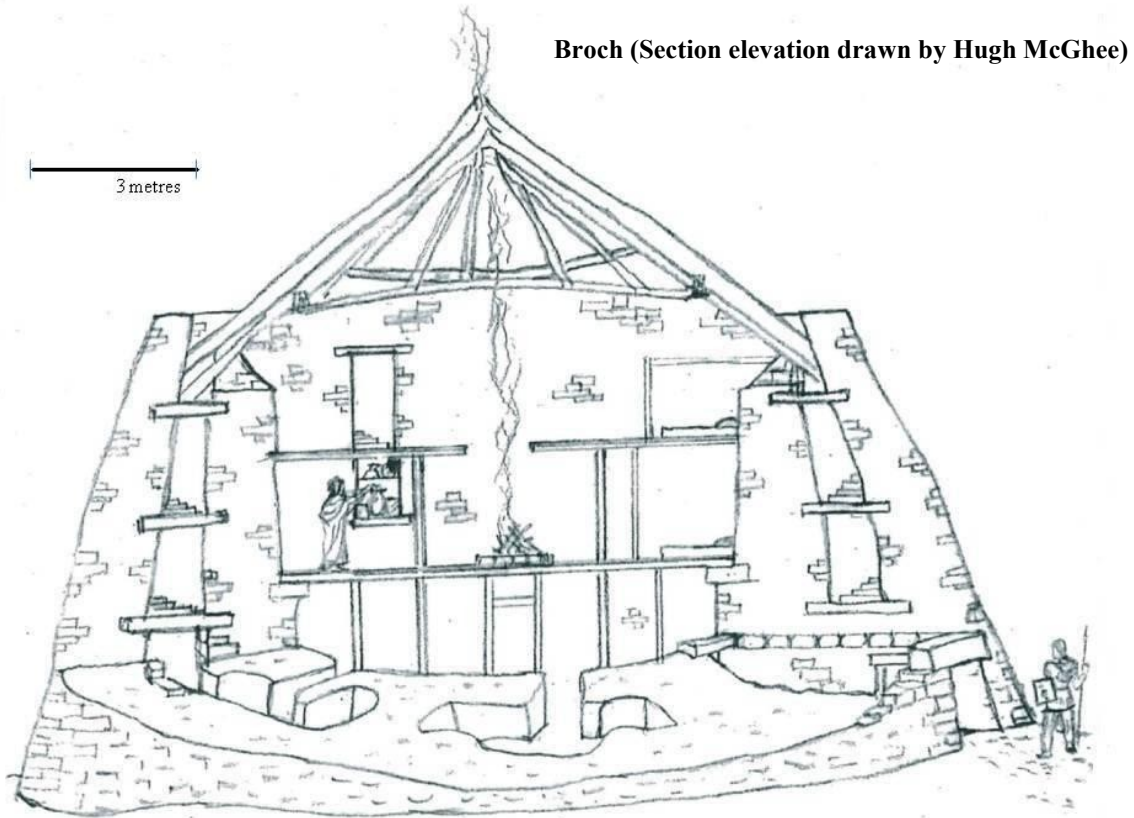
They were fortified dwelling houses serving a family or village rather than designed to protect larger communities and were therefore similar to the duns found further south in Scotland. They became much larger fortifications for larger communities in later periods.

Essentially they are dry stone-towers (photograph below) and despite the wide geographic distribution they are very uniform in that they are circular, with a tapering profile and hollow-wall construction (drawing top next page). The broch in Mousa, Shetland, today is 13 m high but was 28 m high originally with an overall diameter of 15.2 m. The characteristic hollow wall was achieved by building an inner and outer casement wall bonded together by horizontal stone slabs which created a series of superimposed galleries within the wall. A stairway led clockwise up through the galleries. A single entrance at or just above ground level was the only opening in the wall and allowed easy defence. The hollow wall construction lightened the structure and allowed the great height. Ledges supported by wooden posts carried a timber gallery for living accommodation. There was a central hearth on the floor.

There is still much debate by archaeologists regarding who built the brochs and what was their purpose. It has been suggested that they were constructed by engineers who moved throughout the area building for elite families. Some archaeologists doubt that there ever was a single common purpose for which every broch was constructed because of differences between brochs with regard to position, dimensions and likely status.

Geographically brochs were concentrated in north Scotland and the Northern Isles but there is a scatter of brochs around the firths of the Forth and Tay and it has been suggested that these brochs were commissioned by leading families seeking protection against the Roman Army. At Buchlyvie, an earlier timber house was replaced by a solid-based broch in the late 1st century AD. At this site and at Leckie there are finds that include bronze jewellery and Roman imports. Leckie was destroyed in the early second century perhaps by Roman punitive raids. The Roman army with its war machines was the only force capable of successfully attacking a broch. (Photo opposite: Glenelg Broch)





Some massive Iron Age stone-walled roundhouses in Angus (area around Dundee) are so-called 'southern brochs', an example is Laws of Monifieth near Dundee (photograph below). These have architectural characteristics of the towers found along the west and north Atlantic. These buildings were occupied at some point during the first two centuries AD to judge from dating and quantity of Roman origin artefacts found in them. They may have been built in response to pressures or events associated with the Roman presence but the archaeological evidence is unclear. There are three possible scenarios for the presence of these southern brochs:- firstly, they were built by broch-dwelling northerners who moved south to capitalise on a power vacuum after the first withdrawal of the Romans from Scotland in the late 1st century; secondly, they were deliberately set up by Roman commanders with local leaders as puppets to control the local populations; or thirdly, they were built by indigenous local elites who required a more substantial stone building than a timber roundhouse and who adapted the broch architecture to fulfil this requirement.



Caesar and the geographer Strabo wrote about the peoples of Southern Britain but Tacitus, Cassius Dio and Herodian wrote about the northern peoples. Although all ancient authors were prone to describing them contemptuously as stereotypical barbarians, it is evident from the size and complexity of the structures described here that these people were well organised and settled with a domestic economy which could sustain relatively large communities. Over hundreds of years they had built and sustained large communities and though belonging to different tribal groups they could come together in the face of a major external threat - the Romans.

The archaeological record of the Roman presence in Scotland is extensive (map previous page) with many Roman finds associated with the duns and southern brochs e.g. the Traprain Treasure now at the National Museum of Scotland which is the largest and most important hoard of late Roman silver from beyond the edge of the Roman empire (photograph page opposite). However, for the

majority of the peoples in Scotland, the only contact they would have had with the Romans would have been in supplying garrisons with produce or meeting the Romans in battle.

In AD 150, the Alexandrian geographer Ptolemy produced a map roughly covering present day Scotland with twelve tribes listed on it. These would later be described by the generic term *Picti* ("Painted people"), a term first used by the Roman writer Eumenius AD 297 more than a century before the Romans left Britain. By the 4th century the Picts, a coalition of native tribes, were a distinct political and military entity capable of forging alliances with other 'barbarian' groups in particular the *Scotti* - which probably meant sea raiders, who had come over from Ireland and later became established on the west coast of Scotland. The Scots harassed the coastline of Roman Britain and together with the Picts overran Hadrian's Wall in AD 367. It is often asked "Did the Romans create the Picts?" by forcing the Iron

Age tribes of north-east Scotland ultimately to coalesce in response to the presence of and the military threat of the Romans; causing previous disparate groups to merge into one political, military group. It is an interesting possibility that Roman military strength brought about groupings of weaker peoples beyond the frontiers who thereby became a greater danger.



© National Museum of Scotland



The Picts were a major kingdom in Scotland until the 9th century when King Kenneth McAlpine (843-58) defeated them and ruled over them and the other major tribe, the Scots, leading to the foundation of the Scottish Kingdom.

What did these people look like? Defeated warriors are depicted on the Roman distance-slab from Bridgeness, West Lothian. This shows two rectangular shields with round bosses to protect the handgrip and an elaborate hilted sword and naked barbarians demonstrating their disdain for defensive armour (photograph opposite), though in Tacitus' *Agricola*, there is no mention of ritual nakedness among native troops at the victorious Roman battle of Mons Graupius (AD 83) against the northern army in North Eastern Scotland. Another distance slab from Balmuidy (photo below) again depicts naked natives.

There are also descriptions in the *Agricola* and by Cassius Dio of the use of war-chariots by the tribes of eastern Scotland though these had gone out of fashion on continental Europe by the 2nd century BC.

Cicero was correct when he said that slaves captured in Britannia would not have been accomplished in literature. The northern Britons were illiterate but certainly these people were accomplished in many of the basic features of civilisation.

**For the Emperor Caesar
Titus Aelius Hadrianus
Antoninus Augustus Pius,
Father of his Country, the
Sixth Victorious, Loyal and
Faithful Legion (completed
the wall) over
a distance of 3666 1/2 paces**



References:

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A. Konstam (2010): *Strongholds of the Picts. The fortifications of Dark Age Scotland*, Osprey Publishing Ltd.

Silchester Town Life Project 2010

Ben Barwood

Ben Barwood was the 2010 recipient of the Don Boyer Roman Archaeology Travel Scholarship (RAG 5.4). He applied the scholarship to the cost of extensive travel around mainly Roman sites and museums in London and the Middle East. First, however, he began at Silchester which has seen a succession of UWA students in previous years (Rebecca Banks and Iain Gately – RAG 3.4 and 4.4)

If ever you feel the need to gain some archaeological field experience and your history with archaeology is blank I strongly recommend looking no further than the Silchester Town Life Project. Located about 10 miles out of Reading, in the UK, Silchester is a field school set up and run by Professor Michael Fulford and Amanda Clarke.

Educationally, Silchester will start from scratch and introduce you to the basics of archaeology over a period of three days. During this time you'll begin to gain experience "in the trench" (referring to the archaeological area of the site) and other areas of archaeology, including flotation, finds sorting and site planning. Though I went to Silchester with a somewhat romantic and gentlemanly idea of archaeology I quickly had my vision of the profession revised on site. There is virtually nothing in the realm of archaeology you'll be held back from. Each week you are required to spend at least one morning or afternoon helping with finds or flotation. The remainder of your time is generally spent



The diggers' camp

planning areas of the dig site, excavating (which is quite a complex skill) or attending the optional lectures available. In relation to archaeology Silchester is a school designed to give you hands-on experience regardless of how much experience you have prior to arriving on the site.



Silchester Town Life Project

The series of lectures available each week deserves special mention here. They range from the very physical weaponry workshop to special one-off talks about the changing interpretations of henge monuments. Completely free and voluntary these talks and workshops add an extra level to Silchester, allowing you to see many of the experts from the University of Reading, and the surrounding country, showcase much of their research.

Lastly, at each week's end Professor Fulford conducts a guided tour of the site for everybody involved, talking about each section in detail, nicely bringing the whole project into context.

Despite the fantastic set up Silchester has for getting people off the ground with archaeology, it's the people that really make and complete the Silchester experience. You'll not have been

at Silchester more than five minutes before you find yourself talking, laughing and sharing a meal with your peers.

As an undergraduate myself, I was surrounded by people around my age and stage of life, many studying archaeology at Reading University. The atmosphere in the campsite and marquee after work has finished for the day is a joy to be a part of. Games of football, pockets of varying musical genres and people sitting outside tents sharing a drink and a bite to eat are sights you see everyday.

Whether you're a first timer (like myself), a regular, or an old timer (some of the people working on the site have been attending since the current Silchester field school was founded), you'll find yourself fitting in and making new friends.



View over the trench of 2010 before work started for the day 1

I'm still in regular communication with the friends I've made at Silchester and out of a three and a half month trip I count Silchester as one of my top highlights. To put my enjoyment of the field school, and all that goes with it, in perspective I registered for a two week stay in Silchester and ended up staying for over three weeks. I tried to leave at least four times that I can remember and ended up back in my tent each time. An Australian woman, there at the same time as I, left and returned half a week later, missing the site too much to stay away.



Final week: Fancy Dress Beer Festival

I hope this article on my recent experiences at Silchester inspires readers to visit the field school, for it is truly an amazing facility for anyone interested in archaeology, as a beginner or a veteran, and well worth your time and effort for a visit.

I would like to thank Professor David Kennedy for making me aware of Silchester and, along with the rest of the Roman Archaeology Group especially Don Boyer, making it possible for me to visit the school. I cannot recommend the site highly enough to anybody.

Roman Archaeology at UWA

Membership of The RAG

David Kennedy Fieldwork

From late April David Kennedy will be doing archival research in Italy – part in Rome and part at the University of Siena, which has one of the biggest training programmes in Aerial Archaeology in Europe.

He will then spend three weeks in London researching at The National Archive, the office of the Palestine Exploration Fund, and the Imperial War Museum.

Then he will spend two weeks devoted to giving lectures at universities (starting at Exeter), archival research in Oxford, and visits to sites with Roman replicas (Manchester and South Shields in particular).

All that will be followed in late September by the next season of the Aerial Archaeology in Jordan project – 6 weeks of flying and ground work.

Dr Mike Bishop

The Aerial Archaeology in Jordan Project had a bonus last year. For 6 weeks in November-December, Dr Michael Bishop was here at UWA from his home in Darlington in the UK. Dr Bishop's principal area of expertise is Roman military equipment on which he has published extensively. However, he has developed a keen mind for the task of categorization, and creating typologies. During his stay, funded by the Packard Humanities Institute, he worked with David Kennedy on a pilot study investigating the traces of archaeological sites for Saudi Arabia visible in high-resolution windows of Google Earth. The research identified almost 2000 'sites' in a region in which virtually nothing had previously been recorded.

The outcome was an article they submitted to the prestigious *Journal of Archaeological Science*. The article was accepted immediately, an online version was put on the *Journal of Archaeological Science* web site in mid-January, and the hard copy should appear any day. A copy of the full article will be posted on the RAG web site.

The online version immediately caught attention and 'went viral' as the saying goes and there have been radio interviews broadcast from Radio New Zealand and as far afield as Deutschlandfunk ('the German BBC') and CBC in Toronto.

There has also been a spate of articles, in the press from New Scientist, the Daily Telegraph (UK), Sydney Morning Herald and the Times of India, and in online sites.

Simon Rutter

Our Aerial Archaeology in Jordan project was hit hard by the sudden and very tragic death in late 2009 of its relatively young and highly skilled IT expert Mike Neville. He had taken a keen interest in the project and had twice visited Jordan for the project.

It has been very difficult to replace Mike Neville but Simon Rutter, IT Manager for the Faculty of Arts, has now agreed to provide IT support for the Project.

Simon is from the Northeast of England, and he has extensive experience not just in computing but also in GPS work.

He spent part of his childhood in Saudi Arabia, and more recently he has worked in Afghanistan.

Grants

Congratulations to three of our students who have been awarded grants to support their fieldwork:

Karen Henderson (Jordan)

Martina Müller (Germany)

and

Graham Sylvester (Turkey)

The Packard Humanities Institute has provided a grant of US\$400,000 for 2011 for David Kennedy's Aerial Archaeology in Jordan project.

UWA Friends of the Library

David Kennedy is due to give a talk on "Recording and Records in the Roman Empire" on 12 April at 7.30 for 8.00 in the meeting room on the 3rd floor of the New Science Library at UWA.

RAG Winter Programme

The theme for our next season of lectures in July to September will be "Villas in the Roman World".

The lectures will include talks on Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli; the villa at Piazza Armerina in Sicily; villas in Roman Britain; and Roman villas on the Greek island of Delos.

The programme will be circulated at a later date and posted on the web site.

\$25.00 Ordinary membership
 \$35.00 Family membership 1 (2 adults; 1 copy of RAG magazine)
 \$50.00 Family membership 2 (4 family members; 1 copy of RAG magazine)
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 Complete and post the form with this edition of the RAG or contact The Treasurer at the email address below.

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