

2. SCOTLAND

By FRASER HUNTER

NORTH OF THE ANTONINE WALL

ABERDEENSHIRE

(1) **Dunnicaer** (NO 8821 8464): samian was recovered from excavations¹² on this fortified sea stack which is known to have produced Pictish symbol stones.¹³

PERTH AND KINROSS

(1) **Ardoch** (NN 839 099): geomagnetic survey of the fort was undertaken, along with geoelectrical survey of selected areas, and a digital elevation model was created from drone survey.¹⁴

(2) **Bridge of Earn** (NO 11 19): the bezel of a thirteenth/fourteenth-century gold ring set with a reused Roman intaglio¹⁵ was found by metal-detecting (FIG. 2).



FIG. 2. Reused Roman intaglio in a medieval ring, Bridge of Earn. (Photo: Neil McLean, © National Museums Scotland)

¹² Excavations by G. Noble (University of Aberdeen).

¹³ Other Roman finds from on or near Iron Age sites in 2016 were brooches from Foulis (Highland), Woden Law and Clarilaw Hill (Scottish Borders). For details see *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 2016*, 110, 152–3.

¹⁴ Work undertaken by M. Fernández-Götz (University of Edinburgh) and F. Teichner (Marburg University), who sent outline information.

¹⁵ Showing a dramatist with theatrical mask and shepherd's crook (M. Henig, pers. comm.). It is now in Perth Museum.

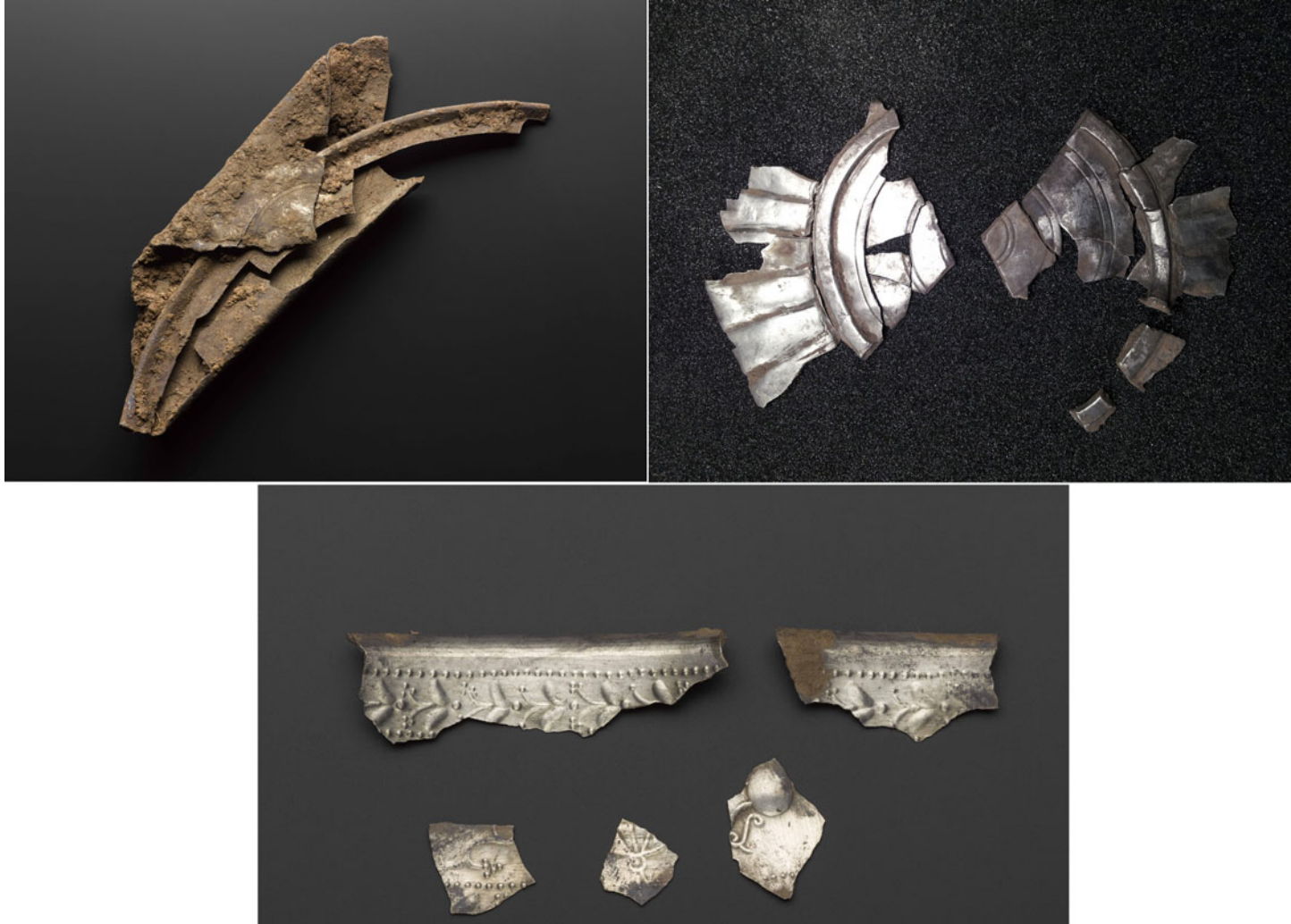


FIG. 3. Selection of *Hacksilber* from Dairsie. (a) Dish folded into a quarter. (b) Parts of a fluted bowl. (c) Parts of a Leuna-type bowl. (Photos: Neil McLean and Fraser Hunter, © National Museums Scotland)

FIFE

(1) **Dairsie** (NO 41 17): a small late third-century *Hacksilber* hoard was recovered by metal-detecting (FIG. 3). It comprises elements of four vessels: two parts of a dish cut into quarters, two pieces of a fluted bowl cut into thirds, a hemispherical bowl with repoussé decoration, probably buried intact, and a sheet fragment rolled into a cylinder. Excavation showed that the hoard was buried in a memorable landscape location, with two earlier standing stones on one side and a small peat bog on the other.¹⁶

(2) **Kincapple** (NO 46 17): a fragment of a copper-alloy crossbow brooch was found by metal-detecting (FIG. 4). Such brooches are very rare in Scotland.¹⁷

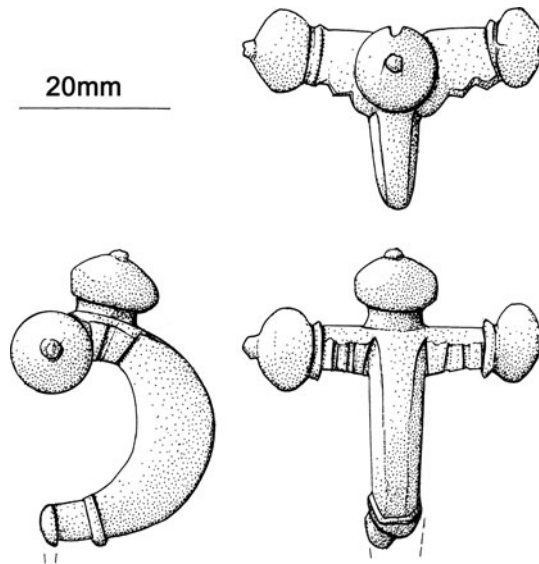


FIG. 4. Crossbow brooch, Kincapple. (Drawn by Marion O'Neil, © National Museums Scotland)

¹⁶ Excavations were led for the Treasure Trove Unit and National Museums Scotland (where the finds are housed) by Dr F. Hunter.

¹⁷ Now in St Andrews Museum. A four-ounce lead weight recovered from Boarhills (Fife) provides a further hint of contact to the area. Further stray finds of Roman brooches were reported from Loanhead (Perth and Kinross), Airth (Falkirk), Pitmilley (Fife), Luffness and Knowes (East Lothian), Cowdenknowes, Hallydown, Hassendean Bank, Maxton and Stobo (Scottish Borders). For details see *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 2016*, 58, 61, 78, 85–6, 139, 150–2, 154, 156–7.

FALKIRK

(1) **Easter Carmuiris**, *Primary School* (NS 8598 8058): trial excavation confirmed the location of the southern side of the camp¹⁸ near its eastern end. Resistivity survey within the school grounds indicated further ditch lines may be present within the camp, suggesting a more complicated sequence.¹⁹

THE ANTONINE WALL

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

(1) **Duntocher**, *Golden Hill* (NS 4953 7264): magnetic and electrical resistance survey of the fort and fortlet²⁰ modified aspects of the excavated interpretation.²¹ Three ditches were revealed north of the Antonine Wall, with a causeway across them issuing from the fortlet rather than the fort. Traces of previously unnoted structures were observed in the annexe.

FALKIRK

(1) **Falkirk**, *Adrian House* (NS 8859 7974): excavations²² among the western ditches of the fort²³ added a third outer ditch to the two previously known and identified a construction phase predating the ditches, with evidence of stone-dressing, iron-working, a kiln and timber structures.

(2) **Kinneil**, *Kinneil House* (NS 982 805): magnetic survey immediately to the east of Kinneil House²⁴ revealed the Ditch on its predicted line; a feature converging towards it as it headed east towards Dean Burn may be the Military Way.

SOUTH OF THE ANTONINE WALL

SCOTTISH BORDERS

(1) **Horsburgh Castle Farm** (NT 29673 39259): a line of shallow pits recorded in an evaluation²⁵ may be quarry pits for the proposed Roman road alongside the river Tweed at this point (followed by the modern A72), though no dating evidence was recovered.²⁶

¹⁸ R.H. Jones, *Roman Camps in Scotland* (2011), 196, illus. 167.

¹⁹ Work directed by G. Bailey (who sent a report) for Falkirk Community Trust, Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society and Easter Carmuiris Primary School.

²⁰ Led by R. Jones (University of Glasgow), who sent details.

²¹ A.S. Robertson, *An Antonine Fort: Golden Hill, Duntocher* (1957); A.S. Robertson and L. Keppie, *The Antonine Wall: a Handbook to Scotland's Roman Frontier* (6th edn, 2015), 115–16.

²² Led by G. Bailey (who sent a report) for Falkirk Local History Society and Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society.

²³ For previous work here, see *Britannia* 47 (2016), 293; for the fort, A.S. Robertson and L. Keppie, *The Antonine Wall: a Handbook to Scotland's Roman Frontier* (6th edn, 2015), 64–5.

²⁴ Work carried out by Canterbury Christ Church University under the auspices of the 'Hidden Landscape of a Roman Frontier' project by N. Hannon and D. Rohl.

²⁵ By G. Savory of CFA Archaeology for Justin Lamb Associates.

²⁶ A line of pits has been recorded on aerial photographs in the area, and assessed nearby previously: *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 1998*, 79–80.

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

(1) **Craik Cross** (NT 3036 0471): field survey of this probable watch-tower²⁷ revealed a previously unrecorded outer bank and entrance facing the Roman road, though disturbance means there is no clear trace of post-holes for the tower.

(2) **Burnswark** (NY 186 787): a second season²⁸ of survey and excavation at the hillfort/Roman camp complex completed the non-invasive metal-detection survey, with some 2,000 metal targets plotted in an area of *c.* 1 km². The distribution of lead signals (the vast majority shown by earlier work to be Roman lead sling bullets) confirmed that the principle barrage had emanated from within and around the South Camp and was aimed at a 500 m-wide expanse of the hillfort rampart. A smaller arc of fire was directed at the single north gateway of the hillfort. The survey also identified probable Roman slinger positions behind the northern South Camp rampart. Two trenches here confirmed the presence of dropped bullets, and recovered stone ballista balls, iron objects and a scabbard fitting. Indications of multiple tip lines in the rampart suggest it may have two phases.



FIG. 5. Cache of lead slingshot from Burnswark under excavation. (Photo by courtesy of J.H. Reid)

A trench in the North Camp targeted on a metal-detecting signal concentration revealed a large cache (>15 kg) of bullets apparently dumped behind the rampart, with the remnants of organic (?leather) containers (FIG. 5). This cache extends the variety of bullets recorded from the site. Preliminary results of lead isotope analysis show that all bullets so far analysed have closely related ore signatures.

²⁷ By Historic Environment Scotland; see *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 2016*, 189. For the site see RCAHMS, *Eastern Dumfriesshire: an Archaeological Landscape* (1997), 173, 309 no. 1201.

²⁸ The work was directed by J.H. Reid and A. Nicholson (who sent a summary) and funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, Trimontium Trust, Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society and Mouswald Trust. For earlier work see *Britannia* 47 (2016), 294–7.

(3) **Glenlochar** (NX 74 64): a scattered hoard of 15 denarii ending with Antoninus Pius²⁹ was recovered by metal-detecting from the vicinity of the fort.³⁰

SOUTH AYRSHIRE

(1) **Ayr, Craigie House/Ayr Academy** (NS 3509 2156): excavations³¹ revealed a previously unknown temporary camp³² on the northern terrace of the river Ayr, overlooking a crossing point. No ditches were revealed in the exposed area, but 30 regularly positioned field ovens were excavated, on rectilinear alignments.³³ Radiocarbon dating of six examples gave a range of 2 B.C.–A.D. 231; detailed analysis of these suggests a likely date in the Flavian period.

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ENGLAND

3. HADRIAN'S WALL

By PETE WILSON

SOUTH TYNESIDE

(1) **South Shields fort** (*Arbeia*) (NZ 365 679): excavation was completed in the area excavated since 2009,³⁴ 20 m south-west of the southern angle of the extended supply-base fort (FIG. 6).

The sequence now established can be recapped as follows. Overlying pre-Roman Iron Age ar marks, themselves sealed by an abandonment layer of windblown sand, the earliest Roman activity encountered consisted of a series of dumps containing abundant pottery and finds, apparently tipped onto the ground from the north-west. The pottery was of Hadrianic and early Antonine date (c. A.D. 120–160) and presumably emanated from an as yet undiscovered early fort at South Shields or its *vicus*. The upper horizon of the series of tip lines contained much burnt daub.

All these deposits were sealed by an extensive dump of clean clay over 1 m deep. Over this was laid a WSW–ENE-running road with a curving stone-lined channel on its north side. The road had a steep downward gradient to the WSW, suggesting that the clay dump may have been the eastern edge of material filling up a hollow or valley to the west that the road had to cross. The pottery from the clay dump and the underlying rubbish dumping suggests that dump, road and channel were constructed at the same time as the first stone fort of c. A.D. 160.

At some point before the early third century the drain was robbed, backfilled and sealed by a further clay dump and a resurfacing of the road, which might have represented a further attempt to level up the depression to the west.

²⁹ Information from N.M.McQ. Holmes and S. Campbell; the coins are now in Dumfries Museum.

³⁰ Other stray finds from the vicinity of Roman sites in 2016 were a pelta-shaped scabbard chape found near the Roman road at Soutra (Midlothian) and an enamelled stud from Carstairs Mains (South Lanarkshire); see *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland 2016*, 119, 165.

³¹ Directed by Iraia Arabaolaza of GUARD Archaeology for Kier Construction.

³² Providing a long-anticipated addition to the unnaturally sparse evidence for Roman activity in the area; see W. Roy, *The Military Antiquities of Roman Britain* (1793), 106, arguing for a road to Ayr; A. Wilson, *Glasgow Archaeological Journal* 19 (1994–5), 1–30, especially 13–15.

³³ The only likely context for such features in this quantity is a temporary camp; see R.H. Jones, *Roman Camps in Scotland* (2011), 81–3.

³⁴ See *Britannia* 45 (2014), 317–18; 46 (2015), 291–2; 47 (2016), 299.