

consistently challenged seemingly-unmoveable paradigms and worked alongside prominent glass specialists. Accordingly, alongside the copious material from Basinghall are photographs of experimental processes in which Taylor and Hill depict their constantly evolving and well-researched *chaînes opératoires* to explain the origin of the archaeological remains.

Composition analysis is the subject of ch. 4 (75–90). Glass composition expert Ian Freestone headed a team to analyse the origin of the glass worked at 35 Basinghall Street, concluding that at some point three types of glass were brought to the site via the Mediterranean to be worked in their pristine state: ‘natural’ blue-green, colourless (antimony decolourised) and nearly-colourless (manganese decolourised). Basinghall adds to a growing body of evidence that suggests that these three glass compositions were commonly used alongside one another, backing up evidence found at both Leicester (Jackson *et al.*, in Pernicka and Wagner (eds), *Archaeometry* 90, 295–305) and Mancetter (Jackson, *Archaeometry* 47, 763–80). This information leads to an intriguing supposition that the workers that set up the workshops at Basinghall (as well as Leicester and Mancetter) arrived from the Mediterranean with fresh ‘raw’ glass, as if they had relocated from elsewhere in London or the north-western provinces, they would have done so with cullet. The peripatetic nature of glass-blowers in the Roman East and in Italy is well known from epigraphy, but this sort of evidence allows us to fit Britannia into this wider socio-technical world.

Ch. 5 (91–110) places Basinghall in its wider context, both within London — where glass-working began c. A.D. 50–60 with the making of beads at Gresham Street, and glass-blowing began in the late A.D. 60s producing stirring rods alongside small flasks/unguentaria and cups — but also in Britannia and the wider Roman world. The volume concludes with the specialist appendices (111–55) detailing the building materials, pottery, industrial residues, vessel glass, accessioned finds, archaeobotanical material and faunal assemblages, which, in keeping with the rest of the volume, are thorough and well illustrated.

In assessing the usefulness of the reviewed volume for Roman glass specialists, Romano-British archaeologists and historians, and other interested parties, it seems apposite to quote the concluding remark of ch. 4 (89): ‘This investigation represents what is arguably the most detailed analytical investigation of a Roman glass workshop to date.’

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The Roman Roadside Settlement and Multi-Period Ritual Complex at Nettleton and Rothwell, Lincolnshire. The Central Lincolnshire Wolds Research Project Volume 1. By S. Willis. Steven Willis and Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd with the University of Kent, Kent, 2013. Pp. xx + 421, illus. 237. Price: £39.95. ISBN 9780956305497.

This substantial volume reports on work centred on a minor nucleated settlement lying close to the highest point of the Lincolnshire Wolds, forming part of a project with the avowed intention (*inter alia*) of redressing a significant imbalance in archaeological knowledge of this area, not least in the Roman period, when compared to adjacent regions. The site straddles the north–south Caistor High Street, probably the line of a Roman road. Prompted by significant metal-detected finds and the results of fieldwalking and geophysical survey carried out in the early 1990s on the west side of the Roman road, the report reconsiders these and presents the results of further work undertaken from 1998 to 2013. This includes the excavation of ten small trenches with locations determined by the various survey data and pragmatic considerations of availability. Detailed analysis of some parts of the programme (e.g. of fieldwalking finds from east of the road) and similar analysis of results of work on other sites in the area, to improve understanding of the context of the present site as well as of broader questions, are promised for a future volume but presented in outline here.

Introductory chapters deal with the regional physical and archaeological background (ch. 1) and the specific project background, including the early 1990s work and more recent geophysical survey in the eastern part of the site (ch. 2). The excavations are described (ch. 3), followed by analyses of prehistoric and Roman finds and environmental material (chs 4–7), a summary of the surveys of other sites in the area (ch. 8) and a closing discussion of ‘site character and context’ (ch. 9). Earlier prehistoric features may have established a locus for long-term ritual activity, but the scale of excavation is insufficient for this to be clearly demonstrable, though it is indicated by large-scale deposition of Iron Age coinage and other

objects (all known as surface finds). Settlement developed from the late Iron Age onwards and by the middle Roman period, if not earlier, was focused on the line of the likely Roman road, with traces of stone-founded buildings revealed on both sides, though activity, in the early Roman period at least, was not confined to the roadside zone. Late Roman activity is not so well represented and occupation may have largely ceased after the mid-fourth century. Aspects of the agricultural economy of the site and much slighter evidence for metal-working are discussed.

The presentation of this work is mostly very detailed and raises interesting questions about the nature of archaeological reporting. As the title indicates, this is a research project, and the level of reporting may be considered appropriate in this context. Willis' description of ten trenches with a total area of *c.* 378 m² takes 111 pages. That this stands in sharp contrast with the approach of most recent volumes resulting from older 'rescue' excavations or contemporary commercial work goes without saying; the scale of these projects is usually such that reporting at this level would be inconceivable. A happy medium seems to be hard to find, though clearly a 'one size fits all' approach is neither practicable nor desirable. Reports such as the present example may serve as a reminder of the range of questions that should be under consideration in compiling ostensibly straightforward site-phasing schemes and narratives, even if they are not then aired at length in those narratives.

A disadvantage of the all-embracing style, however, can be a lack of focus. This is a problem with the present volume, where intensive editing would have been beneficial; reporting of some finds categories, for example, seems disproportionate in terms of their contribution to overall understanding of the site. Conversely, while the broad characterisation of the site as an essentially rural minor nucleated settlement is established clearly enough, more specific discussion of comparative settlement forms would have been profitable. Meanwhile the evidence for the 'ritual complex' headlined in the title is more often hinted at than explored. Its potential Neolithic ancestry is based on very limited excavation and interpretation of geophysical survey results. More frustrating is the lack of detail on the crucially important Iron Age coin assemblage, for which the only reference is to a grey literature report. Surely this should have been set out here, even if only in summary form, and even though it is accepted that very large numbers of Iron Age and Roman coins 'can be presumed to have been recovered over the years by detecting but . . . have passed unrecorded' (387). The continued significance of this aspect of the site in the Roman period is hinted at by important finds of three rings, with devices showing Vulcan, and a lead curse tablet, but it is uncertain if these finds indicate a specific location for ritual activity. A focus in the western part of the site is proposed tentatively, based primarily on reports from metal-detectorists, but not confirmed by other evidence. The presence of a religious focus of some sort is not seriously in doubt (and need not have involved a substantial formal structure), but this is one area of the discussion that could have been developed further.

In summary, Willis and his team have extracted a considerable amount of information from their various data sources, though there remain some frustrating omissions, as already indicated. The extent to which the Nettleton and Rothwell complex is characteristic of the region remains to be determined and it is to be hoped that more work in this region will generate data that will allow characterisation of the whole range of rural site types on the Wolds and beyond.

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Arminius the Liberator: Myth and Ideology. By M.M. Winkler. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2016. Pp. xxiv + 356, illus. Price: £47.99. ISBN 9780190252915.

The name Arminius has become familiar to a wide public through television programmes, films and articles in popular magazines since the discovery in 1987 of the first clear archaeological evidence of the conflict known as the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest. The battle, in September of the year A.D. 9, was mentioned in a number of Roman and Greek texts, and several writers described it in some detail (though their descriptions differ). According to the accounts, three Roman legions and accompanying troops — perhaps as many as 20,000 men — were virtually annihilated in an ambush in which Arminius, said to be a leader of the Cherusci people in what is now northern Germany, led his warriors against the Romans.

Following the rediscovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of the written accounts of Velleius Paterculus, Tacitus and Cassius Dio, intense interest in this event developed in Europe. Poems were