



Roman Britain in 2016

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I. SITES EXPLORED

II. FINDS REPORTED UNDER THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME

III. INSCRIPTIONS



FIG. 1. Key to numbered sections of Part I (Sites Explored).

I. SITES EXPLORED

1. WALES

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GWYNEDD

(1) **Caernarfon**, *Cae Mawr* (SH 479 623): fieldwalking and geophysical survey following the discovery of fragments of Roman pottery as surface finds on a ploughed field on the western shore of the Seiont river (Afon Saint), near the site of the possible Roman bridge.¹ The pottery suggests activity in this area during the Roman period, but so far no conclusive Roman features have been identified.²

ISLE OF ANGLESEY

(1) **Llangefni**, *Bryn Cefni Industrial Estate* (SH 46458 74711): a trial-trench evaluation investigated a known late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement. The enclosure ditch, joined by a smaller gully, was recorded, as was a pit containing pottery dated to the second century A.D. or later. Further features within the enclosed settlement were undated but are likely to relate to the same period, as no remains dating to other periods were identified. Environmental remains provide evidence for agrarian activity.³

(2) **Wylfa**, *Wylfa Newydd* (SH 34990 93194): a very large archaeological evaluation mainly recorded prehistoric and undated features. A single sherd of black burnished ware was the sole Romano-British artefact recovered. An environmental sample taken from an enclosure ditch, which included cereal grains, was, however, radiocarbon dated to the Roman period. It seems likely that other large, undated, ditches may also originate in this period.⁴

NEWPORT

(1) **Caerleon**, *University of South Wales Campus* (ST 33485 91210): as part of an archaeological evaluation 33 trenches were excavated across the site. The majority showed that the site had undergone substantial landscaping, generally scarping into the natural clay and bedrock for the creation of terraces within the former hill slope, as the site had been developed during the twentieth century. A full soil profile was rarely extant, with a notable exception toward the south-western side of the site where the soils sealed a probable cremation deposit within a small pit and a north-south-aligned gully, at a depth of 0.64 m and 0.60 m respectively below the present ground surface. A single heavily abraded tile fragment and two pieces of corroded iron nail were recovered from the gully fill, which also contained moderately abundant charcoal. The cremation deposit was recorded and left *in situ*.⁵

¹ PRN 5564.

² Work by D. Hopewell and Gwynedd Archaeological Trust volunteers (GAT Report G2516). R. Mwyn sent information.

³ Work directed by P. Wright of Wessex Archaeology, for Amex Foster Wheeler. P. Bradley sent information.

⁴ Work directed by P. Noble of Wessex Archaeology, for Horizon Nuclear Power. P. Bradley sent information.

⁵ Work by P. Lovett and T. Vaughan of Worcestershire Archaeology, for Locus Consulting. T. Vaughan sent information.

PEMBROKESHIRE

(1) **Angle** (SM 92 01): a hoard of 105 ‘radiates’, Salonina (A.D. 253–60) to Diocletian and Maximian (A.D. 284–305), was found by use of a metal-detector. The coins appear to have been associated with the corroded remains of an inverted copper-alloy bowl, spoon and other objects as a single deposit.⁶

POWYS

(1) **Caersws**, *Bradley’s Garage, Carno Road* (SO 0310 9194): an archaeological evaluation revealed potentially significant archaeological deposits at a depth of between 0.7 m and 1.0 m below the present ground level, while augering indicated around 0.3 m of stratigraphy below this level. The nature of the archaeology suggests occupation, including perhaps two ovens or hearths, as well as a metallised surface, possibly for a yard area, or perhaps part of an internal road within the *vicus*. The area lies within the *vicus*, which developed outside Caersws II fort in the later first century A.D. and continued to be occupied until the third century.⁷

(2) **Newtown**, *Old Kerry Road* (SO 1127 9143): an archaeological strip, map and record within the grounds of a former rectory which was on the projected line of a Roman road linking the fort at Caersws to the west of Newtown with the fort at Forden Gaer to the north-east. The investigation identified traces of a cobbled metallised surface extending in patches for 25.72 m along the northern side of the excavated area. Whilst the surfaces were undated and badly abraded, they were sealed by two layers of subsoil and broadly respected the projected line of the Roman road. It is, therefore, likely that these surfaces represent the road, although this could not be confirmed without dating evidence. No road-side ditches were present within the investigation area.⁸

WREXHAM

(1) **Esclusham** (SJ 28 48): a hoard of 82 silver denarii, Republic to first century A.D., was found by use of a metal-detector. Forty-five of the coins date from the Republic, together with imperial coins, Augustus–Titus (A.D. 79–81). The likely date of deposit is *c.* A.D. 80–85. The lower portion of a flagon or jug of probable local manufacture was also found.⁹

(2) **Wrexham**, *Borras Quarry* (SJ 355 529): discovery of parts of a Romano-British field-system during soil-stripping operations provided additional context for limited activity of the period identified in 2015. A general lack of physical relationships and broad date ranges for the artefactual assemblage prevented close phasing of the features, although it was evident that there were several main phases of activity. Evidence from the pottery and a single coin suggested a broad date range of the second and third centuries A.D., possibly extending into the fourth century. There are similarities to finds made at Plas Coch, 3.6 km south-west of Borras, where excavations uncovered evidence for a small villa set within a ditched enclosure and surrounded by a system of regular fields, similar to those recorded at Borras.¹⁰ The distribution of features and finds suggests that the main focus of activity may lie just outside the extraction boundary for the Holt Estate, perhaps beneath Moss Bank Farm.¹¹

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⁶ Treasure case Wales 15.02. To be acquired by Milford Haven Maritime and Heritage Museum. E. Besly sent information.

⁷ Work by R. Hankinson of Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. N. Jones sent information.

⁸ Work by AOC Archaeology Group, for Lars Investments (OKR 16). K. McDermott sent information.

⁹ Treasure case Wales 16.13. To be acquired by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales. E. Besly sent information.

¹⁰ N.W. Jones, ‘Romano-British settlement at Plas Coch, Wrexham: excavations 1994–96’, *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 160 (2011), 51–113.

¹¹ Work by I. Grant of Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust. N. Jones sent information.