

dividend that lies within already completed work. These three themes – occasional spectacular discoveries, lack of full publication and failure to obtain new research insights from the data already acquired – provide the mood music, both high and low notes, for the rest of the volume.

Fulford divides his paper on the towns of south-east England into Late Iron Age origins or predecessors, Roman intramural and then extramural results. Pre-Roman discoveries, such as the burials at Stanway (Colchester) and Folly Lane (St Albans), and the Late Iron Age activity at Fishbourne (Chichester), are obvious highlights. However, despite major area excavations within the walled circuits of all the major towns of the south east since 1990, only two have seen full publication. In the south west, important advances have been forthcoming with regard to unexpected installations and structures outside the legionary fortress at Exeter, but Holbrook rightly stresses that the major weakness of developer-funded urban archaeology has been the lack of significant progress with regard to publication. The towns of the Midlands and the north have seen more work take place outside their historic cores, with important advances in knowledge about the nature of extramural areas, but Bidwell, recognising the problem of publication, argues that, for the results of commercial archaeology to be realised in full, there needs to be some sort of stage beyond the output processes of developer-funded archaeology.

Incongruously, the chapter on the dead brings some relief, arguably because it is a thematic, as opposed to a geographically constrained, offering. We learn that inhumation was widespread in the early Roman period, that some funerary ceremonies were marked by extensive destruction of objects and commodities and that between 40 and 60 per cent of people in Roman Britain seemed to have moved considerable distances in their lives. But even here Pearce suggests that the lack of print publication greatly compromises the research potential of the new data. Robinson (archaeobotany) and Maltby (zooarchaeology) both flag discoveries (eg large-scale grain storage or systematic cattle-carcass butchery in towns) while both lament the dominance of grey literature and the lack of full publication.

Fulford's concluding chapter strikes a suitably downbeat note and deserves to be read more than once. He itemises some key steps to address the significant problems of commercial archaeology, and soberly suggests that if

publication of a key urban site has not occurred within ten years the chances of it ever appearing are negligible. While agreeing that the issue of non-publication has an ancestry that precedes 1990, he recognises that this failing is still pervasive and persistent. This reviewer found these observations justified, but ultimately depressing. Reviewed from a distant future it is hard to escape the anticipated judgements of successor archaeologists that our profession, in the first quarter of a century of urban commercial archaeology, just did not get it right.

JOHN MANLEY

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*Understanding Roman Frontiers: a celebration for Professor Bill Hanson*. Edited by DAVID J BREEZE, REBECCA H JONES and IOANA A OLTEAN. 253mm. Pp xxxiii + 398, many ills, maps, plans, tables. John Donald, Edinburgh, 2015. ISBN 9781906566852. £30 (hbk).

This wide-ranging volume has immediately become important reading for anyone interested in the ever-broadening subject of Roman frontier studies. As a collection of twenty-six papers examining different aspects of recent research on the subject, it should perhaps be seen as an extra volume to sit beside those that result from successive Congresses of Roman Frontier Studies (*Limeskongress*). This is appropriate as, for decades, Bill Hanson has been a key figure in the development of frontier studies through these Congresses (as is apparent in the appreciation of Bill's career in this volume). The editors and contributors to the book are mostly regular Congress participants.

The contributions are divided into three groups, 'Frontiers and their Operation' (six papers), 'Life in and Beyond the Frontier Zone' (eleven papers) and 'Roman Frontiers: Prospection and Perspectives in the 21st Century' (eight papers).

The first section ranges chronologically from Augustan *stationes* in areas that were to become frontier zones (Ehrdrich) to the nature of late imperial frontiers (Collins), and geographically from the Pennines and the Antonine Wall (Symonds, Grafstaal *et al*) to the Black Sea (Rankov) via considerations of river frontiers

(Visy) and the Raetian Wall (Sommer). These papers are concerned with what might be regarded as the 'traditional' concerns of *Limesforschung*; the physical structure and layout of frontiers and their function on the ground with relation to military concerns. Several are contributions to long-running discussions of these aspects, which have run over years as knowledge and understanding has developed. In all cases the back-story of research is carefully presented such that they can be understood not only as updates of debate, but also as demonstrations of the dynamic nature of such studies.

It may surprise some to see that papers on life in the frontier zone generally outnumber those on purely military and strategic aspects by almost two to one. This simply reflects the concerns of modern frontier studies in attempting to understand the multifaceted nature of frontier society. Military life in garrison is tackled by an examination of the soldiers' daily routine (Haynes) and by consideration of the logistics of food supply on the desert frontier (Parker). The issue of whether and how soldiers were accompanied by women (Breeze) links to papers concerning the composition and identity of frontier communities. Some of these papers reflect the growing importance and sophistication of comparative artefact studies across the frontiers; thus, large artefact assemblages are marshalled in order to attempt to identify the different types of people (male / female, military / civilian) who could be found within forts (Allison). Artefacts related to dress are a conspicuous consideration here, and a further paper (Hoss) looks at the development of distinctive fashions in dress and equipment and the development of a common material culture within frontier communities, resulting from the hybridisation of elements from the different cultures of a diverse population. Dress on funerary portrait sculpture shows a distinction between male Roman dress and female ethnic attire, raising issues of gendered self-representation (Carroll).

Five of the contributions in this section concern specifically the northern frontier of Roman Britain. Two focus on specific aspects of material culture, finds of leather (Douglas) and issues of literacy deriving from the examination of inscribed objects from Roman Scotland (Allason-Jones). A more theoretical paper examines the evidence for the structured and deliberate deposition of Roman material culture (Campbell), while the distribution of evidence for ritual practice associated with the cult of *Vitiris* suggests the existence of a coherent

territory north of Hadrian's Wall (Goldberg). Finally, the evidence of recent hoards of silver *denarii* from Scotland and the archaeological examination of their findspots is informing our understanding of shifting trans-frontier diplomatic relations (Hunter).

The third group of papers examines new perspectives and advances in prospection. This section is highly appropriate for Bill Hanson, whose work in the field of aerial photography, prospection and mapping in Britain and Romania has been so productive. The impact of the Roman army on north-east England is examined in a twenty-year retrospective (Wilson). The absence of a planned Roman road in Scotland is seen as being eloquent of planning and the activities of the Roman surveyor in the Roman penetration into northern territory (Maxwell) in a paper originating in the author's work in aerial photography. Non-invasive techniques of geophysical survey, field walking and controlled metal detecting have identified a late Roman fortification on the lower Rhine at Drüpt (Bridger). The contribution of geophysics to frontier studies is more generally discussed (Jones and Leslie), and the use of aerial photography and airborne LiDAR has done much to reveal Roman camps in the Rhineland (Bödecker). At Dura-Europos, now so sadly inaccessible, remote sensing and surface survey have contributed to the understanding of the 'conflict landscape' where a Trajanic series of camps and a battlefield is convincingly postulated, extending as a landscape far beyond the trace of the well-known Sassanian siegeworks (James). The contribution discussing the use of 3D computer reconstruction models of sites and monuments (Dobat) rehearses issues relating to the careful documentation of sources and objectives for such work, which can transcend requirements for presentation and be real tools for research.

Finally, a paper by Bill's wife (Lesley MacInnes) examines the creation of the transnational UNESCO World Heritage Site, 'Frontiers of the Roman Empire'. Her 'last word' encapsulates the affection and admiration in which Bill is held by friends and colleagues (including this reviewer), which permeates every contribution to this book. Every paper in this volume is of the highest academic quality and the editors are to be congratulated in bringing together a substantial collection of work which stands as a worthy testimony to a considerable scholar. It will inform work in every corner of frontier studies for a long time to come.

TONY WILMOTT