

ROMAN FINDS GROUP
NEWSLETTER V



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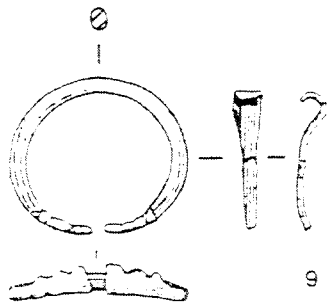
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Roman brooches

Can anyone help? We are interested in finding out more about this penannular brooch (a D7 variant from South Shields fort) and whether it could be sub-Roman as has been suggested (Fowler 1964). At South Shields a sequence of Dark Age occupation is known from the stratigraphy, but as yet no finds of that period have been identified.



*Type D7 brooch from South Shields (drawn by I Hagan, from Bidwell PT and Speak S C, *The Roman fort at South Shields: excavation of the west gate and headquarters building*, forthcoming)*

Scale 1:1

There are three examples of D7 penannulars from the fort. The one shown here, from recent excavations, has the typically narrow terminals, which are pinched up and notched. The only close parallels I can find are two examples from Piercebridge (S Butcher in Fitzpatrick, forthcoming) and Woodcuts (Pitt-Rivers 1887, 56 no 10, pl XVI); another example from Colchester (Fowler 1964, 98-160) appears to be similar, but it's not very obvious from the illustration. The type seems to have a lot of variations, and none of the other examples shown by Mrs Fowler are much like the South Shields penannulars.

One obvious connection between the sites mentioned above is sub Roman re-fortification. At both South Shields and Piercebridge large defensive ditches were dug at some time in the fifth century. The Woodcuts Brooch was found in the fill of the main (presumably late) ditch. The distribution is very odd, though; does anyone know of any examples from the Midlands to fill the gap?

Even though D7 penannulars may be early fifth century in date it is possible there are unpublished examples in otherwise earlier Roman collections. I should be grateful

to hear of any parallels or comments on their discovery
in Dark Age contexts on Roman military sites.

Bibliography

Fitzpatrick, A. *Roman Piercebridge* forthcoming

Fowler, E. 1964 *Celtic metalwork of the fifth and sixth
centuries AD: a reappraisal*, *Archaeol J* 120 98-160

Pitt-Rivers, A. L. H. 1887 *Excavations in Cranbourne Chase
1881-5* (Vol 1)

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Lead seal helps to rewrite history

In 1983 Roger Tomlin stunned Roman archaeologists and historians by his re-interpretation of the tribal area for the East Midlands (Tomlin 1983). By re-examining the graffito on a Roman tile excavated at Churchover, Warwickshire in 1965 he was able to suggest that the reading included CIVITAS CORIELTAUVORUM (of the civitas of the Corieltauri). A critical look at the evidence for the accepted tribal name of Coritani or Coritavi suggested that CORIELTAUVI could be plausibly interpreted from Ptolemy's Geography and the Ravenna Cosmography (*ibid*). The tribal name of Corieltauvi has been generally accepted by Roman scholars although the latest edition of Malcolm Todd's *The Coritani* does support the continued use of the original name (albeit with a footnote acknowledging the discovery of the item described here, Todd 1991 21).

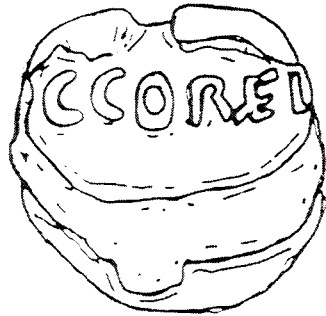
A lead seal discovered at Thorpe by Glebe eleven miles north of Leicester by metal-detector in November 1990 appears to add more weight to Tomlin's interpretation. The seal measures 21mm x 19mm x 7mm with a raised illegible obverse. The recessed reverse bears the stamped legend CCORIEL (Civitas Corieltauvorum). It belongs to a class of objects known from various parts of the Empire and usually interpreted as labels attached to different goods consignments. They are conventionally separated into three types, Imperial, Military or Private on the basis of their inscriptions. In Britain their distribution has tended to favour the northern forts with large numbers known from Brough under Stainmore (Richmond 1936). They are less common in the south and midlands although seven are known from Leicester (Clay 1980).

The significance of this find from Thorpe by Glebe is unclear. Other Roman material has been recovered from the area and a settlement is suggested. The inscription on the seal suggests that a consignment originated from Leicester (Ratae Corieltauvorum). It has been postulated that Leicester served as a redistribution centre for official consignments (*ibid* 320). The inscriptions on the reverse of such seals are difficult to interpret and may often represent private signatures of officials in charge of consignments. A seal stamped METAL(UM) from Brough under Stainmore (Richmond 1936) might suggest that the seal was connected with consignments from lead mines in the area. No other seals are known at present to have a reference to a tribal name for the area.

Bibliography

- Clay, P. 1980 'Seven inscribed leaden seals from Leicester'
Britannia II (1980) 317 - 20.
- Richmond, I. A. (1936) 'Roman leaden sealings from Brough
under Stainmore' *Trans Cumberland and
Westmorland Antiq Soc* 36 of 104
- Todd, M. 1991 'The Coritani' 2nd edition Bath
- Tomlin, R. S. O. 1983 'Non Coritani sed Corieltauvi' *Antiq J*
63 353

Patrick Clay
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10 mm

Roman lead seal from Thorpe by Glebe.

Roman Finds Group
"Finds from the Imperial West"

First International Conference 20th-22nd September
1991 University of Leicester

A participant's view —

The programme was an ambitious one for a first conference. The choice of weekend rather than weekday dates may have facilitated the participation of members not professionally employed in archaeology or who would be unable to secure release during the week. Unfortunately only a few over half made it for the punctual 4.00pm start, and ten or more failed to appear on Sunday. A handful of the twenty five speakers turned up only for the day, half day or session in which they were due to perform. Abstracts were distributed at the beginning, covering twenty three of the expected twenty six papers - one speaker was unable to appear.



The seven sessions grouped the papers into sensible sets, beginning with two sessions entitled "*Beyond Typology*". Fears that the conference could subsequently degenerate into the "*my favourite object*" type of lecture were largely unfounded, although the discussions following papers did tend to be dominated by bees being let out of bonnets by a handful of the more eager assertive participants, and by information exchanges which could best be left to personal interface. The fourth session, on statistics and their application suffered from attenuation; it surely needed more than twenty minutes, and the seated panel were not always audible. That it was justified is born out by the observation that only one of the eleven speakers in the first three sessions made use of statistics, demonstrating just how much remained unpublished from Richborough. The concept of "*magic figures*" for sample percentages, for example N% of pits or N% of kiln wasters, was dismissed, to the relief of several members who struggle to assemble Post Excavation Research Designs.

The most agitated discussion was generated by the issue of the "*we are misunderstood/disregarded*" school. Excavation report writers, who inevitably seem to be excavators, were encouraged — largely in absentia — to use "*Finds*" more extensively in the site interpretation and to raise the profile of Finds in Site Reports. If the conference achieved nothing else, it surely laid to rest the concept that a simple catalogue represents an adequate Finds Report. An invitation by the writer to consider how we disseminate our research to a wider audience — such as arts teaching departments and practising crafts people — was not taken up. It is to be hoped that a high proportion of participants employed by museums and higher education establishments will

take this on board — certainly the excavation units increasingly use exhibitions to explain their digs to the general public.

A couple of criticisms on the programme. The two main group participation events both fell on the Friday - the reception naturally, and the AGM - which may have excluded some unable to make it before Saturday. Indeed, the knowledge that only three papers would be missed may have encouraged some not to come that day. The lack of discussion at the AGM, committee members aside, may have reflected travel fatigue and the brief time available to gather thoughts. A Saturday AGM would I believe be an improvement.

Secondly - and no disrespect is meant to the speakers - the conference rather fizzled out on the Sunday. The invitation to scholars from Europe is to be applauded, and must surely be repeated. However there was no summing up time allocated, aside from the round of thanks given by the chairperson. Again a Saturday AGM would give people time - perhaps four sessions to apply themselves in the crucible of a conference to the question of "*where do we go from here?*".

The organisers are to be congratulated on the information package, the poster session provision and the acquisition of a vintage omnibus for the journey to the Reception, which ensured a convivial opening to what, I hope, will be the first in a long line of International Conferences of the RFG.

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116 Humberstone Drive
Leicester

Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference

Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
March 23 - 24 1991

Peter Wilson writes —

Being asked to write a review of a conference six months after it has taken place is rather daunting. TRAC '91 was the first of its kind and despite this it attracted 95 delegates from Britain, Holland, Germany and the USA, and included 19 papers. The conference was organised by Dr Eleanor Scott, presently with the RCHM (E).

Papers were divided between three sessions —

- *Some Hows and Whys of Roman archaeology*
- *Reconstructing space and social geographies*
- *Economy, technology and impact.*

Ian Hodder chaired the session on social space, guiding the discussion within a structuralist framework.

Highlights amongst individual papers (for me) included —

Greg Woolf on the Romanisation of the Roman army, discussing, amongst other things, the variability apparent within that organisation which is often mistakenly seen as rigid and monolithic

Richard Hingley on Studies of Roman Britain in the context of British Society which was a consideration of the differences between methods of incorporation and methods of assimilation. In parallel with his main theme he acknowledged that it may be possible to isolate Roman period communities that lack 'Roman' attributes.

However Geoff Carter's 'The theoretical development of buildings at the Orsett 'Cock' Enclosure, Essex — an unparalleled approach', was not generally well received although his point that post holes need not be regular to form buildings found some sympathy amongst delegates. Robert Rippengal challenged some of J. T. Smith's (Smith J. T. 'Villas as a key to Social Structure' in Todd (ed) *Studies in the Romano - British Villa* 149-86) conclusions concerning villas and social structure. Kevin Greene examined technology demonstrating the wide distribution of techniques which originated not with 'Greek science' but Rome. Rick Jones looked at the collapse of complex societies, and Martin Millett pointed to the need for frameworks within which to develop our ideas.

In many ways the conference emphasised the absence of theoretical approaches from much Roman period

archaeology to date, and looked ahead to how new approaches might be developed. Five delegates were asked to sum up, and three came out against publishing the proceedings. If theoretical approaches are to be disseminated to practitioners who see theoreticians as talking some form of foreign language (a view I can sympathise with), this seems to be a mistake. In the event *TRAC* will be published soon —

Scott, E. (ed) forthcoming 1992 *Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference (TRAC)*, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 1991' Publishers Worldwide Archaeology Series, Glasgow.

TRAC may develop into a useful and interesting series of conferences, and it could bridge the gap between theoreticians and those of us who aren't.

As to small finds — they weren't greatly in evidence. *TRAC '92* may represent an opportunity to redress this. It is being held in Bradford on March 28-29 (these are revised dates) and Peter Rush the Conference Organiser can be contacted at the address below —

The Department of Archaeological Sciences
University of Bradford
Bradford
BD 7 1 DP

Forthcoming events

Historical Metallurgy Society

Saturday 9th May 1992

Meeting to be held at the Verulamium Museum, St Albans. Topics will include Roman finds related to metalworking.

Details from —


Vanessa Fell
Manchester Museum
The University
Oxford Road
Manchester M13 9 PL
Tel 061 275 2645

Roman Finds Group

ROMAN FINDS
GROUP

GLOUCESTER
and the
SOUTH-WEST

CALAMUS



ROLES

City Museum, Brunswick Rd
Gloucester

MONDAY, 24 FEBRUARY
1992

The next meeting of the RFG will be held at the City Museum, Gloucester on Monday 24th February, 1992.

The cost of the day will be £5 for members and £7.50 for non-members. This will include tea and coffee. Lunch can be obtained close to the museum in many different types of establishments.

Completed booking forms should be returned to Patrick Clay, Leicestershire Archaeological Unit, Museums Annex, 116, Humberstone Drive, LEICESTER LE5 0HD by Friday 21st February.

In addition to the lectures listed overleaf, short contributions (5 to 10 minutes) are invited on particular finds or aspects of finds research. If you wish to give such a paper please contact Patrick Clay at the above address.

GLOUCESTER and the SOUTH-WEST Monday 24th February, 1992 City Museum, Brunswick Rd., Gloucester	
10.00	Check and Registration
10.30	Some Common and Uncommon finds from Frocester Court Eddie Price
11.15	West Hill, Uley: votive finds and depositional processes at a Romano-British temple complex Peter Leach
11.55	Short contributions
12.25	Lunch
1.35	New finds from Kingsholm Jan Summerfield
2.00	The Finds from the St. Peter Port Pierheads wreck, Guernsey Jason Monaghan
2.40	Purton Cemetery and its Finds Chris Chancier
3.20	A new group of penannular brooches from Glamorgan Glenys Lloyd-Morgan
3.30	Discussion
3.40	Tea
4.00	Visit to the gallery of the museum
5.00	Close

Details of cost and how to book are on the reverse of this form.

Next meetings —

22nd June 1992 "Making Waves" at the Museum of London.

26th October 1992 "Wet and Wonderful" at Manchester University



University of Southampton
Department of Adult Education

International Conference on Roman Baths
Bath 30 March - 4 April 1992

**Provisional Programme
and Registration Form**

Conference Organisers:

David E. Johnston, M.A.
Department of Adult Education
University of Southampton
Hampshire, SO9 5NH
Telephone (0703) 592441/592068

Tony Rook, B.Sc., M.Phil., F.S.A.
23 Mill Lane
Wexley
Hertfordshire, AL6 9EU
Telephone (04387) 5300

Registration Form

Please return as soon as possible to:

Beverley Williams
Department of Adult Education
University of Southampton
Highfield
Southampton
Hampshire
England
SO9 5NH

Surname: Forename(s):
Title: Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms
Address:

I am interested in the following: (please tick)

- Details of accommodation available in Bath
- Open-top bus tour of the City of Bath
- Theatre visit
- Conference Dinner
- I shall require commercial exhibition space
- I can offer a 20-minute paper/poster display

Title Abstract (maximum 200 words)

I enclose the registration fee of £70

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Contact —

Paul Bidwell
 Tyne and Wear Museums
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 Tel 091 454 4093

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JOURNAL OF ROMAN MILITARY EQUIPMENT STUDIES

VOLUME 2 1991

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- The Action of the Newstead snaffle Bit *Ann Hyland*
- Bronze spearheads and spear butts from Dacia *Livia Petculescu*
- Plumbatae from Ptsunda (Ptyus), G.S.S.R., and some observations on their probable use
Julian Bennett
- The mule of a soldier *N. Fuentes*
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The second volume of the *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* will be published on 28th February 1992. It will be available only to individual (i.e. non-institutional) ARMA subscribers at the specially reduced rate of £20.00 (US \$38). However, since it is somewhat shorter than volume 1 (and thus marginally cheaper to produce), those who return the application form below before Monday 9th March 1992 (for subscribers outside the UK, the postmarked date will suffice) will receive an additional reduction in the form of vouchers to the value of £3.00 (US \$6) off the price of either volume 3 of the journal or any of the forthcoming monographs.

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Archaeology of Archery

Alf Webb



ANY SUGGESTIONS

If you have any suggestions, or letters for this Newsletter please contact the Editor;

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Archaeology Service,
Conservation and Archaeology Section,
Bedfordshire County Council's Planning Department,
County Hall, Cauldwell Street,

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Under the terms of the 1984 Data Protection Act, The Roman Finds Group is required to ask its members whether they have any objection to personal data about them being held by the Society on computer. The personal data consists of members' names and addresses used in mailing and notices of meetings, and will be released only to archaeological organisations. If members have any objection to personal data about them being held by the RFG, could they please write to the Editor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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