

north-eastern Scottish context, which may extend beyond simple solar (or lunar) concerns.

The penultimate chapter is dedicated to an extensive historiography of recumbent stone circle studies and an attempt to track the origins and inspirations that led to the creation of this distinctive tradition. The historiography is welcome, showing the origins of many of the classificatory and interpretative traditions that still underpin current studies. What is less convincing is the lengthy discussion arguing that recumbent stone circles were simulacra of the much earlier chambered cairns of northern Scotland. This is largely inspired by Bradley and narrowly focused on megalithic architecture. Nowhere are the potential wider links to timber architecture and other third-millennium architectural traditions fully explored. Likewise the idea that the recumbent represents a blocked doorway is not explored in relation to the (albeit very sparse) settlement architecture of the third millennium BC.

Overall, this is an important volume. The interpretations may not always be cutting-edge, but the volume contains important refutations of much perceived (and false) wisdom concerning these monuments. It is an incredible resource and a major development for anyone interested in Scotland's rich heritage. Consequently any detrimental change to the RCAHMS that may emerge from the current review would be a blow to archaeology and heritage not just for Scotland but for the world more generally. Scotland possesses some of the most inspiring, life-enriching remains of our past and RCAHMS is a recent but essential part of that past. Surely it should also be an important part of its future?

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REBECCA H. JONES. *Roman camps in Scotland*. xxix+353 pages, 221 colour illustrations, 4 tables. 2011. Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland; 978-0-903903-50-9 hardback £30, fellows £25.



Britain is particularly fortunate in possessing an unrivalled portfolio of Roman military installations surviving as earthworks. The frontiers and the forts are most visible today,

but there is also an extensive range of camps: marching camps, labour camps, practice camps and siege camps. Those in England have been published by Humphrey Welfare and Vivien Swan (HMSO 1995) and the Welsh examples by Jeff Davies and Rebecca Jones (University of Wales Press 2006). Now Jones has turned her attention to the camps in Scotland.

Camps are the most intractable type of military site. Most were large, sometimes very large, most were occupied for a short period so that dating evidence is slight, and few have been subject to intensive excavation. Yet, the range of camps in Britain is unique within the whole Roman empire. Beyond Britain, siege camps are known, but marching camps have only *predominantly* come to light since aerial survey took off in eastern Europe while practice camps are rarely recognised. Most camps in Britain have been discovered since the start of aerial survey in the 1930s, but Jones provides a useful discussion of the earlier discoveries in the mid-eighteenth century which again emphasises the particularly British contribution to this aspect of Roman studies.

The book consists of two parts, a gazetteer of over 170 known, probable and possible camps running to 215 pages and with every camp in the first two categories illustrated by a clear map, preceded by 10 chapters in which are discussed the history of research, distribution, the field evidence and historical context, supported by plans, maps, aerial photographs and early drawings. The most important chapter is the discussion and analysis of the field evidence. This runs from consideration of the orientation of individual features, with 19 illustrations encompassing all camps, to internal features and the re-use of camps by the Romans and their successors. The evidence of aerial survey, from which the distribution of pits can be plotted, and modern extensive excavations which have revealed internal features such as ovens, offers a way forward in understanding the interior planning of camps and give the lie to this reviewer's earlier bleak comments about such a possibility.

The final two chapters review the evidence for dating and grouping into series. This careful assessment reveals the paucity of our evidence. What there is consists of a few sherds of pottery, a handful of radiocarbon dates mainly from one camp, and the stratigraphic relationships between some camps as revealed by excavation and observation. It is not surprising that few series of camps can be securely dated. These include the three largest series, assigned

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by St Joseph to the Severan campaigns of the early third century AD. Recent archaeological excavations by David Woolliscroft have cast doubt on St Joseph's dating of one of these series, and Jones is suitably cautious on the traditional attribution.

Any attempt to relate the series of camps to known historical events would not meet the approval of Richard Reece, and indeed is difficult to prove. While broadly maintaining the traditional (St Joseph) attributions of the main series of camps, Jones is well aware that there were several other occasions when Roman armies campaigned north of Hadrian's Wall and that the current allocations relate to "the main attested incursions into this territory of which we are aware" (p. 98).

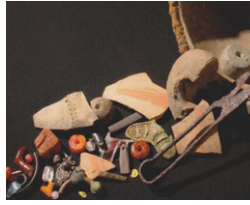
Roman camps in Scotland emphasises that the study of these archaeological leviathans has come a long way in the last 30 years. We are no longer reliant upon the testimony derived from small trenches to identify and date camps. Developer funding has led to larger excavations revealing, in particular, evidence for re-use of camps—previously unimagined—and internal features, as well as providing material for radiocarbon dating. Here the success story is Kintore in Aberdeenshire where Murray Cook's excavations have uncovered 180 field ovens and revealed much information about the operation of a Roman army in the field; the many radiocarbon dates obtained not only date the use of the camp but hint at its re-use, leading, inevitably, to the formulation of a new range of questions about the use of Roman camps.

The publisher is to be warmly congratulated on the quality of this hardback—it is simply sumptuous—and its price. The book is well designed with each plan usually on the same page as the related text, and the whole is supported by a full index. This volume and its English and Welsh companions provide archaeologists with an excellent springboard for further research. It is also an incomparable guide to those wishing to explore visible remains in the field, investigations made easier by the excellent plans and site descriptions.

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DAGFINN SKRE (ed.). *Things from the town: artefacts and inhabitants in Viking-Age Kaupang* (Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series 3, Norske Oldfunn 24). 484 pages, numerous colour & b&w illustrations & tables. 2011. Aarhus & Oslo: Aarhus University Press & Kaupang Excavation Project,

University of Oslo; 978-87-7934-309-2 hardback \$80 & £50.



A bold archaeological enterprise is drawing to a close with the publication of the third volume in the series on the Viking port of Kaupang in Norway, the target of

large-scale research excavation in 2000–2003. The guiding principle of the publication series, as set out by the editor and project director, Dagfinn Skre, is to present problem-oriented research rather than a traditional excavation report. Despite its title, Kaupang III is supposedly not the 'finds volume' in the series, but a collection of studies relating to a key site in early medieval northern Europe.

The contributors have responded in different ways. Some, like Heid Resi, pay homage to the traditional genre of artefact studies. The temptation is understandable, since Kaupang presents substantial and well-recorded artefact groups, some of which have seen no comprehensive study for decades. Resi's chapters on amber, jet and gem stones (with technical analysis of jet-like objects by Unn Plahter) as well as on whetstones and other stone objects, contain general surveys of these materials in Norway. It constitutes a point of reference, which has long been missing.

Giving greater attention to social context, Ingvild Øye demonstrates that textile production in Kaupang followed patterns which are consistent with other early urban sites in Scandinavia. Irene Baug's attempt to provenance soapstone finds through mass spectrometry reveals that most vessels are probably from a single (unidentified) quarry, indicating large-scale production for exchange. The subtle modelling of deposition patterns and recovery rates of glass artefacts presented by Bjarne Gaut (with a contribution by Julian Henderson) points against the received notion that glass sherds arrived mainly as raw material for bead production. Glass vessels, Gaut argues, were part of the inhabitants' cultural baggage.

The analysis of pottery by Lars Pilø, integrated with petrological and chemical analyses by the late Alan Vince, identifies a range of imported wares not previously noted in Scandinavia. Yet what is missing is no less important: there are no continental wares from the late ninth and tenth century and no pottery from Britain or Ireland. This pattern shows that wares were associated with specific groups and flows. The study

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