

Medieval Archaeology

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY FOR MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Ploughs, Kent and the Anglo-Saxon Conversion

Excavations at Lyminge, Kent



Between 2008 and 2010 the University of Reading conducted an intensive campaign of archaeological research aimed at unlocking the origins and development of the Anglo-Saxon monastic settlement of Lyminge, Kent. Provisional summaries of this programme of 'village-core' archaeology have been summarised in the 'Fieldwork Highlights' section of *Medieval Archaeology* (Vol. 54, pp 409-14) with more recent updates appearing in 2011 editions of the magazines *Current Archaeology* and *British Archaeology*. The purpose of this note is to update members on the results of a preliminary phase of post-excavation analysis focusing on the much-publicised plough coulter and related discoveries of 2010 that are generating a vivid picture of life at Lyminge on the eve of the Anglo-Saxon conversion.

When announced, the discovery of the plough coulter – the first of its kind from Anglo-Saxon England – stimulated considerable interest in the British media. Since then the coulter has passed through cleaning and conservation at the Institute of Archaeology, London, and is

currently undergoing a programme of analysis by freelance archaeometallurgist, Gerry McDonnell. The provisional 7th century dating based on the typology of metalwork and glass recovered from layers sealing the coulter has been confirmed by radiocarbon dating (cal AD 570-650 ± 2 sigma; SUERC-35927). This *terminus ante quem* does not provide a date of manufacture for the coulter, but consultation with Romano-British ironwork specialist Professor Bill Manning (Cardiff University) lays to rest the lingering possibility that it is of Late Roman origin: the coulter is as genuinely early medieval as the swords and spears which abound in Anglo-Saxon graves.

The coulter is formed from three billets of iron lap-welded together; there is no evidence for the application of a steel cutting edge to the blade. X-radiography also shows extensive stress cracking at the shoulder of the coulter, indicating that it had seen active use on a plough prior to its deliberate – likely ritual – deposition at the base of a sunken-featured building. The question of where the coulter was made is more of an uncertainty. Its

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The present issue is packed with current research items, demonstrating the continued strength of Medieval Archaeology, and of the Society's members. A significant highlight is the upgrading of our journal by the Norwegian Register of Scientific Journals from level 1 to level 2, the highest category; less than a quarter of other worldwide archaeological journals occupy this status at present.

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Left:

The iron plough coulter recovered during excavation at Lyminge, Kent, representing the first coulter to be recovered from a sealed context on an Anglo-Saxon site. The coulter measures 67cm in length and 8 cm in width at the widest point of the blade. It was recovered from a sunken-featured building highlighted in red.

This stage of the Lyminge post-excavation programme was supported by grants from the British Academy, the Society of Antiquaries of London and the Marc Fitch Fund. Thanks to Prof. Peter Fowler, Prof. Joachim Henning, Prof. Bill Manning, Libby McCormick, Dr Gerry McDonnell and Dr John Merrell for their assistance in relation to the conservation, analysis and interpretation of the plough coulter.

form places it within the continental tradition of 'swivel plough' characterised by what Professor Joachim Henning has called a 'floating coulter', with parallels from a number of early medieval burials, including a 6th-7th-century example from Bel Air, near Lausanne, Switzerland (Henning 2009, Fig. 3b). On this basis, the Kentish find could conceivably be a Frankish import, but the possibility that it was made locally deserves serious consideration given that a charter dated AD 689 records that the royal centre of Lyminge was in possession of its own iron mine, in all probability located in the Weald. Either way, the coulter offers an important new perspective on the close cultural ties existing between Kent and Frankia during the conversion period.

The coulter belongs to an exceptionally large and varied early Anglo-Saxon cultural assemblage recovered from a cluster of four sunken-featured buildings excavated in 2010 - part of a more extensive pre-Christian settlement seemingly abandoned in the 7th century when the focus of domestic activity gravitated towards the site of the newly-founded monastic church. The coulter and the structure in which

it was ritually confined stand at the cusp of a key cultural transition, when Lyminge and other royal centres in Kent were 'Christianised' as aristocratic double monasteries in imitation of established Frankish practice. Post-excavation analysis has established Lyminge's potential to offer a new paradigm for understanding how this cultural transition played out within the early medieval landscape. A new campaign of excavation and research is being formulated to build upon this demonstrated potential. The results of the work to date, including specialist reports and summaries of the completed excavation campaigns can be downloaded at the project website: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/archaeology/research/Lyminge/>

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Reference

Henning, J 2009 'Revolution or relapse? Technology, agriculture and early medieval archaeology', in G. Ausenda, P. Delogu and C. Wickham (eds), *The Langobards before the Frankish Conquest: An Ethnographic Perspective*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 149-164.

Europe's Early Medieval Sculpture: meanings, values, significance

A Society for Medieval Archaeology sponsored session at the EAA in Oslo, September 2011

Mark Hall received funds from the Eric Fletcher Grant to enable his participation in the panel he and Sally Foster organized as part of the EAA conference. The session sought to explore the diverse national and local responses to the research, preservation, interpretation, presentation and dissemination of early medieval sculpture (c. AD 300-1200). Its particular concern was how giving new meaning to this material makes – or can make – a practical difference 'on the ground' in terms of how different people can appreciate its significance and attach value to it. In some areas carved stones comprise a key resource in charting and celebrating a nation's development, in others they form a small part of an embarrassment of monumental riches, while in some places their significance is overlooked. Different ways of perceiving this resource affect the potential significance it can realise, and therefore the value local communities, national heritage bodies and others attach to it. Such aspects influence the ways societies seek to preserve, interpret and present this cultural resource, which in iterative fashion transforms understandings of it, and thereby perceptions of its significance and value.

Mark Hall (Significant reuse: material biography and early medieval sculpture in Scotland) explored material or cultural biography as an approach to the study of early medieval sculpture, illustrated with case studies from the Pictish inheritance of Scotland. Sally Foster (The impact of Victorian and later casts of early medieval sculpture on understanding and appreciation of early medieval sculpture) opened up the subject of plaster casts of early medieval sculpture. The story of the casts, whether examined on the long biographical axis of individual monuments or assemblages, or on a horizontal

axis – the phenomenon of casting from the 1830s to the present, peaking at the end of the 19th century/beginning of the 20th century – casts light on the intrinsic, contextual and associative significance of what is now a fragile and vulnerable international resource. Betsy McCormick was unable to attend but her contribution ('The Highly Interesting series of Irish High Crosses': reproduction of early medieval Irish sculpture in Dublin and London) extended the discussion of casts with a particular focus on Irish examples. Roger Stalley (Irish sculpture and its audiences) discussed how Irish monumental crosses might be better and more widely understood, and focused on the questions that visitors to these sites often ask which, Roger argued, are the ones we should try to explain. These include the practical demands of quarrying, transporting stone, the technical difficulties involved in carving, the overall conception and design of the crosses, and the status of those who actually cut the stone. Cecilia Ljung (Eleventh century stone sculpture and the transformative Scandinavian Christianity) focused on how the design, inscriptions and use of stone sculpture reflected altering perceptions of death, gender and memory in a time of religious transition. Andrew Johnson (The Manx Crosses – A Case of Mistaken National Identity?) considered the question of whether, as the Isle of Man forges an increasingly independent persona, it will become important to establish the significance and symbolism of the Manx crosses, at both academic/public, and historical/modern levels. In the Netherlands, stone has to be imported and there is therefore little in the way of early monumental carved stones. Elizabeth Den Hartog (Sarcophagi in the Netherlands) revealed that,

CONFERENCE / SEMINAR REPORTS

instead of great stone crosses, investment was made in a range of sarcophagi, including limestone examples from northern France in the Frankish period, while red sandstone examples were brought along the Rhine between the 11th and the 13th centuries. Exceptionally great numbers of such monuments are to be found in some churches in West-Friesland.

In sharing new approaches and best practices through a balance of case studies and explorations of broader issues, the aim of the session was to promote a Europe-wide debate that can help broaden and strengthen the potential of this material. We wanted to commence a fuller understanding of the surviving character and nature of the resource in different parts of Europe and to understand what is driving the different ways people look at it and use it. In what ways (biographical, inter-disciplinary, scientific, landscape, etc.) does it help us generate new stories about our past and what impact are these having on the ground (principally publication, online

and museum/site displays)? The session made a successful start in promoting discussion among the diverse range of attendees. Notably, we were able to promote links with the Runes, Monuments and Memorial Carvings International Research Network, organised by Cecilia Ljung and Marjolein Stein, which had its inaugural meeting in Uppsala just before the EAA (<http://monuments.runology.net/>). We are publishing our session jointly with a University of Edinburgh conference, *Scotland and Beyond: Early Medieval Carved Stones*.

In addition to the generosity of our Society, we gratefully acknowledge travel grants from the Hunter Archaeological and Historical Trust, and The Lambarde Fund of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

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Reaching Out

How the Society should realise more opportunities to represent itself abroad

Chris Gerrard and I found ourselves most recently in St Louis, Missouri, attending the Medieval Academy of America's 87th Annual Meeting, at the kind invitation of Tom Finan, St Louis University. We were not alone, and Tom had arranged for quite a number of archaeologists to attend, including our vice President Terry Barry and recent Council member Tomás Ó Carraigáin. Richard Oram and Roger Stalley were also present. We enjoyed a great series of panels; on Rivers, Water and Natural Resources, and on aspects of medieval Ireland. It was an important attendance for Archaeology, since this is a subject area that rarely presents itself in a strong capacity within the Medieval Academy, which prides itself on showcasing the strongest scholarship. Tom deserves significant praise for securing representation in 2012. However what struck Chris and I was the absence of our Society in any formal capacity at the conference. We were all there representing our own institutions, yet it would not have been difficult to mark the Society's presence as well. It is an absence that occurs elsewhere, and, it seems, at many international gatherings outside the UK. As our interests continue to develop, the international fruits of which are increasingly apparent in our

journal, *Medieval Archaeology*, we should be asking what is possible to do to enhance the Society's representation abroad. Martin Carver makes a strong case in this Newsletter in relation to the revitalized Medieval Europe conference, but there are many other venues and opportunities. Our publishers are keen to help where possible. As a member, you can help too by notifying Council of an event that could be a suitable opportunity. You may be asked to shepherd some leaflets to the conference and to say hello to the representative from Maney, but that's no hardship and will serve the Society well. If it is a good conference, you may even feel compelled to write a short account for the Newsletter, highlighting the salient points being argued, and including a good photograph too. It is on foot of such networking that our Society will continue to grow, both in membership and in scope.

Niall Brady

Newsletter Editor

Website

www.medievalarchaeology.org
The website continues to improve.
Send us your comments:
medieval.archaeology@ gmail.com

Apply for a Grant

The Society is in the happy position of being able to offer grants for research and for travel. For information on how to apply for a Society grant/award, see our website www.medievalarchaeology.org

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Society News

The Norwegian Register of Scientific Journals and Publishers

Journals are regularly assessed by external bodies and ranked according to the importance attached to them. The rankings have implications for how a journal is perceived nationally and internationally, and contributing authors and funding authorities will be influenced by such matters. The Society is very proud of the standing that *Medieval Archaeology* has achieved, due in no small measure to the genuine hard work of the editorial team, in screening submissions and working with the authors to produce a first-class product. Our publishing house, Maney, is also involved by ensuring the journal is listed and 'networked' where necessary. As members, we all congratulate Sally Foster for her fastidious work as editor over the last number of years. As she passes the baton in volume 56 to assistant editor Ollie Creighton, she does so having earned a further credit for the Society. The Norwegian Register of Scientific Journals and Publishers has elevated its ranking of *Medieval Archaeology* from a Level 1 'ordinary' status to its Level 2 'highly prestigious publication channel'. There is no higher category, and it represents an important recognition of the value of the journal by a premier Nordic authority. It appears that only 24% of the worldwide archaeology and conservation journals assessed by the Norwegian Register qualify for Level 2 status, and only one of these is Scandinavian (*Norwegian Archaeological Review*).

New Monographs from the Society

The Society has recently published two new monographs. The first is *Ironwork in Medieval Britain. An Archaeological Study*, by Ian H Goodall (SMA Monograph 31; ISBN: 978-1-907975-45-5). This is a 416-page survey of iron tools and other fittings in use during the period c. 1066 to 1540 AD. Exceptional in a north-western European context for its range and coverage of artefacts from both rural and urban excavations, much of the material described here was recovered during 'rescue' projects in the 1960s and 1970s funded by the State through the Ministry of Public Works and Buildings and their successors. The text contains almost everything necessary to identify, date and understand medieval iron objects. In scope and detail there is no published parallel and, as such, it will be essential for almost any archaeologist working in later medieval archaeology, particularly in the fields of excavation, finds study, museums and research. The contents cover iron smelting and smithing, metalworking tools, woodworking tools, stoneworking and plastering tools, textile manufacturing tools, tanning and leatherworking tools, agricultural tools, knives, shears and scissors, building ironwork and furniture fittings, locks and keys, household ironwork, buckles and personal equipment, and horse equipment.

The second monograph is *The Chapel and Burial Ground on St Ninian's Isle, Shetland. Excavations Past and Present*, by Rachel Barrowman (SMA Monographs 32; ISBN: 978-1-907975-46-2). This 256-page volume is the definitive account of the excavation which led to the discovery of the magnificent hoard of 28 pieces of Pictish silverware on St Ninian's Isle, Shetland in 1958. It includes a reassessment of the original archives and finds, including an ogham stone found on the site in 1876 and a fantastic collection of glass beads, as well as several new small-scale excavations on the site of the chapel and its burial ground. Taken together, the work reveals a long sequence of settlement beginning in the Iron Age. The first church was built on the site in the 8th century, and accompanied by a long cist cemetery with cross-incised stones and shrine sculpture. The church may have continued in use into the 9th or 10th centuries, and the recent work has confirmed that the famous hoard was buried into its floor. There was a degree of continuity between the pre-

Christian and Christian burials, with evidence that the site was a special place for burial before the advent of Christianity. The report describes these burials in detail, ending the story sometime between the 11th and end of the 12th centuries, when an adult male who had died a violent death was moved to be buried on the site.

Thereafter the site was inundated with wind-blown sand. A new chapel with an accompanying long cist cemetery was then built above the earlier church, and a chancel was added later. The associated graveyard continued in use until around 1840, long after the building was demolished.

Both monographs are now available from Maney Publishing, http://maney.co.uk/index.php/series/sma_monographs

Chris Gerrard
Monographs Editor



Detail from SMA Monograph 32, plate 1

News & Views

The Medieval Europe Research Congress, MERC 2012

MEDIEVAL EUROPE is the title of a series of conferences launched in York in 1992, with subsequent events in Bruges (1997), Basel (2002) and Paris (2007). The purpose was to review the progress and to set the agenda for research into Medieval Europe at five-yearly intervals. The topics discussed were generally thematic: urbanism, maritime studies, ports and ships, technology and innovation, death and burial, exchange and trade, religion and belief, art and symbolism, rural settlement, the archaeology of buildings and so on. The success of these congresses leaves no doubt that Europe has an appetite for regular reviews of research into its medieval period. The next one is due in 2012, but there have been difficulties in finding a country willing to host it. Following a request from colleagues for help, I held a kind of online chat and we came up with a proposal for a way forward. The proposal is laid out on a web site that can be reached by entering 'Medieval Europe 2012' into a search engine. The rationale and programme are sketched below.

A New Direction for Medieval Europe: There are three main factors, financial, organisational and academic, that suggest a new direction for the congress, henceforward the **Medieval Europe Research Congress, MERC**.

The financial problem is currently palpable over much European activity. Although previous congresses have made a healthy profit, including the last one at Paris, there have been difficulties in finding a country to take on MERC 5 in 2012.

There is also an organisational issue. MERC has a nominal committee, but no permanent governance to ensure continuity. The baton has passed informally from one local committee to the next. In general, archaeologists have also found that the number and size of the annual conferences they would wish to attend has continued to increase. The month of September is exceptionally crowded.

From the academic point of view, the thematic programme of the conference was becoming outmoded, and the range of attendance unclear. MERC was originally aimed at all disciplines but the American Medieval Conference at Kalamazoo and the IMC at Leeds are both designed to

serve the same constituency. In practice, MERC has been largely an archaeological affair, providing a research outlet for archaeologists in every sector (university, commercial, museum, government). There is a case for taking it forward as an archaeological congress, and reviewing its content accordingly. Within archaeology, the study of the medieval period has had a complex itinerary, with its agenda set by history, art history and prehistory. This has provoked many fruitful collaborations. While all these interdisciplinary links must certainly continue, there is an especially good case today for enhancing the relationship of medievalists with prehistory and environmental studies. These are areas in which archaeologists can hope to bring ideas and information to broader medieval history that are really original and new.

MERC 2012 at Helsinki: It was a consideration of these three factors that led to the present proposal, namely that MERC should be merged with the annual European Archaeology Association Conference, beginning at the EAA Conference at Helsinki, 29 Aug-1 Sep 2012. This should serve the combined purpose of protecting the Medieval Europe mission, reinforcing the EAA project and integrating the medieval with the prehistoric agenda.

The MERC brand will be maintained in the form of a Plenary Meeting (on 29 Aug), a keynote session with 4 invited speakers (30 Aug), a reception (31 Aug), a dinner (1 Sep) and a field trip to Taillin (2 Sep). In addition, it is hoped that much medieval research will be embedded in the multi-period proposals for sessions that have been sent to the EAA organisers. (Those selected have still to be announced.) The programme to date is on the EAA conference website: <http://www.eaa2012.fi/me/meindex.html>

Readers will appreciate that these arrangements had to be hurried into being to avoid losing the continuity of the Medieval Europe Congresses. The first thing we will do at Helsinki is to hold a Plenary Meeting, the purpose of which is to agree a future for MERC that has the support of the majority of medievalists. The provisional agenda for the Plenary Meeting at Helsinki on 29 August 2011 will be:

- (1) Introduction, laying out the factors summarised above.
- (2) Proposal: Do we agree in principle to integrate with EAA or should we make renewed efforts to mount a separate congress?
- (3) Proposal: Ideas to put to EAA so as to preserve our identity (for example, use of our logo; choose a Medieval city for our 1 in 5 meetings; ask for a share of the annual conference income to keep our funds topped up).
- (4) Proposals: How to use our funds (c. €13K) (for example to support attendance of medieval students, subsidise field trips, reception).

(5) Discussion, and hopefully agreement, of the Helsinki programme.

(6) In the light of decisions reached by vote on items 2-5, agreement on a system of governance and the election of a permanent committee.

If we can come to an agreement between ourselves, and of course with the governing body of EAA, we should be able to announce the future programme of MERC at the reception we host on 31st August.

All those interested in research into Medieval Europe are urged to attend this Plenary Meeting. Items for consideration at that meeting are very welcome and should be sent to me below. Everyone who would like to help relaunch Medieval Europe should register to attend EAA in the normal way, on: <http://www.eaa2012.fi/registration.html>

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IPOL, the Irish Pollen Site Database

Trinity College Dublin has completed a most useful search tool that is freely available online. IPOL is a collection of metadata of Irish Quaternary pollen sites. The database currently contains information on 472 sediment-based records. It is organised into a table with particulars on the location, chronology and a publication reference for each site. Site locations can also be viewed in Google Earth.

The information contained in the site table is available for downloading in spreadsheet and access database format as well as site markers for display in Google Earth. While not specifically focused on the medieval period, researchers can now know where pollen work has taken place across Ireland, and whether there is any data available for their particular study area. Check it out at: www.ipol.ie

Grants & Awards



Excavation of a glass furnace, from the east, Glastonbury Abbey. Copyright NMR Pub/GLA/11/3. Reproduced with kind permission of the NMR. Donald Harden, a founding member of the SMA, is pictured wearing a beret.

The Glastonbury Abbey Excavation Archive Project, 1908-1979

Glastonbury Abbey is reputed to be one of the earliest monasteries in England, likely dating from the 7th century, and was central to the monastic reform movement of the 10th century. Historical and literary scholars have long been attracted to its rich historical tradition and legendary associations with King Arthur and Joseph of Arimathea. But the story of the abbey's archaeology remains largely untold. Thirty-four seasons of excavation took place in the years 1908-1979 by iconic figures in the history of medieval archaeology: St John Hope (1904), Bligh Bond (1908-21), Peers and Clapham (1928-39), Raleigh Radford (1951-64). Fieldwork was completed on low budgets funded by the Society of Antiquaries of London and the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (SANHS). There were eight different directors, none of whom published more than interim reports.

The full archive of excavations will soon be brought to publication by a major research project funded by the AHRC and being undertaken by the University of Reading

in partnership with the Trustees of Glastonbury Abbey. A key objective is to critically reassess the interim evidence published by Raleigh Radford (1981). Seven charcoal samples from Radford's excavations (1951-1964) were submitted for radiocarbon dating. The charcoal was assessed for suitability by Dana Challinor and the radiocarbon dating was carried out by the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC). Four samples were initially submitted, funded by the Society for Medieval Archaeology. Three supplementary samples were funded by the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (SANHS). The certificates have been interpreted with a 95% confidence level and a brief summary of the final calibrated results follows.

Five of the samples came from early medieval glass-working furnaces discovered within the cloister area of the medieval abbey. Four furnaces were identified between 1955 and 1957 and a large quantity of glass-working debris was recovered, making this the most comprehensive assemblage to have been recorded in Britain. A mid-10th century date has been suggested previously based on stratigraphic locations, suggesting that they were associated with the building work undertaken by Abbot Dunstan (c. 940-957+)

as part of his monastic reforms. However, integration of the excavation material, incorporating many additional finds and records, indicates that the furnaces could have been earlier. Charcoal samples linked to specific furnace contexts have recently returned a consistent radiocarbon age range which is appreciably earlier than the previously accepted dating. Three samples came from within or directly below the *in situ* furnace floors and a further two samples were taken from the overlying ash and debris layers. The project team is considering the full implications of these exciting results, particularly in relation to the nature and dating of the Saxon glass-working (Willmott & Welham in prep).

In addition, a sample from a group of post-pits excavated in the west cloister walk between 1952 and 1954 has been radiocarbon dated to the late 8th-9th century. Sealed beneath the 12th-century mortar bedding and within the bounds of the early medieval cemetery, this appears to confirm the presence of a funerary structure as originally proposed by Radford. The final sample came from a metal-working furnace to the west of the dormitory. This returned an early 11th to late 12th century date therefore disproving the excavator's view that this was contemporary with the glass-working furnaces. Instead, it seems likely that the furnace was associated with post-Conquest construction work, although the stratigraphic record implies this activity pre-dated the building of the mid-12th century dormitory.

The results of the project will be discussed at a seminar to be held at the Society of Antiquaries on the 16th November 2012, and will be published in a Society of Antiquaries monograph.

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Pen-Ucha'r Llan Ringwork

In the summer of 2008, measured survey and small-scale excavation was undertaken at Pen-Ucha'r Llan castle ringwork in Llanfor, north Wales. The southern banks of the monument were previously believed to be damaged by quarrying activity, but a detailed pre-excavation earthworks plan indicated more structure than previously realised in this area, identifying a rectangular building platform (possibly a gatehouse) adjacent to an entrance ramp.

The excavation aimed to establish the date and nature of the site and provide environmental samples for analysis, as part of doctoral research examining diachronic changes in land use in the surrounding landscape. A 1.5x14m trench was

opened at the northwest end of the site, across the earthwork's bank and ditch. The trench established the presence of a possible palaeosoil beneath re-deposited shale and topsoil used to construct the monument, but was unable to recover any datable artefacts associated with the use or construction of the site.

Using funds provided by the Society for Medieval Archaeology, *corylus* (Hazel) wood charcoal from beneath the earthworks was analysed by the Oxford Radiocarbon Dating Unit, providing an AMS date of 1049 ± 24 BP, calibrated at 2 sigma to cal AD 898-919 (7.2% probability) and cal AD 964-1025 (88.2% probability) (OxA-23125). This determination is earlier than expected for the ringwork (such sites are believed to have origins related to Norman campaigns in the late 12th century). It prompts a detailed consideration of whether Pen-Ucha'r Llan is a site of earlier date. However, typological assessment with other ringworks from south Wales suggests that Pen Ucha'r Llan with its gatehouse feature is comparable with ringwork sites that have secure dates from the later medieval period (e.g. Loughor Castle, Lewis 1993; Rumney Castle, Lightfoot 1992). It is concluded that the early date is a result of contamination from older charcoal.

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References

- Lightfoot, K 1992, 'Rumney Castle, a ringwork and manorial centre in South Glamorgan', *Medieval Archaeology* **36**, 96-163.
Lewis, J 1993, 'Excavations at Loughor Castle, East Glamorgan 1969-73', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* **142**, 99-181.

Dynas Powys Revisited

Andy Seaman received an Eric Fletcher award for radiocarbon analysis of material from Dinas Powys, but the results are not back yet, and we look forward to his report in a later issue.

EAA Session at OSLO

Mark Hall and Sally Foster received a travel grant from the Society to facilitate their session at the EAA in Oslo, as reported in the Conference report section of this Newsletter.

Spotlight on Research

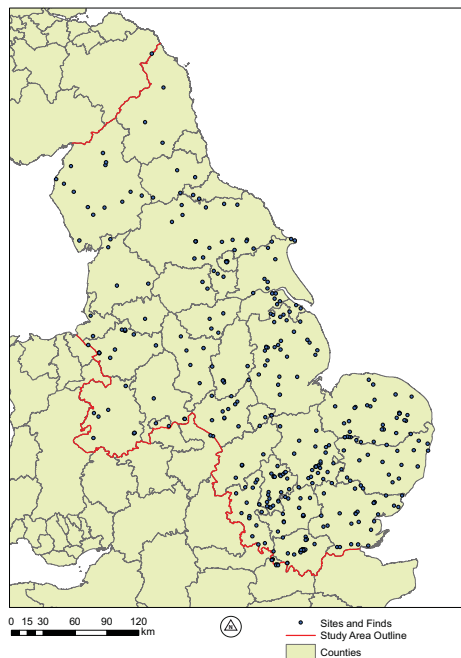
Landscapes of Conflict: The Scandinavian Occupation of England

The archaeology of Viking Age conflict allows us to better understand how 9th- and 10th-century Scandinavian occupied England (commonly referred to as the 'Danelaw') was consolidated and consequently affected through conflict in the period 878 – 954 AD. It presents a short-lived but exciting archaeological case study where material evidence can supplement and challenge the available Anglo-Saxon texts, to provide a more nuanced understanding of the subject matter.

The study of Viking Age England has been dominated by traditional interpretations heavily based on written sources such as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles or Asser's *Life of King Alfred*. Interpretations of the Danelaw have focussed on the role of the city of York and the 'Five Boroughs' of Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham and Stamford.

Conflict is a recurring theme in this period, and many significant events were determined by force, such as the ceding of territory to the Scandinavians following the battle of Ethandun in 878. The borders fluctuated because of endemic conflict throughout the period until 954 when Eric Bloodaxe was driven out from York.

The present study takes a landscape approach to look at archaeological evidence to better understand the means (if any) by which Vikings consolidated their position in England and their newly gained territories. A database of 371 sites and finds make up the core primary information, and ranges from potential battlefield and fortification sites to temporary camps, hoards, town defences, bridges, place-name evidence and even folklore legends. The information is derived from Historic Environment Records, Urban Archaeological Databases, the National Monuments Record, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, published sources, and a selection



Map showing the distribution of archaeological sites and finds across the study area.

of historical material.

The study investigates inter-site relationships, absorbing socio-economic, religious and strategic aspects. It touches tentatively on phenomenological aspects of archaeology in order to investigate the "mentality" of Viking Age warfare. How the Vikings and those living in their territories perceived themselves and how the landscape about them would have influenced their actions and consequently the archaeology that can be discovered.

One emerging observation is the prominence of certain object types and the possible links that these may have with symbolic boundaries. Research is ongoing.

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Society Monographs

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The SMA has published 32 books in its peer-reviewed monograph series since it began in 1966, and is currently seeking new projects for consideration. For further information, contact the Monographs Editor, Chris Gerrard, at c.m.gerrard@durham.ac.uk

Recent and forthcoming titles from the Monograph Series include:

Guy Beresford (2009)
Caldecote: The Development and Desertion of a Hertfordshire Village, Monograph 28

Nancy Edwards (ed.)
(2009) *The Archaeology of the Early Medieval Celtic Churches*, Monograph 29

Roberta Gilchrist and Andrew Reynolds (eds)
(2009) *Reflections: 50 Years of Medieval Archaeology, 1957-2007*, Monograph 30

I. H. Goodall
(2012)
Ironwork in Medieval Britain: an Archaeological Study, Monograph 31

R. C. Barrowman
(2012)
The Chapel and Burial ground on St Ninian's Isle, Shetland: Excavations past and present Monograph 32.



The Fields of Britannia, update

The 'Fields of Britannia' project (introduced to the Society in Newsletter 45) aims to explore the transition from Roman Britain to medieval England and Wales from a broad landscape perspective, reaching beyond the traditional site-based approach that is biased towards high-status landscapes of Roman Britain and the Germanic culture of early medieval England. One of the most distinctive features of the British landscape today is its intricate pattern of fields. Archaeological and historical research has shown that in many areas the field systems of today were largely in existence by the late medieval period, but when and how these fields came into being is less clear. The 'Fields of Britannia' project is using wide a range of techniques to explore systematically for the first time how far the rural landscape of Roman Britain survived into the medieval period and so shapes the character of our modern countryside. This will form an important and innovative contribution to the current debate over one of the major formative periods in British history: the nature of the transition from Roman Britain to medieval England.

Regions and pays

Traditional approaches to the subdivision of Roman Britain have been restrained and mainly two-fold, with upland/lowland, native/villa and civilian/military being typical. The definition of medieval landscape character areas has been more comprehensive, considering settlement types, field patterns and physical conditions. The 'Fields of Britannia' project has divided the landscape of Britain into a series of nine regions based on common physical but also cultural characteristics of both the Roman and medieval periods: South East and Central Southern England (south of the chalk escarpment that runs from Dorset, through the Chilterns, to East Anglia); East Anglia; the Central Zone; the South West; the lowlands of South Wales; the lowlands of western England; the lowlands of North East England; upland Wales; and the uplands of northern England. The Central Zone, for example, is characterised by its fertile lowland topography, relatively Romanised landscape, and a reorganisation of the countryside in the late 1st millennium AD that saw the creation of villages and open fields. The South West, in contrast, has a mix of upland and lowland topographies, a relatively un-Romanised landscape, and a medieval countryside characterised by mostly dispersed settlement patterns and predominantly enclosed field systems (with only limited open field). We recognise, however, that there is also variation within regions and, adopting the concept of pays – the complex interplay of cultural and physical facets of landscape character – have further subdivided the countryside within our nine regions to achieve a local understanding of landscape development.

Environment and economy

Palaeoenvironmental data has been collected through a search of published material and unpublished 'grey literature' in order to reconstruct both broad landscape character and local land-use across the Roman and early medieval periods in each of the nine regions. Previous

attempts to collate environmental data, principally pollen, have been biased towards upland landscapes, but there is now a considerable body of radiocarbon-dated sequences from lowland areas, many resulting from development-led investigations since the introduction of PPG16 in the 1990s.

At the broadest scale, the data suggests widespread continuity of open landscapes across lowland areas, particularly in the 'East Anglia' and 'Central' regions: while there was some decrease in the intensity of agriculture in certain areas, which compliments archaeological evidence for the contraction of individual settlements, the landscape remained open. There was no extensive desertion, and not a single pays shows a significant regeneration of woodland. Areas that in the medieval period were well wooded – such as the Weald, New Forest and Forest of Dean – were also well wooded in the Roman period (these were not post-Roman woodland regenerations). In upland areas, there was a greater degree of discontinuity, suggesting that traditional models of a 'retreat from the margins' still hold true.

Field systems

Analysis of the juxtaposition between late Romano-British and medieval field systems is ongoing, but data has been fully collected and analysed for the four principal lowland regions: South East and Central Southern England, East Anglia, the Central Zone, and the Western Lowlands. Whilst being judicious in excluding Roman boundary features whose dating may suggest that they were abandoned before the 4th century, over 500 sites have currently been identified. As we are seeking to explore the extent to which Romano-British landscapes survived into the medieval period, those sites that fall within historic countryside characterised by post-medieval Parliamentary enclosure (about 150 of the total of 500), have been excluded from statistical analysis.

Across each of the regions examined so far (all lowland) there is an unexpectedly high degree of potential continuity between Romano-British and medieval field systems. At Saxons Lode Farm, on the Worcester Plain (Western Lowlands region), for example, excavated Roman and 'Anglo-Saxon' boundaries share a common orientation with elements of a common field system now fossilized as field boundaries within the historic landscape as mapped in the 19th century (see Fig 1). In the Western Lowlands region as a whole, at least 57% of Roman boundaries share a common orientation or alignment with the later historic landscape in this way, rising to 66% in the South East and Central Southern regions. Analysis at the pays scale is illuminating, and has revealed the extent of local variation in landscape history. In the Vale of Gloucester pays, for example, 79% of Roman boundaries set within areas of former common field appear to have influenced the general orientation or specific alignment of medieval fields or furlong boundaries, although in the Vale of Evesham – an adjacent pays – this drops to only 40%. Mapped across the regions studied so far, there is a marked decrease on potential continuity from the South East, across the central Zone and into the Western Lowlands (Fig 2).

Settlement patterns

The relationship between Roman-British and early medieval settlement patterns has been examined in three county-based case-studies (Norfolk, Somerset and Kent), principally through the use of online Historic Environment Records. The major research aim has been to systematically assess the spatial relationship between Romano-British settlements in different pays with the nearest early medieval occupation and Domesday manors and parish churches. Whilst finer analysis of the results is still in progress, a degree of settlement contraction in the early medieval period is evidenced across all pays, although it is far greater in some compared to others. In Norfolk, for example, which has the benefit of a continuous ceramic sequence, on the acid loamy soils of the West Norfolk Lowland 56% of Romano-British settlements have evidence for 5th to 7th century occupation within 500m, whereas on the heavy clay soils of the Boulder Clay Plateau the figure is just 35%. Across the shallow, calcareous, soils of the Chalk Escarpment the figure is lower still, at 31%. Unfortunately, large parts of Roman Britain became aceramic in the early medieval period, and in order to assess the potential degree of settlement continuity in these areas, all that can be done is to compare the distribution of Romano-British settlements with the

location of parish churches and Domesday villas. Once again, however, there are very clear differences emerging between different areas. On the clay soils of the Mid Somerset Lowlands, for example, 27% of Domesday manors and 25% of parish churches have evidence for Romano-British occupation within 500m, whereas on the calcareous soils of the Limestone Scarp the figures are just 23% and 19% respectively.

Once completed, the results of the project will be published by Oxford University Press in a book titled *The Fields of Britannia: regional landscapes in transition AD 400-1000* (to be published in 2013-14).

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http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/title_84580_en.html

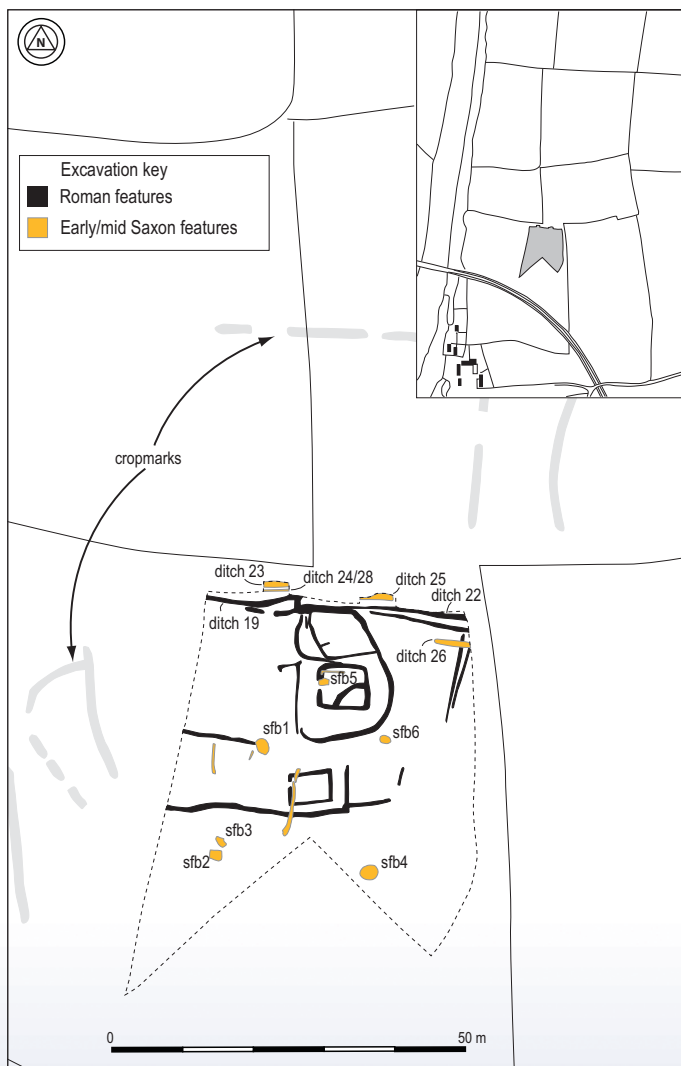


FIG 1. Cropmarks and results of excavation at Saxon's Lode Farm in the Worcester Plain pays of the Western Lowlands region, overlain on First Edition 6" mapping (redrawn). Roman and early/mid Saxon boundary features share a common orientation, which is also fossilised within the pattern of enclosed common field strips in the historic landscape. The presence of sunken-featured buildings suggests that there may be continuity of occupation after the end of the Roman period (after Barber, A and Watts, M 2008, 'Excavations at Saxon's Lode Farm, Ripple, 2001-2: Iron Age, Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon Rural Settlement in the Severn Valley', Trans. Worcestershire Archaeological Society 21: 1-90, figs 3, 13, 19).

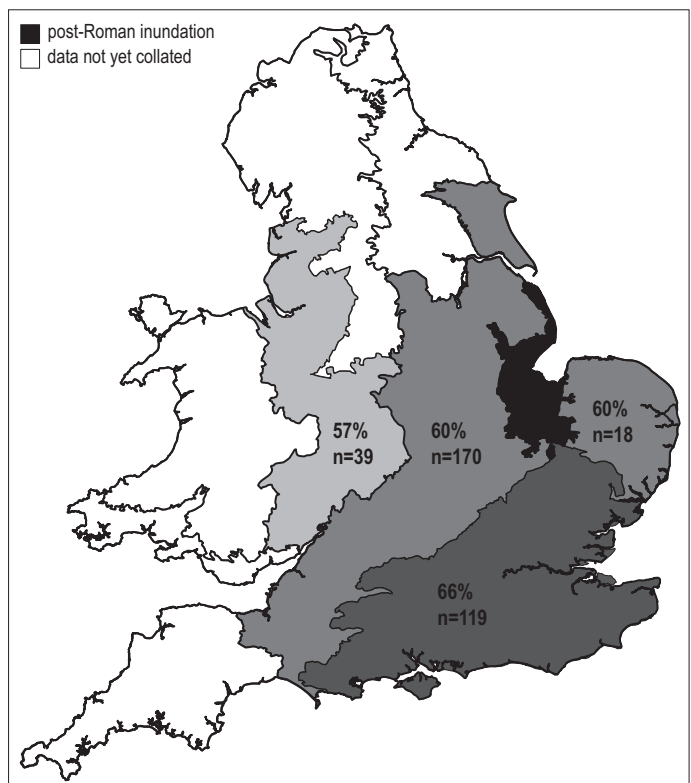


FIG 2. The proportion of excavated late Roman boundaries whose alignment or orientation is reflected in the medieval field pattern across four of the 'Fields of Britannia' regions: Western Lowlands, Central Zone, East Anglia, South-East and Central Southern Britain.

The Hillforts of Strathdon: New Evidence for Early Medieval Aberdeenshire

Between 1996 and 2006 a series of archaeological excavations across c. 50 ha at Kintore, Aberdeenshire, mostly by the author (Cook and Dunbar 2008), identified a sequence running from the early Neolithic to the medieval period and included an unclosed settlement sequence from 1800 BC to AD 1000. The later material included a significant number of early medieval features and structures, including corn-drying kilns, light industrial activity, structured deposition and rectilinear buildings, one of which had a subterranean storage area projecting from the structure in the manner of a souterrain (ibid. 149-50). The appearance of corn-drying kilns and underground storage was argued to reflect both agricultural surplus and an increasingly centralised authority. None of the features contained diagnostic elements or artefacts and without radiocarbon dating they would have remained unrecognised – a situation echoed elsewhere in Northern Britain, as for example in northwest England (Newman and Brennand 2007, 74).

Publication of the Kintore work coincided with an unexpected date from the hillfort at Mither Tap, Bennachie, arguably the most spectacular hillfort in Scotland (RCAHMS 2007, 105-7). Mither Tap has at least two ramparts and distinct areas of settlement, and is very similar in plan to nuclear forts like Dunadd, Argyll. The name Bennachie may mean the ‘Hill of the Che’ (Johnston 1903, 38), one of the so-called Pictish tribes mentioned in *De situ Albanie* and frequently associated with Mar and Buchan. Indeed, early medieval Irish writers were aware of the name ‘Bennachie’, and the accuracy of this text has been placed in doubt (Fraser 2007).

Charcoal recovered from a hearth in Mither Tap’s interior, during re-paving works, was dated to between AD 340–540 and 640–780 (Atkinson 2007). While it does not date the defences, the results support an early medieval origin for the site. Despite knowledge of this date, mainstream discussion in 2007 described a power vacuum between Moray and Southern Pictland because of the absence of hard evidence for enclosed sites (RCAHMS 2007, 116). This absence had been highlighted by Elizabeth Alcock’s 1988 list of enclosed places in Britain AD 500-800, with just five sites named in NE Scotland: Dunottar, Burghead, Cullykhan, Dundarg Castle and Green Castle. Of these, the most recent excavation took place in 1977, at Green Castle.

The study area was neither in contemporary historical records nor had had sufficient archaeological research to develop a framework.

The Hillforts of Strathdon

The Royal Commission’s (Scotland) magisterial publication of the field archaeology of Aberdeenshire’s Don Valley proposed a six-fold scheme for the 19 hillforts in the study area based on defence type and size, without any dating evidence in support (RCAHMS 2007, 96-101). It represented the third attempt at classification since the 1960s, each of which offered different conclusions. The absence of dating evidence and the need to contextualise the Kintore data prompted the author to adopt a methodology employed by the late Professor Lesley Alcock and his wife Elizabeth on their

reconnaissance excavations across Scotland; namely targeted key-hole excavation to extract dating evidence. The Hillforts of Strathdon Project was instigated with the aim to investigate one example from each of the six different classes of hillfort, with the explicit aim of recovering securely stratified dating evidence to inform new gazetteers for future researchers (Cook 2010). The sites studied were Bruce’s Camp, Maiden Castle, Dunnideer, Hill of Newleslie, Hill of Barra and Cairnmore. The results of those sites with early medieval dates are presented below. The new data relates to the defences and not to interior activity, qualifying the conclusions to be drawn from the sites as a whole.

Maiden Castle, Inch - RCAHMS 2007 Type 6 (NJ62SE2)

Maiden Castle is located at the northern end of a rocky spur that projects from the foot of the NE flank of Bennachie (NJ 6942 2435). The site is a small thick-walled stone enclosure (c. 20 m internal diameter) with a surrounding double bank and ditch system. Artefact and radiometric dating places the site sequence within the second half of the first millennium AD. In total three radiocarbon dates were obtained: 1500 ± 30 BP (SUERC-22160), 1495±40 BP (SUERC-15909) and 1540±40 BP (SUERC-15908). Calibrated to two sigma, they respectively date to AD 530-640, AD 500-650 and AD 420-610. In addition, evidence was recovered for non-ferrous metal-working (crucibles) and for putative rectilinear buildings.

Cairnmore, Rhynie - RCAHMS 2007 Type 6a (NJ52SW 9)

Cairnmore (NJ 5035 2494) is set at the termination of a broad spur, Hare Hill, protruding north from the Correen Hills to overlook the plain between Rhynie and Inch. It features a double-banked sub-oval enclosure measuring a maximum 64 m long by 48 m wide, and it has an additional external ditch and rampart located solely at its south-west facing entrance. Artefact and radiocarbon dating place the site in the middle of the first millennium AD. Charcoal from a destruction layer above the middle rampart yielded a date of 1510±30 (SUERC-32839), cal AD 500-630. In addition, charcoal from the foundation cut of the outer rampart was assigned to 1580±30 (SUERC-32840). Evidence was also recovered for non-ferrous metal working in the form of a crucible and moulds.



Volunteers Exposing the outer rampart at Cairnmore, Rhynie, Aberdeenshire

Hill of Barra, Oldmeldrum - RCAHMS Type 2 (NJ82NW4) The Hill of Barra is a multivallate middle Iron Age hillfort located at the edge of a small range of hills at Oldmeldrum (NJ 8025 2570) which can be seen as being re-fortified in the middle of the first millennium AD. The refortification comprised a ditch measuring 1.50 m wide and 0.87 m deep, which, assuming that this ditch encircles the whole of the site, probably enclosed a space of 135 x 140 m. A date of 1615±35 BP (SUERC-28728) was recovered from the primary fill of the ditch, cal AD 380-580.

During this study, Gordon Noble of Aberdeen University uncovered additional evidence showing that the multivallate cropmark enclosure at Barflat, Ryhnie, bore a close similarity in size and form to Maiden Castle. The site is associated with the Craw Stane, a class I Pictish symbol stone as well as seven other stones (RCAHMA 2007, 121-2) including the famous Rhynie Man (Shepherd and Shepherd 1978). The early medieval date was confirmed by Noble during trial excavations which uncovered evidence for early medieval metalwork and imported pottery and glass (Noble and Gondek 2011) as well as radiocarbon dates around AD 450-550 (Gordon Noble, pers. comm.).

Discussion

The new evidence from the Hillforts of Strathdon Project proposes that the other Class 6 type sites are early medieval in date, and any distribution of such sites would include Mither Tap, Barflat and Hill of Barra. The numbers of such sites in Aberdeenshire are consequently almost trebled, from 5 to 14. Equally, the numbers of prehistoric sites is reduced, and researchers should now consider the implications associated with the changing numbers (Cook forthcoming). Of the 20 sites (19 hillforts plus Barflat) in the study area, half may now be deemed to be of early medieval origin, in the period c. 500-600. The remainder are spread from c. 1000 BC to 200 BC (Cook 2010).

With the exception of Hill of Barra's refortification, the prehistoric hillforts are between two and five times the size of the early medieval examples. Certainly this suggests a very different type of society, and this too demands further

consideration. In closing, it is possible to make two other observations that may inform discussion:

1. Alcock's assertion that early medieval sites are very rarely more than 2.5 km from water (1988, 24) is clearly no longer the case and the evidence is considerably more complex.

2. The distributions of both large hillforts and smaller sites may reflect the North-South lines of communication on either side of the Bennachie range: the modern A96 at Inverurie, which is the same route followed by Roman marching camps, and the A97 through Ryhnie.

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Corpus of Scottish Medieval Churches, phase 2

The AHRC has awarded a grant of £490,656 for the second phase of the Corpus of Scottish Medieval Parish Churches project. The pilot phase of this project (reported in Newsletter 44) covered the 105 parish churches in the dioceses of Dunkeld and Dunblane. The second phase will cover the 258 parishes in the dioceses of St Andrews and Brechin.

The aim of the project is to analyse the architectural and documentary evidence for all buildings and sites known to have been associated with medieval parish churches, and to present that evidence in the form of a freely accessible website (<http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/corpusofscottishchurches>), supported by a range of publications and presentations. In doing so, the

understanding of an important but hitherto neglected aspect of the medieval Church will be greatly enhanced.

The Principal Investigator of the project is Professor Richard Fawcett of the School of Art History of the University of St Andrews. The Co-investigators are Professor Richard Oram of the History and Politics Division of the University of Stirling and Dr Julian Luxford of the School of Art History of the University of St Andrews. Also attached to the project are a PhD studentship based at St Andrews, the holder of which is to carry out research into the architecture of the Scottish collegiate churches, and a post-doctoral researcher, based at Stirling.

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Treasures in the British Museum

This review deals with the concluding, British Museum leg (23 June-9 October 2011) of the international exhibition *Treasures of Heaven: saints, relics and devotion in medieval Europe*. Before that it had been on display in the venues of the US co-originators of the exhibition, The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore and the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio. There were variations in content across all three venues but this review deals with the exhibition as seen at the British Museum and only with the US institutions as they are reflected in the catalogue.

The exhibition was one of the highlights of the medieval material culture year for its bringing together of such a large collection of reliquaries and related material culture from across Europe (including Constantinople, today Istanbul) and encompassing the full time span of medieval Christianity between c. 300-1600 AD. These fascinating objects reside in museum collections but with notable numbers still in church treasuries. The exhibition aims to provide a comprehensive overview of a Europe-wide phenomenon. The focus was not so much the rather neglected subject of relics but the reliquaries, inclining to their seductive, sumptuous artistic value above their spiritual worth. It is not a plea for a more spiritual treatment – many visitors brought that dimension to the exhibition with small acts of devotion (bowing and signing the cross before many of the relics) – but I would have liked to see the exhibition get more under the surface of the beliefs that were represented. In fairness the panel on Jerusalem came very close to achieving this with its incisive description of a ‘...steady flow of pilgrims to the city. Many went in search of relics, gathering stones, twigs and soil in the belief that they were infused with holiness through their contact with Christ’. In its treatment of the sub-theme of the Classical inheritance, it gives a good sense of continuity of practice from pagan to Christian with respect, in particular, to votive plaques seeking the healing intervention of supernatural forces. The portable altar, probably from Hildesheim was notable in being accompanied by a short slide show recording the dismantling of the altar to reveal its relic parcels concealed within. Accompaniment came from appropriate music, ‘Alleluia sweet wood, sweet nails’ by Magister Leoninus of the late 12th century. This triple combination had a readily perceptible performance element that evoked partly a medieval ritual and partly a contemporary one of scientific interrogation.

Exposing the reality of religious beliefs in all their dynamism and paradoxes is no easy task and perhaps the key task is to show the evidence, which this exhibition certainly does well. While the overall design of the exhibition lacked any interpretative force, the labelling was clear and brief, showing commendable concern not to overload the initiate with extensive textual interpretation. The exhibition addressed

nine themes: ‘Routes to Heaven’; ‘The Classical Past’; ‘From East to West’; ‘The Sacred and the Precious’; ‘Cuthbert and Becket’; ‘Speaking Reliquaries’; ‘Relics of Christ’; ‘Private Devotion and Power’; and ‘Beyond the Middle Ages’. Scattered throughout the exhibition was a series of brief panels highlighting particular saints: James; Peter; George; the Evangelists; Ursula; St John the Baptist; and Ludmilla.

There was a sense of some missed opportunities. ‘From East to West’, for example, did not really grasp the nettle of the paradoxical use of violence in the acquisition of so many relics from the Holy Land and from Constantinople and did not explore at all the inter-church rivalry and theft of relics in the West or the theological resistance to relics by some church doctors, or how one would distinguish between ‘real’ relics and faked ones? It rather skated over the lack of bodily relics of Christ, with no reference, for example, to the many foreskin relics in circulation (which would have made an ideal platform from which to launch a discussion of ‘fakes’, whether human or mythical creature, and their function). Such biographical aspects of relics and their reliquaries were not directly addressed but were implicit in several of the objects, including the St Menas pyxis and the walrus ivory reliquary from Scandinavia that started out life as a furniture leg.

The exhibition catalogue adds further depth and its authors – Martine Bagnoli, Holger Klein, C. Griffin Mann and James Robinson – are to be commended, for its rich feast of analysis and insight. The catalogue focuses on fewer themes (From Tomb to Altar, Gathering the Saints, Ritual and Performance, A Matter of Faith and Beyond the Middle Ages) and each theme or section comprises two or three essays followed by the relevant portion of the catalogue entries. Sub-themes around collecting and the afterlife of reliquaries (what might be usefully characterised as biographical episodes) get much fuller treatment. The overlap with play and the re-imagining of the power of relics within modern popular culture remain missed opportunities. There are some flaws however, for the catalogue struggles to cover all three venues and their changing exhibit lists. Each catalogue entry usefully notes when an object was not on display in all three venues but problems arise when the catalogue does not match the lay-out and contents of the exhibition, as happened with the BM leg. The BM themes ‘Routes to Heaven’, ‘Cuthbert and Becket’ and ‘Private Devotion and Politics’ are absent from the catalogue and object-wise, for example, so are the Wroxeter votive eye plaque, an Etruscan cremation urn, the Hedwig glass beaker (it does get a text mention in the catalogue but not a catalogue entry) and several lead pilgrim badges and ampullae. Some objects are also detailed in the catalogue as being on display in the BM but were not (e.g. items from Trier and Irish bell shrines from the BM’s own collection). There

were clearly difficulties with loan arrangements and the synergies between catalogue and exhibition production, indeed this is implied in the catalogue acknowledgement to a member of the BM staff: 'Matt Weaver of Collections Services expertly managed an ever expanding and contracting list of lenders'. I spent three hours there and could have spent longer. The experience was rewarding, stimulating

and provoking: a valuable opportunity to contemplate both the sameness and the otherness of our medieval forebears through their enduring material culture.

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Notes and Notices



Kilmakeadar, Co.Kerry. Photograph by Tomás Ó Caraigáin

Niamh Whitfield is leading a tour of the Dingle Peninsula and the Ring of Kerry on 23-30 May, to see a selection of archaeological sites in this spectacularly beautiful part of Ireland, including: Ross Island (the oldest known copper mines in Europe also mined in the early Middle Ages); Beaufort and Ballintaggart (ogam stones); Gallarus (early medieval corbelled boat-shaped oratory, with decorated stone and 'saint's bed'); Reask and Kilfountan (early medieval ecclesiastical sites with fine cross slabs); Ballynavenooragh

and Leacnabuaile (excavated early medieval stone forts); Brandon Creek (traditional point of departure of St Brendan the Navigator); Glenfahan clochans (beehive huts similar to those on the Skelligs); Kilmalkedar and Aghadoe (Romanesque churches); Ardferth Cathedral (complex of churches including 12th- and 13th-century cathedral); Muckross Friary (15th-century Franciscan friary); Ross Castle (early 15th-century castle, beautifully sited by the shores of Lough Leane); and more.

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John Schofield's *London 1100-1660: the archaeology of a capital city* (Equinox, 2011) is a summary of archaeological work in London and its environs, for the five centuries after 1100, as amply illustrated by the last 40 years of excavations. London is the European city most investigated by archaeology, due to its pace of development since the 1970s, and the discoveries have been spectacular and wide-ranging: from the cathedral to chapels, the bridge and waterfront, houses and streets, and the many thousands of artefacts dated by dendrochronology of waterfront reclamation units. The book is £60 hardback or £25 paperback (ISBN 9781845535513 and 9781908049728) but until the end of June 2012 you can get a discount of 25% (£45 or £18.75) by ordering on the publisher's website, www.equinoxpub.com, and entering the code LONDON

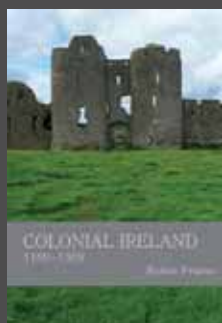
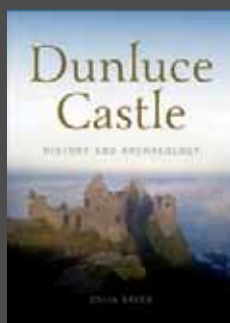
The Medieval Settlement Research Group (MSRG) has a new website: <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/msrg/>

The English Landscape and Identities project now has a blog: <http://englaid.wordpress.com>

The University of Aberdeen is launching a new one-year post-graduate taught MSc on the Archaeology of the North, to begin in 2012-13: http://www.abdn.ac.uk/prospectus/pgrad/study/taught.php?code=archaeology_north

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Conferences & Events

— FORTHCOMING —

MAY:

10-13 May

International Congress of Medieval Studies,
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo,
USA. [http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/](http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/)
[congress/](http://www.wmich.edu/medieval/congress/)

14-16 May

EMASS 2012. The 6th annual Early
Medieval Archaeology Student Symposium
will be held at the UCL Institute of
Archaeology, London.
<http://www.emass.org.uk/>

19 May

Death, Memory and the Landscape.
Colloquium held in association with the
University of Chester and held at the
McDonald Institute of Archaeological
Research, Cambridge.
<http://www.mcdonald.cam.ac.uk/events/>

JUNE:

9 June

Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes
of Medieval Wales. Held at Lucia Windsor
Room, Newnham College, Sidgwick Avenue,
Cambridge.
<http://www.mcdonald.cam.ac.uk/events/>

JULY:

9-12 July

19th International Medieval Congress,
Leeds, an interdisciplinary forum for the
discussion of all aspects of Medieval
Studies.
[http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/imc2012_](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/imc2012_call.html)
[call.html](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/imc2012_call.html)

28 July

The Society for Church Archaeology will be
holding a conference entitled
'Thetford: The Medieval Church in Context'
in the town. For more details please contact
m.shapland@ucl.ac.uk or visit the
Society's website: [http://www.britarch.ac.uk/](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/socchurcharchaeol/)
[socchurcharchaeol/](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/socchurcharchaeol/)

AUGUST:

29 August-1 September

The Medieval Europe Research Congress
(MERC) as part of the EAA meeting in
Helsinki (see pp 5-6 above).
http://www.eaa2012.fi/merc/helsinki_2012

SEPTEMBER:

8 September

Professor Nicholas Brooks will present
the 2012 Deerpur Lecture in St Mary's
Church, Deerpur, on the subject of
'St Ælfheah (Alphege) from Deerpur
to martyrdom (1012): some millennial
reflections on religious ideals'.
<http://deerhurstfriends.co.uk>

8-11 September

International conference: Deer and People
— Past, Present and Future, University
of Lincoln. [www.nottingham.ac.uk/](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/archaeology/research/conferences/)
[archaeology/research/conferences/](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/archaeology/research/conferences/)

17 September

2011 Deerpur Lecture: 'Deerpur Priory
in the later Middle Ages', by Martin Heale,
St Mary's Church, Deerpur.
<http://deerhurstfriends.co.uk>

21-23 September

Making Christian Landscapes: Conversion
and Consolidation in Early Medieval Europe,
University College Cork hosts the Making
Christian Landscapes Project and the
Society for Church Archaeology's Annual
Conference.
[http://www.ucc.ie/en/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/DepartmentsCentresandUnits/Archaeology/NewsItems/MCLConferenceSept2012/#d.en.148350)
[DepartmentsCentresandUnits/Archaeology/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/DepartmentsCentresandUnits/Archaeology/NewsItems/MCLConferenceSept2012/#d.en.148350)
[NewsItems/MCLConferenceSept2012/#d.](http://www.ucc.ie/en/DepartmentsCentresandUnits/Archaeology/NewsItems/MCLConferenceSept2012/#d.en.148350)
[en.148350](http://www.ucc.ie/en/DepartmentsCentresandUnits/Archaeology/NewsItems/MCLConferenceSept2012/#d.en.148350)

OCTOBER:

13 October

Timber Castles. Marking the 20th
anniversary of Higham and Barker's seminal
work, the Castle Studies Group is organizing
a 1-day event at University College London.
jeremy.cunnington@btopenworld.com

29 October-3 November

EuroMed 2012. The 4th International Euro-
Mediterranean conference will be held in
Limassol, Cyprus at the Amathus-Limassol
Hotel. <http://www.euromed2012.eu/>

2013 Preliminary Announcements

22-24 February, 2013

Scotland in Early Medieval Europe.
The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
invites papers and posters for Scotland
in Early Medieval Europe, the fourth in its
series of international-themed conferences,
to be held in conjunction with the Dark
Age Studies Committee. The conference
will examine Scotland and its connections
and identity in Early Medieval Europe
(AD200 and AD1000). Contributions from
all disciplines are welcome, utilising all
sources of evidence, and we are particularly
interested to mix overarching themes with
specific case studies. Proposals by 29 June
2012, to SIEME@socantscot.org

9-12 July, 2013

Plantations amidst Savagery: reformed
monastic orders in North Europe, c. 1100-
1600. University of Stirling.
Proposal outlines and enquiries due 1 June
2012. In 1113 David youngest son of St
Margaret of Scotland founded a colony
from St Bernard of Abbeville's abbey of
Thiron-Gardais at Selkirk in the Scottish
Borders. This community was the first of any
of the reformed Benedictine or Augustinian
monastic orders to be founded in the British
Isles. The arrival of these continental monks
heralded an era of profound religious,
political, cultural, social and economic
transformation in the lands along the
northern rim of Christendom from Scotland
and Ireland in the west, through England,
Scandinavia and north Germany, to Poland
and Estonia in the east. Contact Richard
Oram, rdo1@stir.ac.uk

9-15 September, 2013

Agrarian Technology in the Medieval
Landscape, is the theme for Ruralia's 10th
conference, the proceedings of which are
published as a peer-reviewed volume. The
conference will take place in Smolenice
Castle, Slovakia, on the invitation of the
Slovak Academy of Science. Contact
your National Representative for further
information:
UK: Mark Gardiner, m.gardiner@qub.ac.uk;
Piers Dixon, Piers.Dixon@rcahms.gov.uk
Ireland: Niall Brady, [niall@](mailto:niall@discoveryprogramme.ie)
[discoveryprogramme.ie](mailto:niall@discoveryprogramme.ie)
Other countries, www.ruralia.cz